www.libtool.com.cn

P
270
14

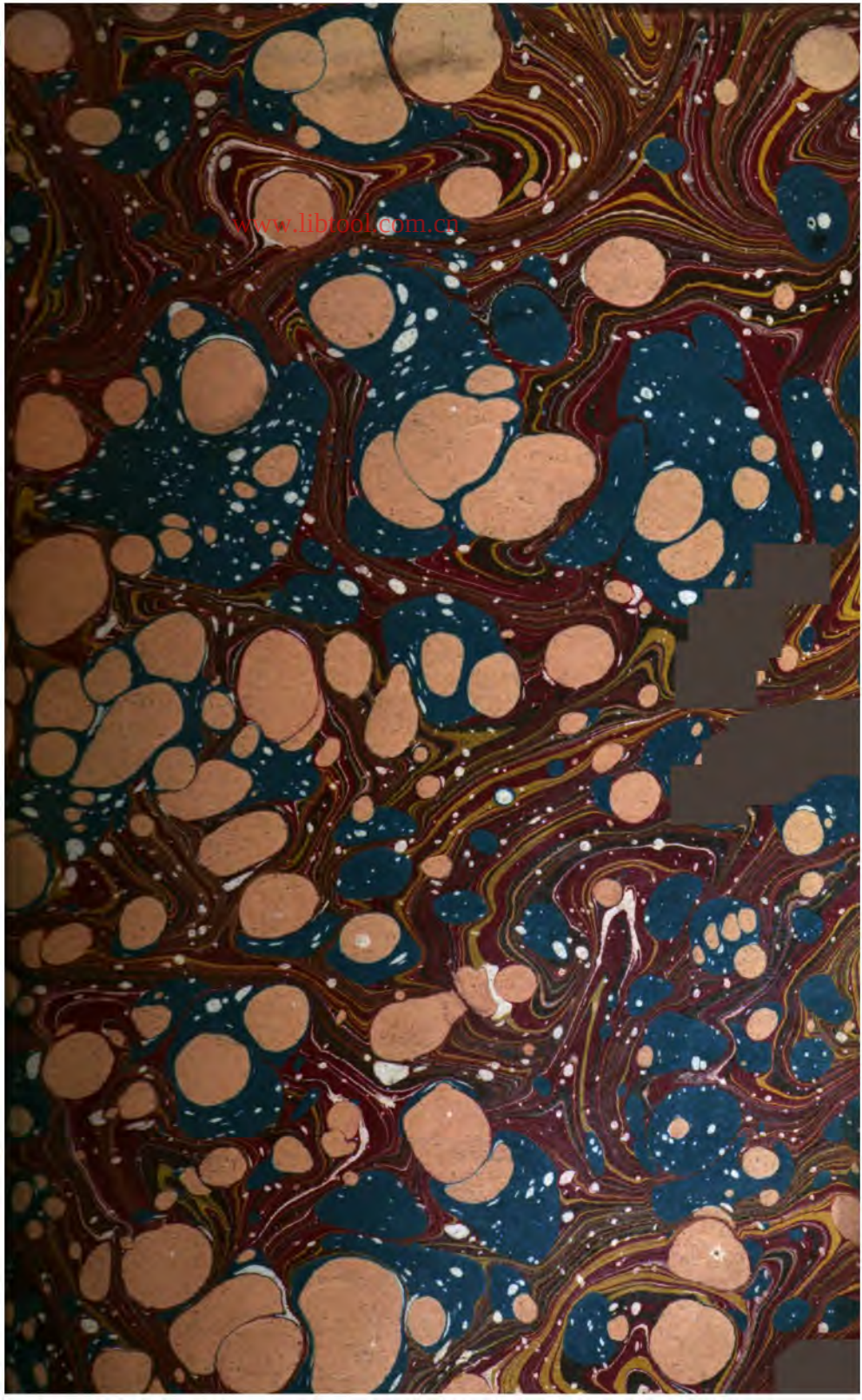
www.libtool.com.cn

LOANED TO
FORT ORANGE CLUB.
—BY—
MR. ERASTUS CORNING.

KF612

Harvard College
Library

By Exchange


www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

THE INNER LIFE.

"Thoughts of mine, so wildly pressing
Through the mystery of my soul,
While my calm face, unconfessing,
Keeps the solemn secret whole,
Oft I ponder,
With vague wonder,
Whence ye come—and what ye mean;
Visions of my world unseen!"

From the Painting by Louis Desanges.

See "The Undercurrent."

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

LONDON SOCIETY.

www.libtool.com.cn

An Illustrated Magazine

OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

THE HOURS OF RELAXATION.

VOLUME V.

LONDON:
OFFICE, 9 ST. BRIDE'S AVENUE, FLEET STREET, E.C.
1864.

P 270.14

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
BY EXCHANGE

MAY 19 1939

www.libtool.com.cn

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET
AND CHARING CROSS.

www.libtool.com.cn

CONTENTS.

Engravings.

	Drawn by	Page
A Modern Masquerade	*Adelaide Claxton*	462
Admiral Sir John Hawkins		527
An Actor's Story	*W. M'Connell*	209, 213
An April Fool	*Adelaide Claxton*	320
An Hour with a Snake-Charmer	*J. B. Zwecker*	225
An Old-fashioned Valentine	*H. Sanderson*	168
A Railway Battle at St. Stephen's, Westminster	*H. Sanderson*	200
Art in the Auction Room	*H. Sanderson*	299
At Swindon	*M. Ellen Edwards*	41
Cheap Switzerland	*C. A. Doyle*	504
Christmas with Grampus	*Alfred Crowquill*	25
Costume of English, Flemish, Prussian, and Venetian Merchants of the Sixteenth Century		449
Dr. John Black, Editor and Political Economist		233
Highgate Archway	*E. M. Wimperis*	120
How Charlie Blake went in for the Heiress	*G. du Maurier*	385
How the Shareholders' Money goes	*H. Sanderson*	193
In Rotten Row Three Years Ago	*E. H. Corbould*	80
London Opera Directors:—		
Signora Faustina		289
Aaron Hill		400
François Xavier Geminiani		401
Veracini		404
Felici Giardini		409
Leap Year	*Phiz*	176
Little Golden Hair	*R. Barnes*	268
Lovely Lady Coventry		353
Love's Weatherglass	*E. F. Weir*	112
May in the Park	*F. J. Skill*	424
Mephistopheles and the Geese	*H. Sanderson*	481
Midsummer Lyric	*Robert Jefferson*	503
Miss Morton's Mince Pies	*Kenny Meadows*	93, 96
Mrs. Honiton gives her hand to Perkins	*Adelaide Claxton*	320
Mrs. Spencer's Party	*C. A. Doyle*	192

	Drawn by	Page
No Admission under £300 per annum	*Florence Claxton*	178
Not for You	*M. J. Lawless*	85
Our Croquet Party	*F. J. Skill*	496
Our Entertainment	*C. A. Doyle*, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, [313, 314, 315, 316, 317	
Poor David!	*M. Ellen Edwards*	277
Preparing for 'The Derby'	*Cuthbert Bede*	467
Rival Charms	*M. Ellen Edwards*	538
Shakespeare, from the Droeshout and Chandos Portraits, with Sketches at Stratford		416
Ships of the Sixteenth Century		531, 538
Sir Richard Whittington		328
Sir Thomas Gresham's Tomb in St. Helen's Church, Bishopsgate		460
Society on its Feet	*Florence Claxton*	6
St. Valentine's Day in Leap Year	*Phiz*	176
The Bay Window of Our Club	*C. A. Doyle*	558
The Dream becomes Reality	*M. Ellen Edwards*	350
The Duet	*J. D. Watson*	268
The Electric Telegraph: An Allegory	*From Echter's Fresco*	364
The First Day of the Season	*Phiz*	113, 117
The Forlorn Hope and the Damask Rose	*M. Ellen Edwards*	151
The Inner Life	*Louis Desanges* *Frontispiece*	
The Maiden's Lament		40
The Railway: An Allegory	*From Echter's Fresco*	265
The Snowy Christmas	*Rosa Mulholland*	65
The Study of Astronomy	*M. Ellen Edwards*	428
The Two Valentines	*G. H. Thomas*	169
Tom Probus and his Valentines	*T. Morten and W. M'Connell*	97, 103, 105
Turning Over a New Leaf	*W. M'Connell*	1
Types of English Beauty	*Lucy Meadows*	38
What is my Love like?	*E. K. Johnson*	495
Whittington's House		328
William Makepeace Thackeray		128

Tales.

	Page
A Coffee-room Christmas. The Angel Inn, Ironstown	61
An Actor's Story	209
An April Fool	318
Christmas with Grampus	25
How Charlie Blake went in for the Heiress	385
Just as it happened: A Tale of Two Valentines	169
Lovely Lady Coventry. The Story of a Belle	353
Miss Morton's Mince Pies	86
Our Croquet Party	496
The Snowy Christmas	65
The Ordeal for Wives. A Story of London Life. By the Author of 'The Morals of Mayfair':—	
Chap. I. At Swindon	41
II. On the Coach-box	48
III. A Muscular Heroine	52
IV. The Fleming Blood	142
The Ordeal for Wives—*continued.*	
Chap. V. A Forlorn Hope	145
VI. Rescued	149
VII. Concerning Fly-fishing	153
VIII. Esther's Knowledge of the World	155
IX. The Disorder called Love	270
X. Poor David!	277
XI. Oliver as a Hero	280
XII. Miss Joanna evinces her Strength of Mind	283
XIII. A Pharisee *comme il faut*	338
XIV. The First Infidelity	347
XV. The Study of Astronomy	425
XVI. Scruples	431
XVII. The Trials of Toad-eating	433
XVIII. An Unknown Rival	439
XIX. Calumniated	538
XX. A Serious Bringing-up	541
XXI. Fifty Thousand Pounds	545
XXII. Rival Charms	553

www.libtool.com.cn

Sketches.

	Page
A Chat about Valentines	178
Christmas and New Year's Day in Paris	8
How the Shareholders' Money goes	193
London Papers and London Editors:—	
No. IV. John Sterling, Dr. John Black, William Jerdan	233
Mrs. Spencer's Party, and how the People amused themselves	184
My Rowing Days	368
Our Entertainment	304
Picturesque London:—	
No. I. From the Golden Gallery	73
II. From Highgate Arch on Christmas Day	120
III. Hyde Park	419
Society on its Feet	6
The First Day of the Season, and its Results	113
The London Opera Directors:—	
No. I.	289
II.	401
III.	513
The Merchant Princes of England:—	
Chap. I. Early English Commerce	129
II. The De la Poles of Hull	256
III. Richard Whittington of London	328
VI. The Cannings of Bristol	332
V. The Greshams of London	449
VI. The Hawkinses of Plymouth	527
The Playgrounds of Europe.—Cheap Switzerland	504
Tom Probus and his Valentines	97
Turning over a New Leaf	1

Miscellaneous Papers.

A Gossip on Garden Games—Quoits Bowls, Summer Skates, and Children's Garden Games	473
An Hour with a Snake-charmer	225
Art in the Auction Room	299
Art in a Railway Station:—	
Echter's Fresco—The Railway	265
„ „ —The Electric Telegraph	362
At Thackeray's Grave	126
At the Westminster Play	107
Christmas in the Colonies	17
Easter Eve at St. Petersburgh	365
Football at Rugby, Eton, and Harrow	246
From Putney to Mortlake with the University 'Eights'	372
How some Folk prepare for the Derby	467
How they 'get up' a Company	481
In the Water:—	
Chap. I. A Fatal Negligence.—What it has Cost us	487
In the Water—*continued*,	
Chap. II. The Ladies' Swimming School on the Seine, and the Ladies' Bath in Marylebone	490
III. Society in the Sea	492
Ladies' Work	161
Notes Drawn on the Avon Bank for General Circulation	413
Notes on Dress at a Fancy Ball	462
Parisian Promenades	442
Searching for Summer Quarters	559
Social Pioneers—Charles Knight and the Penny Press	523
St. David's Day	219
The Gullibility of Man	228
The School of Musketry at Fleetwood	81
The Story of Thekla	38
Young England's College Sports: A Day with the Champion Athletes of the Universities	375

Poetry.

A Bundle of Contradictions	327
A Bundle of Answers to a Bundle of Contradictions	472
Ad Lunam	182
Albert the Good	80
An Old-fashioned Valentine	168
Little Golden-Hair's Story	268
New Year's Eve	24
Not for You	85
Reading the Valentine	112
Refused!	298
St. Valentine's Day in Leap Year. A Solemn Warning to Single Men	176
The Bay-window of our Club	557
The Duet	268
The Spirit Child. A Bridegroom's Tale of the New Year	59
The Under-Current	522
Two April Pictures	367
Types of English Beauty	38
What is my Love like	495

www.libtool.com.cn

LONDON SOCIETY.

www.libtool.com.cn

JANUARY, 1864.

TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF.

NEW-YEARS' Days are the milestones on the journey of life. What a weary journey it would be without those milestones! The traveller over the waste of time would be like a mariner on a trackless sea without rudder or compass—a castaway! Just imagine mankind without a calendar—seasons following seasons, and years gliding into years without a resting-place from which to look back upon the past, and forward into the future. I do not know how we can realize this except upon some desert journey, where there are no landmarks to tell us how far we have travelled, and how many weary miles yet lie beyond. He who has travelled such

a road can tell how long the miles appear, how heavily the time hangs; how weary become the feet! As you trudge onward, seeing nothing to give you assurance that you are nearing the goal, your heart sinks for want of hope. You do not know how far you have come; you cannot guess how far you have yet to go. Oh! for a stone or post to tell you that you have accomplished some definite portion of your journey, if it be only one single mile; for then you know the extent of your toil. At such landmarks you sit you down, as on an oasis, and bathe your wayworn feet, and dry your tears, and rise refreshed and strengthened for the next stage on your journey. How infinite is the mercy of Heaven in adapting times and seasons to man's estate and condition! Let us suppose a sudden change, and that the earth occupied two years in revolving round the sun —that the four seasons were doubled in length. How the tedium of opening spring would provoke us! how the glory of summer would pall upon us! how the lingering promise of autumn would make the heart sick! and how terrible would be the dread of the coming winter! But to realize this more forcibly, let us imagine a day of forty-eight hours—twenty-four hours of day, and the same number of night. As it is, many of us talk of killing Time. But in such a case, would not all mankind be in league to put an end to him once and for ever? So intolerable does the bare idea of such an arrangement appear, that the order of things in the inhabited regions near the poles may almost be regarded as a defect in the Great Scheme. These regions are apt to give us the idea of outhouses attached to the Great Building which were never intended to be inhabited except by reindeer and bears. Tell a fashionable cockney of a place where they never draw down the blinds and light the lamps for five months and he will faint. Perhaps the seven months when the blinds are permanently drawn down, and the lamps are always burning, would suit him better; but he would get tired even of that. The fool's paradise of eternal night-revels would be a pandemonium. Nature has set us an example in the ordering of seasons, and the marking of time, which we have followed in our own small way by instituting minor subdivisions. It may be said, God made years and days, and man made hours and minutes and seconds. It is well that the plan has been thus artificially extended, for we stand in need of the most frequent reminders of the flight of time. Without these bells of warning, clashing for ever around us, the sands of life would steal away like a thief, robbing us of many wholesome seasons of thought and sober reflection. But we take small note of these minor warnings. *Carpe diem* is a maxim little heeded. A miserly maxim. As if a day were of any account! A youth with many years in store for him throws away a day as a rich man throws away a guinea. 'There are plenty more. The sun will rise to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, and my purse will fill with days as fast as it is emptied.' Weeks! what do they mark but a brief period in our course of toil or pleasure? Months! Do we not sometimes forget whether it is August or September? Years! But here we pause. Days, weeks, months, may preach to us in vain, but years will make us hold and listen — especially when we have turned thirty. Before that age most young men are proud of the fact that they are growing older. They hear their seniors prate of their age and experience, and they envy age and experience as, at another period of their existence, they envied whiskers and tail-coats. But when thirty years are passed, and the figures are rapidly leading on to twoscore, a man becomes as unwilling—ay, as unwilling as any woman—to confess that he is as old as he really is. He would like to be thought younger—he would like *to be* younger.

This is about the time of life when men begin to exclaim

'Eheu fugaces anni labuntur!'

It has been but a line from Horace hitherto, something to scan, some-

thing to quote to show off your Latinity. But now it is a stern, inexorable voice, challenging you on the threshold of a new year. You have serious thoughts now; you are wise now—now that half of your three score is gone. Why were you not serious, why were you not wise before, when you were one-and-twenty, entering upon manhood and life, ten years ago? 'Fool, fool, fool! If I had had such thoughts then as I have now, what might I not have accomplished ere this?' Well, it is no use biting your lips, and stamping your foot. It is a true and wholesome proverb which says you cannot put an old head upon young shoulders. There is no fitness in the thing: man must have time to develop his head, as a cabbage must have time to develop its heart. I for one do not believe in William Pitt, prime minister at twenty-three. He might have been as learned as Bacon, but what could he have known of the philosophy of life? How could he have known that which he never saw? Solomon was not wise because he read books.

According to my experience of life derived from observation, and the perusal with the keenest interest of many biographies, 'thirty' is the golden number in the years of a man's life. This is the middle milestone upon which he rests to survey the past and contemplate the future. Woe to him who does not rest and think now! for at this time the mind is more candid and the heart more open to the touch of truth and tenderness than it ever will be again, until, perhaps, the day when there is no hope left. If you look around in your society, and mark the men who have passed the Rubicon of forty-five or fifty, still retaining health and strength, you will find that the *fugaces anni* trouble them little. Men at this age think less of death than youths of half their years. They seem to look upon the midway of their age as the crisis of a disease, and that when they have passed this bridge they have got over the worst. I remember, when I first began to think seriously of the fleeting years, asking a boisterous old gentleman if the thought of his narrowing span ever troubled him. I can recall our brief colloquy word for word.

'Ever trouble me! not in the least; not half so much as when I was your age.'

'But,' I said, 'does it never occur to you that your time is getting very short, and that you must go some day soon?'

'Not at all,' he said; 'I am strong and hearty, and I feel to have just as good a prospect of life as ever I had. When I was twenty I thought I should die before I came of age. Now I am sixty-three, I see no reason why I shouldn't live to be a hundred.'

I know my friend well, and I am not going to hold him up as an awful example, for that would be to mistake his case altogether. He is not a man hardened in sin, but a man hardened in years. He has got used to living, and thinks he will live on indefinitely just the same, as a man used to wealth thinks he will always have turtle and champagne for dinner. I don't say that this is not a comfortable state of feeling to arrive at, so as you carry with you a pure heart and a clear conscience; but I think you miss the lesson which chasteneth a man to most profit, and teacheth him most fully the philosophy of life, if you escape over the bridge of mid-life without passing through the valley of the shadow of serious thoughts.

Age does not alone blanch the hair and wrinkle the cheek. I will not say it hardens the heart, but it dulls the feelings and blunts the sensibilities. Neither very young nor very old people feel the loss of friends so keenly as do persons of middle age. The young are too buoyant of spirit to be deeply touched by grief: the old have stood by many graves. At thirty you feel the loss of friends and companions keenly. You set out with them on the journey, full of strength, and life, and hope; and now they have fallen by the wayside, one by one,—those you loved best perhaps—and you are alone with strangers. There was a time when you could not have imagined life tolerable without those friends of your heart;

but what have you done when they sank beside you on the road, but paused for a moment, and said, 'Poor fellow!' dropping a single tear, and passing on. There is a bitter but profitable reflection in this. A man of great mark, much esteemed, and held in high regard by the circle in which he moves, sinks into an untimely grave. Just for the moment there is a hush among those who knew him; a few tears are shed, a few grave looks are interchanged; but to-morrow brings dry eyes and cheerful faces, and his friends eat and drink and make merry before the week is out. The persons who do this are not more heartless than the rest of their kind. It is a failing common to humanity. It is hard to grieve enough. Often and often I have caught myself laughing and making merry when I felt that I had yet a heavy debt of tears to pay to a dead friend. So it will be with you. You will die, and the friends who now 'grapple you to their souls with hooks of steel' will be gay of heart with the next sun. There are some who ridicule the conventional ensigns of grief, 'the trappings and the suits of woe.' They are wrong. It is the only way in which poor weak humanity can give permanence to its sorrow. Let us show it on our hats, if we cannot in our hearts, that we are grieving for a friend. Let crape redeem our cold stint of tears. I hold that the least we can do for a friend when he is dead is to pay all honour to his remains. When he is alive, do we not set our house in order to receive him; do we not place the choicest viands before him, and allot him our best room? Does he need all the superfluities which we press upon him? No. But we are lavish in our attentions that we may show him respect. And shall we have no further regard for him when the spirit has fled, and his clay—that clay which we honoured so much in the warmth of life—has grown cold? Away with your hard shopkeeping maxims! Leave me to pillow the head of my dead friend upon the softest satin, and furnish his last house with becoming state. It is the last service I can render him. I cannot pay him all the debt of grief I owe him. Let me wring my purse-strings if I cannot wring my heart-strings.

I am reminded of Queen Elizabeth's injunctions to the discursive preacher at Paul's Cross. 'To your text, Mr. Dean—to your text!'

Well, my text is 'Turning over a new leaf,' and I am coming to the point in my own way. This night when the last days of the year are ebbing away, a fair hand playing with my dark locks has discovered a gray hair—the first gray hair! I had never seen such a thing—never dreamt of such a thing! At *my* age: I could not believe it.

It was laid upon a band of black velvet and placed before me.

I can resist conviction no longer. There it lies, blanched and white—white as the driven snow! And it is *my* hair. It seems but yesterday that I was at school, wishing I were a man. And now to-day I am gray, and growing old. What have I done in all this time? Have I fulfilled a man's mission upon earth—have I made any step towards it? Have I done any good in the most infinitesimal degree, for which the world is wiser or better? I cannot answer my own questions. I am dumb, and sitting here contemplating that white hair, with the sense that another year is gliding away, I feel that it is time in right good earnest to turn over a new leaf. I have made the resolution often before, but never under the sense of obligation which now weighs upon me. I remember a certain 'Hogmanay' night, ten years ago, when half a dozen young fellows sat round a certain hospitable fire, which has, alas! been quenched. We were not, any of us, in good heart, and we resolved with the new year to turn over a new leaf. It was a trifling proceeding—little better than sport. When twelve o'clock struck, one laid down his pipe, and said, 'From this moment I give up smoking;' another threw his box into the fire, and said, 'I will snuff no more;' a third said, 'I forswear billiards henceforward;' a fourth resolved to master the German language before that day

twelve months. These were small leaves to turn over; but the result was not unimportant. These vows made in concert, at the midnight hour of the last night of the old year, were kept for twelve months. The smoker and the snuffer relapsed; but the billiard-player broke himself of a passion for play, and was a richer man for it. The aspiring linguist learnt German well enough to read it, and has been a man of more value in his vocation ever since. Would that I could meet all those friends again on the last day of this waning year, that we might resolve anew, and on a broader plan! I would say to them, 'Let us begin the new year with chastened hearts, and with a resolve to shape all our actions by the rule of Christian charity; let us measure all we do by the gauge of truth, for then, whatever be the result, we shall have the consolation of knowing that we have striven to walk in the right path.' But, alas! that same company will never meet together on earth again.

It is the fashion with many persons to dance the old year out, as if it were a matter for rejoicing that another period of life is gone. I hold it is no time for dancing nor for mirth. It is a time for thought and serious reflection; a moment to pause and gird up our loins for a fresh start on the journey of life. The time is peculiarly favourable for making new resolutions, and if they are solemnly made by a family, or social circle, by the fireside, as the bells ring out the knell of the old year, they are more likely to be remembered and kept than if they were made at a less impressive moment.

Thirty years ago, a young man began to feel the burden of a rapidly increasing family. His companions in the race of life pitied him, and prophesied that he would never get on, with so large a family dragging upon him. The young man himself quailed before his responsibility, and almost lost heart, for he had already seven children, and was little more than thirty years of age. But on the last night of a certain year he made a resolution. He said, 'I will do my duty by my children; I will strain every nerve to give them a good education to fit them for making their way in the world.'

For this end he toiled and slaved, and denied himself; and when his friends and associates saw him in rusty clothes, and with careworn looks, plodding on year after year, getting poorer rather than richer, they sighed for his hard lot, through the *curse* of a large family that weighed upon him and crushed him.

That imagined curse became a blessing. That man is now in the sere and yellow leaf, happy, contented, and well provided for by his sons and daughters, who, through the superior education they received, are now occupying positions in life which may almost be termed brilliant. This is no parable.

I have preached my sermon, and have only to add one 'lastly' to my congregation. Don't dance out the old year; don't let it slip away amid mirth and thoughtlessness. Seize the moment to be sober and thoughtful—to make good resolutions for the future. When these are made, with a strong heart, and a firm will, then may we truly wish each other a Happy New Year.

A. H.

SOCIETY ON ITS FEET.

SHOULD Mr. Frith ever be in want of a subject for one of his great character pictures, few scenes would afford him more opportunities for the study of the varieties of human expression than an ordinary ball-room. Not being anatomists, we are unable to account for the intimate connection between the muscles of the foot and those of the face; but that an intimate connection does exist few can doubt who ever studied the science of dancing.

Dancing, like painting, has its various schools. First, at least in point of seniority, comes the pre-Raphaelite school, whose followers are generally of more sober years than the ordinary run of dancers. To them aptly may be applied the German epithet of 'foot-painting.' In the same manner as Mr. Millais elaborates a rose-leaf or piece of point-lace, so do they with intense earnestness finish off each individual step of a quadrille. The pre-Raphaelite is, however, seldom met with beyond the confines of a quadrille or Lancer. Sometimes a bolder spirit than his fellows may hazard a polka, but never a waltz or galop. Such delicate machinery is of no avail amid the boisterous waves of a 'sensation' or a 'burlesque.'

The next—and this is a very numerous class—are what may be termed the 'scudders,' who are always ready to dance anything, and rarely think it necessary to say 'they would rather not dance this time.' When invited by the affable and smiling hostess, the scudder, although a graceful is by no means an easy dancer, his long, flowing steps carrying his partner along with marvellous rapidity, which, accompanied by tolerable steering, will often earn for him the reputation, at least among his own intimate circle of friends, of that ubiquitous character, 'the finest waltzer in London.'

A third class let us call the 'staggerers'—the pests of the ball-room. A staggerer can generally be detected: even before commencing a dance there is a peculiar vague and uncertain expression about the eyes—a nervous anxiety about commencing, which never fails to betray him. You see, from the moment of his starting, that he is a doomed man; his unfortunate partner, perhaps unconscious of the fate in store for her, is gazing another way. Could she but see the expression of the staggerer's face, we feel sure she would pause ere taking the fatal step. We will suppose, however, after numerous false starts they are at last off. If, luckily, the corner from which they start happens to be entirely free from dancers, they may, perhaps, survive the first half-dozen steps without a collision; but their good fortune rarely lasts so long—certainly not longer. By a kind of magnetic attraction the staggerer seems to bear down against the first approaching couple, and then commences a series of collisions of more or less disastrous effect; thenceforth personal identity is gone, and he becomes a mere racquet-ball tossed about from one side of the room to the other, until at last he seems to have just sufficient presence of mind left to

lead his bruised and lacerated partner to a sofa, where she may congratulate herself on having at last obtained a haven of rest after the perils she has undergone.

www.libtool.com.cn

But in addition to these three large divisions there is yet one more, though, we fear, in a smaller proportion—the really good dancer. In him the spirit of dancing is not confined to the mere movement of the feet, but seems to pervade his whole body—not only his toes but every limb seems brought into action. There is a spring and buoyancy in his style which may even excite admiration in the most placid of chaperons. Though an excellent steerer, passing easily through the most intricate passages, he never appears to be on the 'look out.' A kind of instinct seems to guide him through the most complicated mazes; and whether it be the quietest of mazurkas or the fastest of galops, he bears his partner along with equal skill and grace.

In our description of the various classes of dancers we have purposely abstained from including the ladies, who, as a rule, have fewer peculiarities, or, at least, less opportunity of showing them. They may generally be divided into two classes—those who can, and those who cannot dance. With the former, dancing is one of the most fascinating of all amusements. With the latter—but no, let us recall the days of our childhood and copy-books, when we used diligently to write that most amiable of precepts, 'Comparisons are odious.'

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S DAY IN PARIS.

www.libtool.com.cn

I was once my lot to spend my Christmas Day in Paris, away from familiar faces, away from familiar places, and that much-loved magnet for our Englishman's eyes and coat-tails—a Christmas coal fire.

None of your wood fires for me—such as were burnt in my white, fluted, china-looking stove, that hiss, sputter, crackle, and sing, but throw out no heat. I have often thought that wood fires and coal fires were admirable examples of the national characteristics of the two peoples. How quickly your wood kindles! How soon he is a flame: in what a state of roar, crackle, fume, and fuss he passes his brief existence; what volumes of smoke he emits; what a buoyant, boisterous, brilliant fellow he is altogether, and how soon he subsides into white ashes! How long coal takes a lighting: how he has to be petted, patted, and coaxed into a flame; but once a-blaze, what a steady, genial, glowing heat he casts around him; and what a long time that heat lasts! I remember little Jack Shattersense used to say the proper way to spell Englishman was *Ingle*-ishman, and that they were so called from their attachment to the chimney-corner.

But, as I said, there I was in Paris; away from my old, natural Christmas associations of holly, oyster-barrels, white-topped leads of churches, pantomimes, laurels, turkeys, country dances, foxes, mistletoe, snap-dragon, amateur theatricals, Devonshire cream, flirtation, mince-pies, pianos, stables, staircase-conversations, snowballing, and burnt brandy. I sighed as I thought how pleasantly my friends would pass their time—sighed as I thought of those two quaint old gables that I could never remember seeing for the first time; the roof tops familiar to my eyes as my father's face, and the two little ends of white cravat that always stuck out from beneath his chin, or those long-loved cap-strings of my mother's—the strings that, years ago as I went to sleep in her lap, I used to curl round my fingers, and hold as a material guarantee that Hannah of the nursery should not be summoned to carry me away.

So instead of being among my old friends, there I was in a small room, standing on a fleecy, furry rug, near the cheerless stove. My floor had no carpet to cover its shiny, slippery, bright, bees-waxed surface. My sofa, arm-chair, and indeed the furniture generally, was elegant and luxurious, and more fitted for a lady's boudoir than a man's chamber; and there was the ever-present gold pendule on the mantel-piece, which occasionally struck the half-hours as a piece of distinction from the monotony of an existence, that to a French clock must have been distressing n the extreme.

I had only one room, one whole side of which constituted a door, which closed, shut off the bed, and left an entire and perfect sitting-room. I never got over the feeling of wonder at opening the whole side of my room at once with a small handle; it looked as if it were a preliminary effort to walking away secretly with a floor of the house.

CHRISTMAS ON THE BOULEVARDS.

On the morning of Christmas Eve, I turned out of my little room and took a stroll upon the Boulevards, after going through the preparatory ceremony of locking my door, and giving the key to the concierge. I verily believe that Frenchmen invented concierges, and concierges invented houses in flats, for the sole purpose of necessitating the smiles and nods, and small talk, which form the countersigns to the delivery of the key.

'Bonjour, madame, voila là clef!'

'Merci, monsieur,' as I offered her the key.

'Merci, madame,' as she takes it.

'Il fait un temps superbe, monsieur.'

'Très-beau, madame!'

'Bonjour, monsieur!' as I descend the stairs.

'Bonjour, madame.' I lift my hat—we exchange a smile, the old lady giving infinitely more in the way of propitiation than she takes. I have no doubt, that in speaking of me to the garçon, she says: 'Ce monsieur là est très-aimable!' and not only says it, but thinks it, because I always linger near her window for that delicious interchange of thought and sentiment quoted above. Singular people! If lifting the hat, and saying bonjour, give you a good opinion of me, then will I lift my hat and bonjour continually.

Three minutes' walk brought me to the Boulevards—those wonderful Boulevards that would half convince a stranger that the population of Paris is composed of soldiers, waiters, nurse-girls, and babies. As I walk on the broad asphalte pavement, and look at the shops, and the leafless trees, I sigh as I think of our noble Fleet Street, and our gorgeous Strand, and confess that while Paris is a city, London is a mere agglomeration of houses.

Although the Parisians think but little of Christmas, and reserve the celebration of the season for New Year's Day, still there is a bustle on the Boulevards. The visitor who only knows Paris in the heat of summer, will be surprised to see that on each side at the edge of the pavement nearest the gutter, small wooden huts are being erected. Mere shells, built of the roughest boards—they spoil the beauty of the Boulevards. Their construction is conducted with great noise and bustle, hammering of nails, shouldering of planks, consultations with the sergent-de-ville, for it is impossible to do anything in Paris without demanding permission of an individual in a cocked-hat.

The erection of these cockle-shells on the Boulevards forms the distinctive difference of Paris at Christmas to any other season of the year. 'What,' asks the inquiring English visitor, as he hears the strife of hammers, and the din of tongues, 'can it be that the town is in a state of siege, and that the Emperor is ordering the erection of these huts for the military; or are they merely temporary accommodation until fresh barracks are built?' and he thinks with fond pride of his own Shorncliffe, Aldershott, and Colchester, and the superior strength of the timber-architecture there.

The builders of the huts—those wood masons, who are very industrious—go at their work with a savage energy for sometimes full five minutes together; then rest for a quarter of an hour or so, and contemplate the product of their toil with pride, and talk, and talk, and talk, and talk, and talk. Stimulated to fresh exertion by the flow of conversation, they renew their efforts; more nails are driven, another plank is added. Hourra! and they go to the café and order a choppe of beer, and talk to the garçon, and confer with him as to the general effect of the wood-work on the eye of the casual spectator, and say: 'Eh! Ah! Ouf! Hein!'

These little temporary shops are for the sale and exhibition of the Etrennes; and great is the excitement of the perambulating Parisian population, as indeed it would be at anything—a victory, a defeat, the erection of a new wall, the pulling down of an old house, a bonne carrying twins, or a drum-major twirling his staff. Nothing comes

amiss to inveterate sight-seers or flaneurs, from a revolution to a chiffonier.

On Christmas Eve, a yule log is burnt, as with us; and among the humbler class there is a charming and touching observance. When the children are undressed, and have presented their soft, round cheeks to papa and mamma, they place their shoes upon the hearth close to the fire: their prayers said, they once more kiss papa and mamma, and go to bed. During the night, an angel, or a Good Fairy, is presumed to come down the chimney and fill the little shoes with presents, toys, bonbons and macaroons; and sure enough, as they rise in the morning, and run to the fire-side, the tiny shoes are filled with sweetmeats. Great is the children's joy as each bonbon is brought to light; loud is their laughter, and, to foreign ears, extraordinary their proficiency in French, as the smaller ones inquire if the good things were placed there by a fairy or by an angel.

'C'était un ange,' smiles papa.

'C'était maman!' shout the little nasal treble voices.

'Mais, maman, elle est un ange,' says the biggest boy; 'n'est-ce pas, papa?'

And n'est-ce pas, everybody else? for if a mother is not the providence or good fairy of her children, who should be?

While the buche de noël is burning with proper state and ceremony, a réveillon is held, a thé is prepared, and a family party is given. Monsieur, the husband, is very amiable to his wife's relations; as is madame to her husband's—it is a Christmas party without the preliminary dinner.

Réveillons are held all over Paris, for though the aspect of the streets may contradict us, there are still students in the Quartier Latin—as, despite alterations and improvements, there is still a Quartier Latin. Eugène, Jules, Alphonse, and Hyppolite meet over a 'ponche.' They are somewhat lugubrious and dismal in their jollity, for they have recently taken to stick-up collars, and to what they suppose to be English manners, and like to preserve an unruffled surface; but at a later, or rather at an earlier hour, natural vivacity breaks through affected phlegm, and they are noisy, jolly, unreasoning, and agreeable.

They have réveillons, too, among the people, for in this variable, political climate, the humbler classes alone are styled the people. Jean-Marie clinks a cup of hot blue wine with Claude, and Jeanne-Maria compares confidences with Claudine; a considerable quantity of tobacco is consumed; hard times deplored; the continual shrug of the shoulders, and the equally continual 'Que voulez-vous?' oft spoken, more blue wine heated, and a provincial song about the smiling land that they have left 'la bas,' with a Ta-ra-la-ra-lon-ton-taine chorus, sung so noisily, and so effectively, that the black eyes of the women are gemmed with tears; and the men knit their brows, and begin to think upon their wrongs, and how hard it is to work all day for a few sous.

Those who spend the eve of Christmas out of doors, spend it on the Boulevards and in the Passages; but in Paris, though there may be a number of people, there never is a mob. In England, hardly a hundred folks can gather together without the chance of a fight. Here there is always good-humour, forbearance, and the external forms of politeness — these social virtues being all beneath the grim guard of a cocked-hatted sergent-de-ville.

The theatres are crowded on Christmas Eve, and the cafés in the neighbourhood are thronged during the Entr'actes. About half-past eleven, the salles disgorge their audiences, the cafés do a brisker business, and those wonderful beings, the garçons, move about with a more ubiquitous rapidity, 'Du café! du soda! Un grog du vin! un grog du cognac! du vin chaud! groseille! and pallal,' are sounds that meet the ear on every side. As I have spelt pallal phonetically, I may as well inform my reader that it means pale ale, or bitter beer.

It is curious to follow the crowds on Christmas Eve. They go to the

theatres, the concert-rooms, the music-halls, the guinguettes, and the dancing-rooms, and then to hear High Mass.

High Mass at midnight, on the eve of Christmas Day! The Madeleine was so crowded that numbers of people were turned back by the Suisses, and it was difficult to obtain admission at St. Roch. The interior of the church was crowded, and among the female portion of the congregation there was a refreshing absence of costume. The ladies who were seated had evidently come to hear the service, and not to exhibit their toilettes; but their attention must have been sadly disturbed by the continual stream of people, entering, as it would appear, for the sole purpose of looking round, and going out at an opposite door. These ill-mannered folks had no scruple, but pushed and elbowed their way through ranks of earnest and devout spectators. Another thing offensive to my English eyes, was that the sergents-de-ville *wore their hats.* Surely, in a church the policeman might descend to the level of the mere civilian.

But these annoyances faded from my feelings as my eye grew accustomed to the proportions of the edifice, and my ear drank in the service. And as the rich and noble music swelled to the roof, wreathed round the pillars and filled up the vast area, that man would have been indeed cold and unimpressionable who had not remembered how grand and solemn was the anniversary there celebrating.

CHRISTMAS DAY

was clear, sparkling, and not cold. I delivered my key to the concierge with my accustomed amiability, took off my hat with my usual grace, and prepared for a long walk. I struck from the Rue Neuve de Luxembourg, on to the Boulevards, and traversed the whole of that wonderful pavement. The Boulevard des Capucines, stony, white, and new, with its promise of a magnificent Jockey Club, and a new Grand Opera House, and its realization of a monster palatial hotel, with corridors divided into streets, and its postes de service stationed at intervals, where the servants send orders to the kitchens, stables, and bureaux by electric telegraph. The Boulevard des Italiens, with its old Opera House, attainable by the old Passage de l'Opéra, with its many memories of Meyerbeer, Scribe, and the infernal attempt of Orsini, the Boulevards Montmartre, Poissonière, Bonne Nouvelle, to the famous Porte St. Denis. Past the Porte St. Martin to the Boulevard St. Martin, or the new Boulevard du Prince Eugène, as far as the Barrière du Trone. Back again to the Boulevart du Temple, with its recollections of Marie Antoinette, and Sir Sidney Smith, on by the Boulevard des Filles du Calvaire, and the Boulevard Beaumarchais, where the winged figure that crests the magnificent column of the Bastille shone molten in the clear sun — down the new Boulevard Bourdon, over the Pont d'Austerlitz, by the side of the river into the Quartier Latin; then into the Faubourg St. Germain, back again over the Pont des Arts, and so into the gardens of the Tuileries—a tolerably good walk, in the course of which I met several military schools taking their promenade; the lads talking with a volubility and gesticulation perfectly national, and their masters bringing up the rear. The majority of the shops were closed; and the only sign of external festivity was a troop of boys in the gardens of the Tuileries, playing at 'La Barbe' —a sort of calm compromise between the English games of 'prisoner's-base,' and 'horney.'

Paris observes Christmas Day as it does Sunday. Many of the shops are closed; and the bonnes and the soldiers walk about with an air of rest rather than holiday. It is a Dimanche that falls in the middle of the week, et voilà tout! That it is Carnival time, you are reminded by the bills of all the places of public amusement, and by the notices, stuck against the doors of the cafés and restaurants that they will keep open all the night on the occasions of the masked ball at the Opera.

At six o'clock, as on other days, Paris turns out to dinner, and although this leaving home to dine at a restaurant may seem to be a strangely undomestic proceeding, it should not be forgotten that families dine together. Monsieur Dupont does not visit the restaurateurs alone. He takes with him Madame Dupont, and his children, Monsieur Auguste, Octave, Maximilien Dupont; and Mademoiselle Victorine, Amélie, Therese Dupont. The grandfather or grandmother of the children is often of the party, and it is very charming to watch the attention of the married Duponts to their elderly relative, their devotion to their offspring, and the admirable behaviour of these last-mentioned little individuals, their quietude of manner, and habitual deference to papa and maman. The whole affair is, in feeling and spirit, as healthily domestic as the excursion of a mechanic—when the husband carries the baby proper, the wife the baby before the last, and the eldest boy the basin tied in a handkerchief that contains the cold meat, and bread and cheese. It is a great error to suppose that Frenchmen are more regardless of home ties than men of other nations—an error which their own novelists and romancers have done their utmost to create and to foster. The prevailing notion of the relations of husband and wife in France is of a couple totally indifferent to each other—to say nothing worse—living entirely apart, and when meeting in society, treating each other with an odd sort of chilling ceremonious politeness. Nothing can be further from the fact. The littérateurs of France have found it convenient to represent the manners of only one section of society in Paris, and it is to a great extent to terrible De Balzac, cockney Paul, and others, that France owes the evil opinion held on this side of the water, of the habits and morals of their compatriots.

On re-entering my hotel, I found my friend Doctor Shaw waiting for me.

'Here you are,' said he. 'Where shall we dine?'

Now this was a question easy to answer on ordinary occasions.

'This is Christmas Day,' I said.

'Yes,' replied the doctor.

And we both looked at each other.

The fact was, that both the doctor and I wanted to dine à la Française, but we were much too English, having only known each other nine years, to mention that fact without reserve.

'Ah!' I said, 'you see—on Christmas Day——'

'One likes to have a Christmas dinner.'

'Just so. When one is in Paris——'

'One must do as London does—just so.'

There is no lack of English hotels in Paris; indeed, since the Anglomania, now prevalent in that big bonbonnière of a city, many restaurants, French as the time of 'Malbrook,' have broken out with 'British Tavern,' in large gold capitals; and, notwithstanding railways, exhibitions, and the *entente cordiale* produced by the Crimean wars, there still exists a strange misapprehension as to the appetites of the brave eccentric English. Foremost among these superstitions is the notion, that to a man we doat on mock-turtle soup. Numerous are the placards which inform the travelling Briton that 'Mock-turtle' is always ready. Offer your English mock-turtle and you secure him, think the traiteurs. It is the only soup produced by his brave but benighted chief of the kitchen!

Shaw and I dined and drank after the manner of our forefathers, and I trust the indigestion and headache which we suffered next day were convincing proofs of our patriotism.

After dinner, as we sat puffing our cigars at the open window that looked on to the brilliant street, he said to me—

'You know that English family that came to our hotel last week?'

'Yes.'

'Their servant girl is laid up in bed with rheumatism, ha! ha!'

'Not being a medical man, I don't exactly see the joke,' I said.

'Not one of them speaks a word of French,' continued Shaw.

'I know.'

'And they've had a French doctor to the girl;' and Shaw laughed again.

'Well.'

'The French doctor can't speak a word of English, and so physician and patient confer in signs. He doesn't understand the girl's symptoms, and he is bungling the case completely.'

'I really am at a loss to——'

'Wait a bit. You know Thomasine, the landlord's daughter, who says she can speak English, and can't. Well, she interprets for them. She only knows one phrase, which she told me she learnt in London, when she was there for the Exhibition; it is a question which she asks the patient every time she goes into the room. Can you guess what it is?'

'No.'

'I can't help laughing; it is so very applicable to a rheumatic case. Thomasine is always saying to her, "How's your poor feet?"'

We sat and smoked and drank, and drank and smoked, till we got up the proper Christmas post-prandial feeling; and went home to the smiling concierge, as every man should on Christmas night especially, at peace with ourselves and with goodwill to all men.

CHRISTMAS AT THE THEATRES.

English folk have their pantomimes, Parisians their revues. Of late years this species of entertainment has languished. As has been well pointed out in 'Figaro,' the revue is no longer a comic summary of the events of the year; dramatic writers are not permitted to make capital of political events. It is no longer possible to allude to a commercial panic by a dirge called 'La Morte de Commerce,' and a funeral procession of all the trades of Paris. The revue is now simply and purely theatrical; and the various dramatic events of the year are burlesqued, imitations of popular actors given, some well-arranged ballets danced, pungent parodies sung; and nothing more. Widely different was it when there was no dramatic censorship in the days of the famous La Propriété c'est le Vol and La Foire aux Idées.

While the popularity of pantomimes with us would seem to increase every year, the taste for revues has so much declined that few theatres now attempt them.

At the Palais Royal, 'Les Perruques' was so heartily disapproved of that in a few nights it was withdrawn. The doctor and I went to see it, and certainly such a farrago of unamusing absurdity was never witnessed. The only revue which stood its ground, with the exception of one played at a theatre we did not visit, was 'Eh! Allez donc Turlurette!' at the Variétés, and after the first act that was very poor. The Prologue or Introduction took place at the house of a literary *lionne*, where a number of guests are invited to hear the *lionne* herself read her own tragedy. The veteran Arnal sang and acted with his usual charm; and Dupuis, one of the best eccentric actors on the French stage, appeared as the meek, subdued husband of the brilliant blue-stocking. The company is seated, and the reading is begun: the husband's rapture is so great that he expresses it in the same manner as Mr. Pickwick his admiration at the leaders in the 'Eatanswill Gazette,' on the buff job of appointing a new keeper to the toll-gate—his eyes close with intense appreciation, the guests depart one by one; the unconscious authoress rolling forth her periods with such abstracted gusto that she is unaware of the defection of her audience. Arnal makes good his retreat by crying 'Charmant' as he retires; and finally the lady is left declaiming to one solitary auditor—her unconscious husband. The curtain falls on her as she continues to pour forth tragic verse; and the sleeping Dupuis is left close to the footlights, from which he is soon hidden by a property cloud, which bears upon its anything but undulating surface the words, 'C'est une reve!'

The first act reproduced a piece called 'La Reine de Crinoline,' and at the same time carried out the *lionne* idea of feminine domination and masculine submission. The ladies are the ruling and moving powers in the state. Ladies are

lawyers, ladies are soldiers, sailors, and drum-majors. A corps of awkward female conscripts, are drilled by a lady-serjeant, who gives an admirable imitation of the military brusquerie of a vielle moustache. The queen has left her court to fight her country's foes. The king, personated by Dupuis, remaining behind to weep and mourn her absence. Amid a grand flourish of drums and trumpets, the female warriors return; and the king, who has reason to fear his dread queen and master's presence, is agitated and confused. 'Loveliest, you are pale!' exclaims the anxious queen. ''Tis—'tis nothing; a passing indisposition—not more.' Then contemptuously remarks an old soldier, full sixteen years of age, with saucy eyes and a brilliant complexion, 'Les hommes, ils sont toujours pâle!' and so the scene proceeds. The rest of the revue was purely theatrical—the second act treating of the removal of the theatres, from the Boulevards to the Place du Châtelet; the spectres of successful melodramas holding a midnight meeting, and talking greater rubbish than could be supposed to be uttered by even melodramatic ghosts. In the third act the characters of the famous Rothomago are found fishing on the river in their dramatic costume, and when asked by their irate director the reason of their conduct, they reply that it was his orders that they should all meet in costume sur la scène (sur la Seine)—as bad a pun, perhaps, as was ever perpetrated. The piece concluded with some imitations of the most popular actors, Lafont, Lesueur, Landrol, Melingue, Brindeau, Bouffé, Chilly, Arnal, Dupuis, and others; and the curtain fell on a fairy scene with a fountain of real water; a number of the corps de ballet, dressed as Pompiers, supplying the fountain with fire buckets. Sad silliness, sham fun, and make-believe wit, utterly unworthy of French writers and French actors.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.

Of all days in the year, Parisians think most of New Year's Day—possibly because it is new. L'an est mort. Vive l'an!

This first day is essentially a day of costume—a day for brilliant bonnets, glossy hats, varnished boots, perfume and cosmetique. Dressed, brushed, oiled, waxed, and gloved, Monsieur first pays his service to the Emperor. The approach to the Tuileries is a great sight, and philosophical must be that civilian who does not feel himself utterly crushed and humiliated by the neighbourhood of the gorgeous uniforms around him. The white stone buildings of the Rue de Rivoli form the background for a military tailor's Paradise. And how happy are the militaires inside the uniforms. How they feel that they are the show, that the world is looking at them, and that the occasion is their own. How complacently they sport their medals, and what a quantity they carry of those certificates of valour. The corpulent old gentleman in a cocked hat, now waddling across the road, carries an enormous weight of metal. First there is his gorget—that queer bit of brass that reminds one of the labels round the necks of bottles, still found in some old country houses, on which the word port or sherry is engraved. Then there is his sword, which is pendent from a wonderful complication of straps and buckles; and as for medals, the man must have fought victoriously in every battle since Pharsalia. Yet he is modest, though he wears large scarlet trousers, and sucks a bad cigar with the *bonhomie* of a bourgeois.

A French soldier is happier in scarlet trousers than in those of any other colour. In black, blue, green, or grey, he may exist; in scarlet he lives.

More costumes tramp and glitter by; soldiers, soldiers and soldiers; then, for variety, some officers of the Marine; soldiers again. Russians, haughty, elegant, and furred; magnificent Circassians, men whose bearing indicates their habit of looking down upon the world from mountain tops; and more cocked hats, swords, and scarlet trousers. Look on, Parisians, and admire, for

your army deserves it at your eyes. It is for this they stormed Alma, fought Inkermann, flooded Solferino, and pocketed Pekin. Vive la France! Vive le Tricolor, and Vive la Gloire!

www.libtool.com.cn

On ordinary days only so many beggars are allowed to solicit alms, and they hold a permission from the police. On New Year's Day there is free trade in mendicancy, and at every tenth step you hear a beggar; but they are never obstinately importunate as English beggars are. Many of them bring out an old organ, that can sound only six notes, and turn the handle as they chant a dismal song, and the sight is touching to the stranger—the resident, who knows that these useful properties are safely stored, to be brought out once a year, is not moved by the sight. They are a singular race, the beggars of Paris, and would make an interesting study. One girl, of about twelve years of age, asked alms of me in French, English, German, and Italian. I discovered that in the last three languages she could only ask alms, that she had a quick eye for a foreign face, and seldom begged of her compatriots.

Among the huts that dot the Boulevards, there is the usual crowd hustling each other with undisturbable good humour. There are toys to more than realize the maddest fancies of imaginative childhood. Cigarres à la musique, serpents à la musique, and some wonderful little figures, three inches high, that 'dance themselves,' if placed on a piano, play the instrument, or thrum upon a table; and they derive a motive power from the mere vibration. There is a toy in which the figures are boxing, and the more you shake them the harder they box. There are rabbits affected by every feeling and motion of which humanity is capable. Rabbits making love, rabbits jealous, rabbits billing and cooing in honeymoon bliss, rabbits getting very tipsy, rabbits quarrelling, rabbits fighting duels, and rabbits borne away killed and wounded after a mortal encounter. Not only are rabbits depicted suffering all the inconveniences of an artificial civilisation, but frogs are also shown loving, fighting, drinking, dying, and the rest.

Human nature is mimicked everywhere with a strangely weird and terrible fidelity. The dolls are wonderful. Dolls dressed à la Pompadour, with blue satin hoods and spectacles, and an expression of face that says plainly, 'I am a doll-grandmother.' Dolls seated on thrones, a 'gorgeous canopy' above their heads, and a mien of perfect majesty upon their waxen brows. Then there are dolls in uneasy circumstances—dolls that, to use the term by which the French politely imply poverty, 'are not happy.' There is a brilliantly-complexioned young fellow in a blouse—a he-doll of the people—asking a young woman of the people, in a head-dress like an exaggerated extinguisher or ornamented fool's-cap, to dance with him. From the limpid look of her eyes we know that she will answer 'Oui,' and smile and curtsy graciously. Close by is a Breton doll, a sturdy fellow, with a rough outside but a warm heart within, his musette in his hand. The group was so perfect that I turned away, or I should have doubtless heard the Breton strike up the *zing-zing* of the musette, and seen the young couple foot it to the music, as only French folks, intoxicated with sugared water and gooseberry syrup, can foot it.

How happy must these dolls make their fortunate possessors, and how happy must be the little darling whose grandpapa, that worthy old bourgeois, has just presented her with a New-Year's gift!

The tastes of children are alike all over the world. Girls love something to pet, love, and fondle, comb, wash, above all, dress, and—crowning glory and power of motherhood—put to bed. Boys prefer an article with which they can do mischief—a sword, a gun, or a cannon—they like destruction—anything that smokes or smells like gunpowder. As a young friend of mine observed upon a 5th of November, 'If fireworks are so nice, what must a battle be?'

Le jour de l'an! Glorious sound

to the million round-faced, black-eyed little children of France. Glorious day when they receive a compliment from papa and mamma. Bounteous day of distribution from Christmas trees; when there is affectionate contention and loving struggles as to who shall first rush into the chamber of papa and mamma to greet them with the first word, the first kiss, and the first embrace. Happy anniversary for all, rich, poor, high and low, from the well-bred child, secluded from the world in the Faubourg St. Germain, to the shoeless gamin who starts at the glimpse of a cocked-hat in the distance! Day when the domestic affections, dimmed and blurred by constant contact with a hard material world, are rekindled and reanimated by the sight of joyous little faces that unite the expression of those whom inclination, fate, and faith, have united irrevocably. Day that to monsieur and madame brings back the memory of the brilliant blush of their happy honeymoon; of those strongly-knit home ties flashed from the eyes of loving, lovely children, intoned in the sound of their sweet voices, and mellowed in their merry and innocent caresses. Bearded husband, strong-limbed and determined; elegant wife, sprightly, naïve, and charming; brown-faced bonne from Alsace, with ruddy cheeks and comfortable cap, cheery bonne, who carries the baby; little monsieur and smaller mademoiselle, leaping and frisking with delight—all are made happy as that central sun of the domestic universe, mamma, distributes to her darlings the gifts of the New Year. People of France, warlike, volatile, and gifted, what haughty and supercilious stranger, basking in the sight of your snug homes on the first day of the year, could deny that you are an affectionate, domestic, and home-loving people?

T. W. R.

CHRISTMAS IN THE COLONIES.

'Through varied climes, o'er many a plain and steep,
Doth England's vast colonial empire sweep;
See Canada, which Boreal blasts assail;
Ceylon oft parched with Equinoctial gale;
Forests, and gold, and corn, Columbia's pride,
While tea-plants clothe the Assam mountain's side.
The straits where Singapore the trade divides
Between two worlds, and queens it o'er the tides
Of Indian and Pacific Oceans vast;
The boundless scenes of many a triumph past;
And where the Austral heats rich fruits beget;—
A diverse realm whereon the sun doth never set.'

DR. JOHNSON defines the word colony as 'a body of people drawn from the mother-country to inhabit some distant place'—a very short definition, and not one which is absolutely exhaustive. The French Protestants, for instance, who settled in the United Provinces and in Spitalfields, come exactly under this definition of a colony, and yet were not, in fact, colonies. The true and full meaning is—a body of men who go to some outlying possession previously taken by the mother-country by discovery or conquest, and in modern times fostered and governed until sufficiently grown to establish a kind of local government, subject to the imperial government and under its protectorate.

The colonies of Greece usually formed, at each exodus, a new state, in most respects independent of the parent one, and subject entirely to local and separate government, but still keeping up the friendly relations which descent, language, and customs would continue. Perhaps the relations kept up on a national scale between the daughter state, and that from which it sprung, might find somewhat of analogy or illustration in the connection, exemplified individually and socially, which subsisted between patron and client in the palmiest days of ancient Rome.

For a Greek colony to make war upon its parent state was accounted a sort of parricide, or rather matricide. Hellas was wherever Greeks were, just as to-day England is wherever waves its flag. Thus was Asia Minor, and thus were Sicily and Magna Græcia colonised.

As in ancient times, no people colonised so widely, so substantially, and so systematically as the Romans, so, in modern times, no nation has colonised so extensively as our own. Other European nations have a long list of colonies; but they are, for the most part, small in territorial extent, only that of late years France has conquered and colonised Algeria, and is now in process of subduing a part of Cochin China and the peninsula of Malacca. The subjects and colonists of that empire on which the sun never sets must naturally enough pass that festival which we have just celebrated, under every variety of circumstance which difference of latitude or longitude, and therefore difference of climate and products, necessitates.

We hail Christmas, or used to do—for an old-fashioned Christmas is now rare—beneath a pale-blue sky, and a crisp and dry and frosty air; the green foliage of the summer trees lost, it is true, but abundantly supplied by the hoary fancies of Jack Frost; the bells of the neighbouring church pealing out in jovial tones, and announcing, in almost articulate voice, 'Peace on earth and good will towards men.' It is a misfortune that the first instalment of their song appears far from being realized; but in England, and with Englishmen, in all parts of the world, there is no mistake about the second.

There are somewhere about thirty-two colonies of England on the surface of the globe, and therefore our readers will pardon us for relieving their anxiety at the outset by saying that we do not propose to describe

so many different Christmas dinners, but merely two or three, with a short description of their surroundings.

Tasmania, an island nearly as large as Ireland, situated southward from Australia, possesses, according to some persons well qualified to speak of it, one of the finest climates in the world. It has a winter not more severe than that of the south of France, a summer not hotter than that of London, and not so close and dusty; a spring equalling that of Montpelier, and an autumn like that of the south and west of England. The temperature is not marked by extremes of heat or cold; it is free from marsh miasmata, neither remittent nor intermittent fevers occur; the cool nights of the summer prevent the heat of the day from being relaxing, and the cold of winter is not such as to prevent agricultural and outdoor operations being carried on. Here are, throughout the colony, homes marked with all the characteristics of an English house. The small, thatched, hut-like house, built of slabs, and covered to the roof-tree with geraniums. The dairy farm-house, with its vines and trained flowers; the sunlight streaming through the leaves of English forest-trees, planted with a careful hand all round the house, to remind the settler, in the land of his adoption, of his old home sixteen thousand miles away; and the handsome and solid stone-built mansions, overshadowed by the oaks of Old England, with their wide domains of cultivated paddocks and green pastures, their hedgerows of hawthorn and sweet-briar, or in some cases of fuchsias six feet high; their orchards of tall pear-trees and apples; their haystacks, corn-ricks, barns, wool-sheds, and outhouses larger than the mansions themselves.

Every house has its garden, in which the flowers most carefully tended are those of home—the simple flowers of our childhood, primroses and cowslips, pansies and daisies; while the sweet little violet blooms under hedges of ever-flowering geraniums ten feet high. We quote a short and lively account of a Christmas here from the pen of a forty years' resident:—'The English reader must picture to himself a Christmas Day passed amidst the scenes of summer; a population turning out on New Year's Day to play at cricket, or to make pleasure excursions on the water; and an exhibition of fruits and flowers in December. We are the antipodes of home: the 21st of December is the longest day; the thermometer frequently stands, at Christmas, at 70° in the parlour. Now the citizen chooses the shady side of the street, or indoors throws up the window and lets down the blind. Beyond the precincts of town, the country is one vast expanse of verdure: the tall corn waving in the gentle summer breeze, while haymaking is going on, or some early crop courts, by its yellow tints, the sickle of the reaper. In the garden one is pleased with flowers of every hue, and tempted by luscious fruit. The farmer flings himself on his back on the lawn, and with merry child-faces around him, eats strawberries and cream to a delicious extent. In our evergreen forests, the cattle begin to seek the shelter of the trees, under whose grateful shade, in some cool brook, the boys are wont to bathe. Parroquets, in green and gold, flash past with their brilliant colours; the birds are merrily singing, and the locust makes his summer life one ceaseless song. No fire can be borne save in the kitchen; doors and windows are thrown open; flowers and evergreens grace the dining-rooms for lack of the traditional holly; but the roast beef and plum pudding of Old England retain their place of honour on the festive board. At that board the colonist, mindful of the custom of fatherland, unites his family, and after service in the neighbouring church, entertains his friends with grace and no stinted hospitality. And if Christmas does not come to him with the old associations of his youth—with its wind in gusts howling through leafless trees or fast-falling snow; if scene and clime and season invest the festival with a different aspect to that familiar to the Englishman at home, he is not the less happy; nor is he saddened

by the reflection that his neighbour is too poor to enjoy with him the good things of the season, with its holiday and feasting; for it is Christmas to every man, woman, and child in Tasmania, and there are none so poor that they cannot have in abundance the immemorial fare; and on all sides is heard the old English greeting, "A merry Christmas and a happy New Year." As the daughters of the Pharaohs, who in the marble palaces and gilded halls of their foreign husbands sighed for a draught of the waters of the sacred Nile, so do the daughters of Tasmania, under the burning suns of India, though they possess all the rich fruits and gorgeous flowers of the tropics, and live in palaces, yet sigh for the delicious climate of their own loved home, and prefer the scent of the simple mimosa to the most noble rhododendron of the Sikkim Himalaya.'

The Australian colonies generally have, if not quite, very nearly the advantages of Tasmania. Here, also, nature is prodigal of her gifts, the forests abounding in beautiful trees, and thronged with birds of the gayest plumage — the Australian mocking-bird, called by the colonists the laughing jackass, is a species of woodpecker. The following curious account is given of its vocal performances. His chant, frequently kept up for a lengthened period, is the most laughter-provoking of sounds. It is, indeed, impossible to hear with a grave face the jocularities of this feathered jester. He commences with a low, cackling sound, gradually growing louder, like a hen in a fuss. Then suddenly changing his note, he so closely imitates Punch's trumpet, that you would almost swear that it was the jolly 'roo-too-too' of that old favourite that you heard. Next comes the prolonged bray of an ass, followed by an almost articulate exclamation, which might very well be translated, 'Oh! what a guy!' and the whole winds up with a suppressed chuckle, ending with an uproarious burst of laughter, which is joined in by a dozen others hitherto silent.

A writer on the Australian colonies would give us an extraordinary idea of the size of men there, for describing the emu, a bird very like an ostrich, he says:—'This bird often stands *nearly* as high as a man, varying from *five* to *seven* feet.' The emu, however, in its great and increasing rarity, is fast becoming 'simillima nigroque cygno.'

These adjuncts following, do not, however, promise any increase of comfort to the Australian settler. Snakes and lizards are numerous, and the deaf adder, a disgusting and dangerous creature, guanas, a kind of lizard four feet in length. Frogs are numerous, and sometimes intrude into the settler's dwelling. Scorpions, centipedes, and other smaller members of the reptile tribe, are also sufficiently, and more than sufficiently, numerous. Snakes, especially, appear to exist in inconceivable variety, for there are snakes of the following variety of name—black, brown, diamond, ringed, hazel, whip, and many others. The black snake, when broiled on the fire, has the very good gastronomic quality of becoming white as an eel and tender as a chicken.

These are the reptile torments, but the insects are really the greatest nuisance, on account of their more constant presence, and the greater difficulty of guarding against them. A colonist says: 'The mosquitoes and flies constitute, during six months of the year, an intolerable nuisance: these detestable items of entomology are a perfect torment to the settler, leaving him no peace, either by day or night; the mosquitoes ruthlessly exact their tribute of blood from beneath his irritated and tortured skin. Fortunately, it is chiefly to new comers that the bite of the mosquito is extremely annoying, and it does not often produce any swelling on those who have become by long residence habituated to it. Then there are "lion-ants"—ugly, venomous, black creatures, the sting of which is as severe as that of a wasp; wood-ticks, that burrow under the skin—and other abominations. Towards the North, in the neighbourhood of Cape York, there are ant-hills of an enormous size, sometimes twelve feet in height. The ants are of a pale-

brown colour, and a quarter of an inch long. These, however, must bide their time, for they have no white settlers to provoke at present.'

The common flies are a more general nuisance, settling so thickly and pertinaciously on every article of food, as to make it almost impossible to avoid swallowing some during the progress of every meal. One small matter on the other side is, that the native bees do not sting, and produce very fine honey and wax.

However, the climes of the sunny south do not contain more than their share of English colonies; for where in the wide world exists any considerable extent of country that bears not Englishmen; and what sea or port where does not wave

> 'The flag that's braved a thousand years
> The battle and the breeze?'

That Christmas in the colonies may be anything but merry, let us see how a poor unsuccessful emigrant spent Christmas Day some years ago in the remote wilds of Canada. Here, though the summer months are hot, the winter is perfectly Russian. The rivers are frozen over, or blocked with ice for six months of the year. About Christmas the atmosphere is dry and exhilarating, and soon after come great falls of snow; then the smooth-gliding sleighs make their appearance, drawn by horses, to whose harness bells are attached, that jingle merrily as they trot over the frozen surface of the roads. All work, of course, is at a standstill, and nothing attended to but visiting, sleighing, and enjoyment among the well-to-do classes.

Amidst the festivities and jollity of a Canadian Christmas, however, one poor emigrant at least had a sorry time of it. He had been unsuccessful, and his stock of money and provisions exhausted, hoping against hope for work, but in vain; and, to crown all, Christmas came, but no work. In the words of the poor man himself, 'This was the climax. I counted the contents of our scanty purse, and small, indeed, was the sum that remained. My resolution was taken. I bought a load of firewood, split it, and piled it indoors, that my children might not have to go out to fetch it, and carefully stopped all the chinks and openings in the walls and floor to exclude the cold. I then laid in a small store of salt pork and potatoes, and with a wallet on my shoulder, and one dollar in my pocket, started before daylight on the morning of Christmas Day, after a sorrowful leave-taking, to walk over the hills eighty miles to the nearest city, where I hoped to meet with some occupation by which I might be able to support my wife and family till the genial spring returned. As I closed the outer door of the house, I seemed to lose half the courage that had hitherto animated me. The morning was dark and starless; heavy clouds obscured the sky; the sullen roar of the ice, drifted up and down by the tide in the neighbouring river, was wafted drearily to my ears: everything seemed to be in accordance with the depression of my feelings; and after walking about an hour, my reflections became so painful that I turned round to retrace my steps. The feeling, however, was but temporary. "Go ahead!" came to my mind; I fancied, like Curran, that my little boys were pulling in the opposite direction, and I once more turned my face to the East. To add to my discomfort, with the appearance of daylight it began to rain, at first slightly, then heavily, and at last settled into a downright pour. After walking thirty miles, I felt so jaded, from the constant soaking and bad condition of the roads, that I was glad to stop at a tavern, which opportunely appeared at nightfall, but where little denoted Christmas save the blazing logs, of which there was no stint, and by which I gladly recovered from the soaking and cold I had suffered. Certainly to me this Christmas was no merry one, nor were the prospects of a happy new year very bright.'

Our good neighbours, the French, do not call us 'les perfides Anglais' for the first time in the last century or two; but we shall hardly expect to learn this fact from a Frenchman of

the time when Agincourt was just fought, and Crecy no very remote tradition. 'It may be said of the English, neither in war are they brave, nor in peace are they faithful; and as the Spaniards say, "England is a good land with a bad people."' Again he says: 'The people are proud and seditious, with bad consciences, and are faithless to their word, as experience has taught. These villains hate all sorts of foreigners; and although they have a good land and a good country, they are all constantly wicked, and moved by every wind, for they will now love a prince; turn your head, they will wish him killed and crucified. The people of this nation mortally hate the French, as their old enemies, and always call us France chenesve (French knave), France dogue, and so on.'

Again: 'In this country you will not meet with any great nobles whose relations have not had their heads cut off. Certes, I should like better to be a swineherd, and preserve my head: for this affliction falls furiously upon the heads of the great nobles.'

But what can be expected of people who call our national dish rosbif, and 'prefer 'marsh chickens' to the most tender delicacy?

At the risk of cavil I choose to call, for the purposes of this paper, the English community in Paris, a colony—I have seen it so called by other people, and it suits me now.

There are two immortal plum-puddings celebrated in the annals of the English colony at Paris; and I am only sorry that I cannot just now unkennel the records where their memory is preserved, but must trust to a somewhat treacherous memory. An English colonist in Paris, determined to have an English plum-pudding for his Christmas dinner, gave his French cook the most elaborate directions as to the composition and preparation of the delicious compound, according to the dictates of Mrs. Glasse. Having thus insured the proper preparation of the pudding, he left it to his cook, with instructions for it to be well boiled, which my fair readers who are versed in the coquinary art know to be most essential.

The expatriated Englishman looked forward with considerable pleasure to his pudding, and under such circumstances almost considered the rosbif, and especially French rosbif, a bore. Looking longingly for the introduction of the anxiously-waited-for luxury, he beheld his chef de cuisine, anxious for his credit, bearing the pudding himself—in a soup tureen! The vexatious truth instantly flashed upon our countryman, that although he had taken every precaution to insure the proper mixing and manipulation of the pudding, he had forgotten the mention of the pudding-bag. And so it came about that an English plum-pudding became French soup; and though by no means soup-maigre, I do not suppose it was eaten with any relish, if at all—which latter hypothesis I take to be the most probable.

There is another pudding whose history is preserved in the traditions of the English colony at Paris. Briefly, for our subject is voluminous and our space scanty, the contriver of the second pudding, with the experience of the former failure in his memory, not only superintended the manipulation of the pudding, but, putting aside his dignity for the occasion, tied it in a bag himself. Knowing the necessity, well known also to our fair caterers, of leaving room for the expansion of the unctuous contents of the pudding-bag, he tied it loosely, and left it to the care of his cook to boil.

When this second Parisian colonial plum-pudding came to table, it made its appearance in the shape of a great bullet or shot, harder than lead, and altogether like a stone. The contriver of the pudding demanded an explanation, and was informed that the cook, finding the bag tied so loosely, had taken the responsibility of tying it tighter; and so again, the most anxious precautions of an Englishman to secure an English plum-pudding for his dinner at a Parisian Christmas were disappointed.

From a paper in a Cape Town journal I extract a very graphic description of the anticipations of Christmas in Cape Colony, which,

with one or two elisions, I give in the appropriate sentences of the writer: it is from the column usually devoted to the gossip of the colony, and therefore called 'Town Talk.'

'Christmas Eve! which being the case, and as all men *say* that honesty is the best policy, I think I had better make a clean breast of it at starting, and confess that I don't mean to write anything at all to-day, except Christmas talk. In the English "Prayer Book" you occasionally see the heading, "*For the Epistle*" instead of "*The Epistle*," as usual; in the same way let the reader suppose the title of this column to be "For Town Talk" in place of "Town Talk." And then, when he has read thus far, he can, if he so please, skip all the rest. If, however, he is a good, genial sort of man, he won't do anything of the sort, but read it right through, by way of impressing upon his mind that it is Christmas: for unless one is a very old stager here, or has the honour of being colonial-born, it is not quite so easy to realize the presence of Christmas. The old gentleman comes amongst us here in a garb so very different from that in which you and I used to hail him in the olden time, that sometimes he does not seem like the same individual. Church folks, I suppose, would not hear of an Act of Parliament, "For the transfer of that holiday commonly called Christmas Day to the coldest part of the winter season." I don't know why they should not, though; Church authorities have done such things before now. There have been endless quarrels about the proper time of keeping Easter—in fact, I am not quite sure that the Greeks and Romans have come to the settlement of the question yet. And then, you will remember, also, that it is written in history how a notice was once affixed to a Devonshire church-door, "There'll be no Sunday here next Sunday, 'cause measter's gwaun tu Dawlish to preach."* *Ergo*, if Sundays have been known that were Easter Sundays in some parts and not Easter Sundays in other parts, two or three hundred miles away; and if there really could be 'no Sunday next Sunday,' why could not Christmas Day be transferred to the winter time? I am sure if Christmas had fallen a few months back, in that cold weather when the snow was on Table Mountain, we could have clustered round the fire in right earnest, punished the roast beef and plum-pudding in prime style, and done the port wine and walnuts afterwards gloriously. To-morrow I hope we shall do our best to behave like true Britons and loyal subjects of her Most Gracious Majesty. If it is not possible to eat as respectable a dinner with the thermometer at eighty as at thirty, it is possible to be jolly and good-tempered, and, what is still better, kind-hearted and considerate to all about us—as, indeed, we ought to be every day.'

People with the newest, most improved, and enlightened ideas have got hold of the notion that Christmas-boxes and revelry, and all that sort of thing, are by no means sage. Your servant sells you his labour, they say, and you buy it; why should he want Christmas-boxes any more than the man who sells you so many yards of cloth or calico? Now I venture to think that the good-natured reader who has read thus far will see the weakness of this style of argument. As a very jolly friend of mine, rolling along under sixteen stone weight of rotundity, or thereabouts, but a very shrewd and a very successful man withal, used to say, 'You must grease the wheels sometimes;' and in your mind's eye don't you see that old woodcut in 'Æsop's Fables' of the unbent bow lying on the ground?

But there is a motive for keeping Christmas which is far more beautiful and altogether excellent than greasing of wheels and unbending of bows, and that is, the godlike

* In a village which I knew well, the parson, as was common years ago, had to perform the duties at two distant churches; and to provide for this, the announcement was made by the clerk in the following terms:—'Notice is hereby given, that our parson will preach here and at St. Edmund's each Sunday to all eternity.' He meant to say 'alternately.'

feeling of benevolence, the genuine, earnest desire to make others happy, without the shadow of a thought of any benefit to be derived by oneself. That is the sort of feeling to keep Christmas with; and let the thermometer stand at what degree it will, the man who is actuated by it will be sure to have a merry time of it. *He* won't be afflicted with abstract mental calculations about Christmas-boxes; no sense of dignity and self-respect will withhold him from joining in the merry dance and song, even though his voice be none of the sweetest, nor his movements of the most graceful. If you look at it rightly, a certain degree of *abandon* at Christmas-time, springing from pure benevolence, is highly respectable, and a dance, 'join hands, up the middle and down again,' a most praiseworthy occupation. And suppose you admit that it is all vanity of vanity, yet out of such vanity comes recreation in the truest etymological meaning of the word; a forgetting of past vexations and quarrels, and a girding up of oneself with the voluntary obliteration of past trials, to the fresh battle which we all have to wage, year by year, with life.

In almost all the colonies there are Church establishments; and the religious celebrations peculiar to that especially interesting season of the Church are, of course, carried out with all the zeal which characterizes the season in England.

There must be, however, a very appreciable difference in the manner physically of celebrating our greatest and pleasantest anniversary. We have seen something of these differences as they occur in Canada, Australasia, and Africa. India falls out of our subject, for it is not a colony. Ceylon, I believe, in distinction to the peninsula, is a colony, and here the colonists, principally nutmeg and coffee planters, spend their Christmas at a time of year when the fervid tropical heat is somewhat lessened by the declination of the sun to the south, though the temperature is even then of a kind to astonish the new colonists for a year or two. Ceylon has, however, the advantage of possessing an alternative climate; and the mountain ranges of the interior, not being so inaccessible or so distant as the Himalayas in India, most of the planters, at least, can contrive to spend the very hottest seasons, at such an elevation as materially to alleviate the fervid tropical heat.

Of the colonies in Europe, we know, to our cost, Gibraltar and Malta, which figure for so much in the expenditure of the year. Few people, however, know anything of the little colony of Heligoland; and possibly to many the lines following will reveal, for the first time, the true etymology of the name, and the meaning of its flag, which is tricolour:—

'Green is the land,
Red is the cliff,
White is the sand:
These are the colours of the Holy Land.'

Well! these colonies of ours are delicious places in many respects; but though climate, and luscious fruits and large sense of freedom, and plenty to be had in return for little labour, are recommendations, yet they have their drawbacks: for myself, nothing would compensate me for the attacks of mosquitoes, cockroaches, vampires, rats, ants, and other obnoxious insects, more or less the bane of most of our tropical colonies; and as to weather, I am inclined to be of the opinion of our merry monarch, Charles II., who thought that of all countries in the world, England had the happiest climate, since in it one could be out of doors more days, and more hours of the day, than in any other country under the sun.

While, then, I am glad that those of my countrymen, who, either by choice or through the imperative calls of business or professional life, can enjoy the good old Christmas festivities, under every variety of climate, and under every diversity of circumstance, I must congratulate myself and my home readers on the fact that we can celebrate this great annual festival at home in Merry England. Where the salutation is

'God save you, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Christ our Lord in Bethlehem
Was born this happy day.'

NEW YEAR'S EVE.

ART going, Old Year, with no promise fulfilled?
Why desert me so soon, with no sweetness distilled
From thy fair summer roses?
I stand at the brink of the streams as they meet,
The streams called the years, and a new era greet
As the old era closes.

O hurry not on! thoughts are crowding so fast;
Give me time—give me breath—I must call back the past,
Old Year, ere thou diest;
Some bright hopes recall, and some sorrows forget;
So much thou hast brought, I've not done with thee yet,
Too quickly thou fliest.

Hark! the bells have begun! 'tis thy death knell, Old Year;
I grieve for thy parting—and enter with fear
The year that is dawning:
The wind moans and wails like the saddest farewells
Of many sad hearts—but the inconstant bells
E'en now welcome the morning.

What bring'st thou, New Year? dare I look in thy face,
And question thee boldly, and bid thy hand trace
The pathway before me?
Ah! no, my heart faileth, and silence is best:
I ask not for knowledge, but *only to rest*—
God's mercy is o'er me.

Oh! friends, I pray for ye! the wayworn and old,
And the youthful to whom life is shining like gold,
And love seems a glory;
For the hearts rich in ventures by land and by sea,
Lest the storm winds should rise,—O! I tremble for ye,
And the dangers before ye.

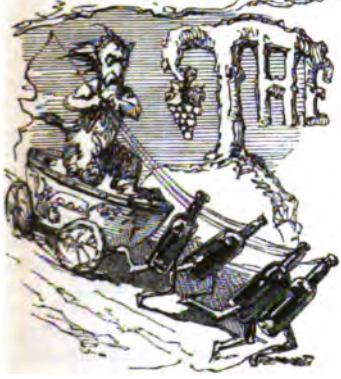
And I pray for the hearts with *few* ventures at stake,
Who lose all or win,—whom no shoutings will wake,
Till *one* voice hath spoken;
Then faint though the whisper, they answer and rise,
And follow and follow with blindfolded eyes—
Must the Idol be broken?

Now the bells are all silent, the Old Year is gone;
Quite away in the darkness the New cometh on,
With a quiet step and pressing;
And we pray through the days to be guided aright,
And we smile at our fears, for our clouds turn to light,
Illumed with God's blessing.

M. DE LYS.

CHRISTMAS WITH GRAMPUS.

www.libtool.com.cn



WINGS of Mnemosyne bear me to the county town of P——. The Goddess of Memory sets me down at the age of ten before an old-fashioned, red-brick mansion, guarded by curiously-wrought iron gates, in which the initial letters of my name are cunningly introduced and twisted round with divers flourishes. Two venerable link-extinguishers which, to my infantile mind, seemed poor relations of my grandmother's ear trumpet, adorn the portal. The keystone of the arched doorway is carved into the likeness of a jovial satyr, whose portrait alternating with that of a serious nymph, is repeated all along the street. The bust of an amiable panther with a ring in its mouth, constitutes the knocker, which has been no sooner raised with a gentle rat tat, than Peter opens the door. Peter is a diffident youth, in mulberry-coloured smalls, rather groggy—to use a modern phrase—upon his pins, and with a decided tendency to falter in his speech—the result of a long and continued series of blowings-up from his master, my uncle, of whom he stood in chronic terror. Then follows a pattering of tiny, snow-besprinkled feet upon the hall floor, a throwing off of cloaks, tippets, turn-overs, pelisses, clogs (observe the antiquated character of these now-discarded garments) by my sisters; then a triumphant entry of my great-aunt Tabitha, borne by two purple-nosed gentlemen in a sedan-chair (like a female sentry-box off duty), and now we are all inside the house.

A queer old house it was to be sure, with high wainscot panels running along the walls, elaborate plaster cornices running round the ceilings, and sturdy old twisted oaken banisters running up the stairs. The windows were deeply recessed in massive walls—you could lean upon the heavy sash-bars without breaking them; the small side-panes were filled with yellow glass, through which you seemed to look upon perpetual sunshine in the garden behind the house, though the day was never so gloomy. Seen through this cheerful medium, the very snow flakes fell like showers of gold in Danaë's lap (there was a picture of that mysterious subject over a sideboard in the dining-room, which I often looked at in childish wonder), and when Peter stepped across to the coach-house beyond, his complexion assumed a beautiful gamboge tint. The dead, dank leaves

which lay about the grass were transformed into golden fragments; the gravel paths became a mass of sparkling amber. What a lovely atmosphere enveloped everything as we peeped through those yellow panes! How cold and dull the self-same scene appeared through ordinary glass! I have often thought of that dear old window in later years, and how pleasant it would be to look upon the world through some moral transparency equally enlivening. I think there are some of us who have this happy gift—who see life and its cares, disappointments, losses, uglinesses, all thus delicately tinted. To them, the absence of a dear friend, the arrival of a dun downstairs, the failure of a favourite scheme, the faithlessness of a mistress, the faults and imperfections of mankind at large appear *en couleur de rose*. Ah! lucky mortals, who can thus see all things through this sweet and mellowed light!

My uncle is an old gentleman in a dark-blue coat and brass buttons. The collar of this coat is of the ancient type, padded and rolled, and so large that it touches the back of his head. His legs are enveloped in drab-coloured cloth breeches and tightly-buttoned gaiters, terminating in a pair of highly-polished and very square-toed shoes. His cuffs, instead of contracting at the wrist, expand in that direction like a flattened muffin bell, and nearly cover his hands, only leaving to view on either side a row of shiny nails—so oval in shape that they resemble tiny plovers' eggs, split down lengthwise. A ponderous chronometer is concealed in a fob about S.S.E. of the lowest button of his waistcoat. From this depends a massive gold chain of such dimensions that any individual link would make an average-sized signet-ring. As my uncle inclines to corpulency, it requires some effort, and no small amount of puffing and blowing, to extricate this machine from its receptacle. That operation is usually effected by resting his elbows on the arm-chair, seizing the bunch of seals with both his hands, and gently swaying his body to and fro, until the desired end is attained, and the watch comes out with an awful jerk. It must have had first-rate works to withstand the shock. An inferior article could never have survived such treatment. As for replacing it in its original position, after finding out the time, that was a feat which my uncle never attempted in society. My impression is that it could not have been done without assistance. I used to think that he rang for Peter to help him when we were gone; but on this point that trusty retainer, on being questioned by us, persisted in a discreet silence.

My uncle's features are tolerably good. He has a large kind eye and a capacious forehead. His nose, perhaps, partakes too much of that metallic hue which is said to be the result of an over-partiality for port wine, and his lips, especially in winter, are somewhat purple, but altogether he is rather a good-looking old gentleman. I must not, however, forget to state, that he has no teeth—at least in present wear. Two or three sets of grinders designed by dental artists of celebrity, we know, have been made for him, and were, indeed, discovered by my brother Tom (a youth of great promise, and an inquiring mind) stowed away on the third shelf of the left-hand library cupboard, one morning when my uncle was out, but he never wore them.

Nature, ever bountiful in compensating for such defects, enabled him to digest his food without their assistance, although his manner of eating—when nose and chin came into close proximity—caused us children some surprise, and induced disrespectful comparisons between our revered relative and a grotesquely-carved wooden nut-cracker which we used at dessert. Whether it was this peculiarity, or the general awe which we felt for him suggested the name, I cannot remember, but he was familiarly known to us under the sobriquet of *Grampus*. Grampus belonged to that fine old school of British worthies who entertain a profound contempt for the abilities of the rising generation. He was perpetually cross-examining us on the

subject of our youthful studies. Pinnock's 'Catechism of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge' was a joke to the multiplicity of his questions. From the moment I began to learn the Latin grammar, he was perpetually down upon me with regard to the declensions, and 'As in præsenti,' seizing every unguarded moment to inquire, for instance, what the genitive case plural number of '*Lapis, a stone*,' was, and putting me through all the tenses of the irregular verbs, as if he took a malicious pleasure in their anomalous conjugation, always declaring, at the end of our interview, that I knew nothing whatever about it, and averring that I should terminate my career as a professional dustman—an occupation which, in those days, seemed positively cheerful to me compared with the study of syntax.

'When I was your age' (nine), 'you young rascal,' (such were the endearing epithets with which he occasionally greeted us)—'when I was your age, I could read "Ovid's Metamorphoses" straight off without a dictionary. Can you? No, I dare say not. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Tell your father to buy you "Dryden's Ovid" immediately, or—stop, I'll give it you myself.' And down he took that excellent and highly-instructive work from his library. The reader will probably recollect the nature of the anecdotes which it contains, and how admirably they are adapted for the perusal of children. It was my first introduction to the classics.

During the winter evenings my brother Tom and I were in the habit of going to tea at his house occasionally. This was curiously enough looked upon in the light of a recreation by our papa and mamma, who, no doubt, derived pleasure from the society of Grampus. As for ourselves, we considered it a sort of hebdomadal sacrifice to which we were bound to submit for the benefit of our intellects. The old gentleman brewed his souchong, rang for the muffins and seed-cake (I have contracted a violent antipathy to carraways from the painful associations which their flavour recalls), and then proceeded to recite whole odes of Horace, to which we listened in silent awe with our mouths full of bread and butter, or quoted a lengthy passage from the 'Rape of the Lock,' compared with which we were told that 'Marmion' was simple twaddle. One unlucky evening, I had preceded Tom by about half an hour, and found Grampus reading the 'Morning Chronicle.' Laying down the paper, he welcomed me, and began retailing the news of the day, in which the town of Philadelphia chanced to be mentioned. 'Of course you know where it is?' he asked.

'Yes, uncle,' said I, 'in America.'

'North or South?'

'South,' said I, after some hesitation.

''Pon my word, you're a pretty fellow!' roared Grampus, waxing wrath. 'How old are you, sir?'

'Nine, uncle, next Tuesday week.'

'And don't know more of geography than that! You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Go home, sir, directly, and tell your father you don't know where Philadelphia is.'

Returning in deep dismay after this *contretemps*, I met my brother on the road, and confided to him the reason of my disgrace.

'Which did you say, North or South?' asked Tom, who was rather a sharp boy for his age. I told him. 'All right,' said Tom; 'then of course it must be the other.' And off he trotted to my great uncle's house.

'Tom!' said Grampus, after greeting him; 'before you take off your greatcoat, tell me where Philadelphia is.'

'In North America,' cried Tom, with tremendous confidence.

'Bravo! that's a good boy, there's half a sovereign for you!' said Grampus, pouring out the tea. I will do Tom the justice to say that he subsequently made over five shillings to me: but it was some time before I was restored to my uncle's favour.

It will be gathered from the foregoing anecdote that our anticipations of Christmas Day with Grampus were those of pleasure not altogether

unalloyed. At the same time it must be remembered that most of us had hardly completed, or were only just emerging from our teens, an age when the prospect of a good dinner and a game of snapdragons go far towards insuring jollity. The mince-pies alone would have restored our equanimity and banished dull care from our breasts while we stowed away their contents——elsewhere.

We enter the room, then, in single file, with smiling, rosy faces; and wishing our revered relative a merry Christmas and a happy new year ('compliments of the season' was a phrase not then in vogue), walk up to him one by one to be kissed, a ceremony which he went through after a fashion peculiar to himself. As soon as we came within reach of his arm, he pounced upon us in regular order, drew us each violently towards him, slipped a half-sovereign into our hands, imprinted a hasty salute upon our cheeks, and then as hastily thrust us off. Whether he thought, as an old bachelor, and being unaccustomed to the habits of children, that we might bite him playfully, or whether he conceived we should notice too plainly his own dental incapabilities, I cannot say, but this was his method of osculation, and a very remarkable one it was. Kissing is a habit which does not exist in all families. I confess that I have rather a tendency to indulge in it myself, having a fair field for the exercise of that accomplishment among my female cousins. I believe I inherit it from my mother's side, and trust it may be transmitted to future generations.

There was a curious old clock in the hall; none of your vulgar modern timepieces, all head and no body, supported on flimsy brackets, but a good old-fashioned concern, standing about eight feet high, in a walnut case with a big door, which, being opened, revealed a little perpendicular rope-walk of strings, chains, weights, and pulleys. The pendulum was as large as a cheeseplate, and wagged to and fro with such a majestic tick that you would as soon have thought of digging the Great Mogul in the ribs as trying to interfere with its motion. As for the face, it was a regular horological encyclopædia. There was nothing that it didn't tell you. Besides indications of the hour hand, and the minute hand, and the seconds hand, it informed you of the day of the week, the state of the atmosphere, and described the earth's orbit. My brother Tom, who has been looking over this manuscript, declares that there was one department in the works designed with a view to ascertain the latitude and longitude of any given place at a moment's notice; but this I admit I do *not* remember, and must beg the reader to receive the statement with caution, as Tom, though a very well-meaning young man, has a habit of romancing which has much grown on him of late.

My great uncle being, as I have said, a very old-fashioned gentleman, had fixed on the unearthly hour of four o'clock for dinner. If any of my readers have ever been condemned to dine at that excessively inconvenient time they will fully sympathise with the protest which I record against this inhuman, and, I trust, now happily exploded practice. Dinner at four o'clock is a social anachronism almost amounting to a crime. You may dine at one, or even at two, and (with the intervention of a cup of tea) be prepared for supper at eight; or you may make a substantial lunch in the middle of the day and be ready for your principal repast at seven; but four o'clock is neither one thing nor the other. If you have lunched you have, as the phrase goes, spoilt your dinner. You make feeble efforts to eat, and abandon your knife and fork. The consequence is that by-and-by, at supper-time, you are famishing and there is no supper for you. If, on the other hand, you have *not* lunched, you sit down to your feast like a starving man, eat ravenously, and dyspepsia is the inevitable result. A person who invites his friends to dine at four is guilty of cruelty to animals, and ought to be proceeded against under Martin's Act.

For us children, to be sure, it did not so much matter. I cannot answer for the experience of others, but I never yet met with a youth

under the age of discretion who was not ready to eat cheerfully on the shortest notice and at any time. It seems to be a provision of nature that children should be always ready for natural provisions. The instant we came out of church (where, I fear, we had been far more occupied in criticising the evergreen decorations and indulging in visions of turkey and plum-pudding than in listening to Parson Blowhard's sermon) we were regaled with an enormous piece of currant cake, which, however, did not much interfere with our appetite at four. So when the clock had struck that hour, and the cuckoo on it had fluttered punctually after its usual fashion, and retired into the little door just as coolly as if there had been no Christmas Day at all, Peter opened the drawing-room door, and in a voice quaking with emotion—partly due to the occasion, but principally out of dread of his master—exclaimed—

'Pleesir dinner's on the tablesir!'

At that instant Grampus rose to his legs and gave his arm to my mother; papa followed with my maiden aunt, Tabitha, a lady of few personal attractions but of untold wealth, from whom we had great expectations, but who subsequently retired from this sphere bequeathing her property in equal shares between the Society for the Encouragement of Indigent Organ-grinders and the Metropolitan Dustman's Shirt and Collar Association — two excellent institutions now unhappily become obsolete. My brothers, sisters, and I brought up the rear, descending the stairs with great gravity, except Tom, who insisted on executing a sort of brief Feejee war-dance on every third step, until Grampus, whom we believed to be safely out of sight, caught a glimpse of his shadow on the opposite wall.

'Halloa there, you young scapegrace! what are you about?' shouted my uncle.

Tom muttered out something about losing his shoe, and with great presence of mind knelt down on the landing to untie one of his highlows and tie it up again. Presently we all entered the dining-room, where there was always a mingled smell of port wine and French polish. We gathered round the table and sidled into our places. My uncle said grace, and the covers were removed by Peter (who was by this time in a state of awfully nervous vibration) and Betty, a female domestic in a very black dress and a very white apron. As we sat down in all about twelve, and as children are addicted to that summary and often indecorous manner of feeding known as bolting their dinner, it was generally understood that no one was to begin until we had been all helped. This injunction, however, not extending to the rolls already placed before us, we employed the interval in consuming them and in disposing the napkins in which they were wrapped very tightly round our waists.

At last every one was served and we all began to ply our knives and forks. What a precious clattering was heard, what a Babel of voices as the wine went round (we little ones were allowed one glass apiece, and generally drank it in a diluted form)! How quickly soup, fish, turkey, roast beef, with all their accompaniments, disappeared before us! This was the only day in the year on which we were allowed to choose a dish at table, and of course we selected all the unwholesome ones.

It was a beautiful and gratifying sight to behold honest Peter staggering into the room under the weight of that *summum bonum* of our expectations, that long-looked for consummation of Christmas hopes—the PLUM-PUDDING; an enormous affair quivering in a little sea of liquid fire and surmounted by a generous sprig of holly and red berries. What a graceful contour it presented in that lovely spheroid form, gently merging into corrugations where the pudding-cloth had left a pleasing impress! I say *pleasing*, because I truly and conscientiously believe that no good Christmas pudding can be made but in a bag. It has become part of the tradition and cannot be omitted. I have dined at houses in later years where this noble emblem of Yuletide has appeared in an artificial shape, such as that which the baser *gallantine* and the more effeminate blanc-mange are wont to as-

sume, and when the powdered menial has offered it to me I have declined the gross imposture. No; if I am to eat pudding at Christmas it shall be a Christmas pudding.

When the cloth had been removed, a fine polished surface of dark Spanish mahogany was revealed, on which the richly-chased épergne, the delicately-cut decanters and finger-glasses sparkled in the light of a dozen spermaceti candles. The silver, too, did ample credit to Peter's care and plate-powder, being of a dazzling brilliancy. Every article on the table was mirrored in its surface, and we children found a source of instant gratification in beholding each other's faces reflected, topsy-turvy, on opposite sides of the festive board. When the servants left the room, my uncle filled a bumper of port, having previously executed a similar office for my mother and Aunt Tabitha, who always sat on either side of him. This was a signal for 'hands round the table,' an important ceremony in our eyes, and without which Christmas Day would have been as a thing of nought. It consisted in everyone's inserting his or her palm into that of his or her neighbour and using it as a pump-handle for the space of half a minute with appropriate action. This parallel is the more complete because it actually did draw water from some eyes; my Aunt Tab, for instance, being always ready to cry on the shortest notice. I do not mean my readers to infer from this circumstance that she was in the least degree unhappy, far from it. On these occasions she was usually, for her, in excellent spirits; but this was her peculiar mode of indicating hilarity. It is the way with some people. I have heard of individuals who have a morbid inclination to laugh at a funeral. Perhaps philosophers may be able to give some common solution to these paradoxical phenomena of nature. After the solemn rite of 'hands round the table' had been concluded, Grampus proceeded to amuse us by a variety of entertainments, chiefly based upon and in connection with the dessert and dinner service. He peeled oranges in the most ingenious and apparently miraculous manner, turning the rind inside out into hemispheres of perfect symmetry without spilling a drop of the juice, and then fashioning it into miniature cocked-hats, little boats, and fictitious porkers. He ate imaginary wax tapers, previously cut out of the heart of a Ribstone pippin by the simple aid of a cheese-taster, having added a slice of burnt almond thereto for a wick. He converted a dinner-napkin into the likeness of a rabbit, which sprang about his knees and up his arm with an almost supernatural effect. He produced the most delightful music from a finger-glass, three tumblers, and an empty decanter, and was immensely gratified by our detecting it to be 'Rory o' More,' played to psalm-time with a fruit-knife. He became quite purple in the face in consequence of the exertions which he made to toss up three apples in the air consecutively, after the manner of the street-jugglers, and found a brief respite from his labours in the act of cutting up one of them with immense care, throwing the spiral parings over Aunt Tab's head and declaring that the letters which it formed on the floor behind her would be the initials of the gentleman whom she would make happy for life. They happened to alight in the form of P. S., which we, with the charming simplicity and ready wit characteristic of our years, immediately divined to be an omen of her ultimate union with Mr. Peter Slowman, my uncle's butler, a supposition which was fraught with all the greater horror in consequence of that gentleman's devoted attachment to Mrs. Colinder, the cook, down stairs. After everybody's health had been drunk all round, and the conversation was beginning to take a political turn (my uncle was a stanch Tory, and when once he began to discuss the Melbourne administration there was no stopping him), my mother would give a private signal to Aunt Tab and my sisters, who with one consent arose and left the room. Of course we little ones went with them, but instead of ascending to the drawing-room again we used to make a bolt down-stairs to see how Sally was getting on, and how she had liked

her dinner. Sally was our handmaiden, pretty well stricken in years, and a faithful servant in our nursery ever since we could remember. She had nursed us through measles, hooping-cough, scarlatina, and, in short, all the ills which infant flesh is heir to. I thoroughly believe there is nothing that good creature would not have undergone for our sakes. She had but one foible, and that, considering that we lived in a garrison town was a pardonable one —she was consumed by an unextinguishable passion for marines. I am not prepared to say that she was insensible to the attractions of 'the line,' or that if an eligible artilleryman had come in her way she would have treated him with incivility, but marines were her weakness, and she married several: of course I don't mean at the same time, but in turn. Poor Sally was very unfortunate in her attachments, and had become a widow twice within our recollection; but neither these matrimonial alliances nor the domestic afflictions which followed them interfered with the faithful discharge of her duties to us. For years she reigned supreme in our nursery, and in the case of fraternal quarrels there was no appeal from her decision. Sometimes she asked for a holiday to see her husband embark, or welcome him home from that widely-extended tract of country known as 'foreign parts,' or went away for an hour or so to get her pension or another marriage licence; but through all her vicissitudes she remained constant to her trust: and attached as she was to her amphibious lovers, I believe she would have cheerfully relinquished the most attractive marine rather than quit our service. Many a letter have we directed for her according to a model address which she always kept, and from which no orthographical deviation was permitted, until she changed her partner.

> Mister corporal John Taylor, exquire
> his madgestis ship Harrythewsir
> lying off Spithedd
> or in the Meddytrainyen
> or ELSEWHERE.

In this comprehensive superscription, whose chief merit seemed to lie in the wide field of conjecture which it opened to the Post-office authorities, Sally had the most unbounded confidence, declaring that she always 'have heard tell that it would be sartain sure to find her old man *sometime* hows'ever;' but as she never prepaid her letters, nor expected any answer until her husband's ship was paid off, the probability is that Mr. Taylor was spared the trouble of deciphering at least half of her communications. We found Sally, then, after dinner, over a dish of tea with Mrs. Colinder, my uncle's cook and housekeeper, a middle-aged lady in a black bombazine dress and burnt-umber-coloured wig, who entertained certain theories of a peculiar and exceedingly original system of theology, which she and Sally were never tired of discussing, and which they seemed to have chiefly derived while 'sitting under' an eminent dissenting divine by the name of Blenkinsop. This extraordinary expression has I believe since been commonly accepted in its proper sense; but at the time, and owing to our limited acquaintance with modern metaphor, I remember we regarded it in the light of a religious but highly uncomfortable ceremony.

How well I recollect that cosy kitchen with its ample fireplace and complicated roasting-jack of wheels, chains, and pulleys, attached to the wall!—the comfortable old Windsor-chairs, with green-baize cushions, the round table covered with a cloth of the same material, on which Dodd's Bible lay, bound in rough calf, with 'The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain,' 'The Complete Letter-writer,' and Mrs. Colinder's tortoise-shell spectacles. Nor can I forget dear old Mouser, a black tom-cat of great antiquity that purred unceasingly upon the hearth, and kindly bore with all our teazing. Across the passage, there was the butler's pantry too—a chamber which is always associated in my mind with a peculiar perfume of oil of vitriol and candle-ends. Here Peter was wont to sit and peruse odd numbers of the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' and

here, too, he was delighted to receive us and deliver (*sotto voce*) a short and extemporary lecture on the art of button-cleaning—an operation in which he took especial pride, and for which he had invented an ingenious machine, with a vague and foggy notion of 'taking out a patent for it some of these here fine days.'

After rifling Mrs. Colinder's circular spice-box, and tasting all its contents from mace to nutmeg, we concentrated our energies in endeavouring to induce Mouser to sup on an infusion of cinnamon and water; and failing in this dietetic experiment, in consequence, as we thought, of the ungenerous interference of Sally, we betook ourselves up-stairs again with an eye to cake and muffins, which formed the simple elements of our next repast. After tea we amused ourselves by inspecting 'Fox's Book of Martyrs,' of which Grampus possessed a very fine copy, illustrated with woodcuts of such an appalling nature in regard to subject, that, aided by the unusually heavy dinner of which we had partaken, it had the ultimate effect of giving us all nightmare, or at least uneasy dreams in which gigantic gridirons, racks, and thumbscrews were called unpleasantly to mind before the morning.

But our great delight, during the latter part of the evening, was to gather round the fire and clamour for a song or a story from Grampus. Of these commodities he possessed, indeed, only a limited stock; but as they were well selected and strictly reserved for these occasions, we listened to them with annually renewed interest. Of the songs, I regret to say, I remember but little. There was a very remarkable one, the end and object of which appeared to be a description of and various suggestions for the definition of a woman. In the course of the chorus —a very lengthy one—the poet compared her to a flower and a tower, a song and a thong, a mill and a pill, a flea and a bee, and a variety of other monosyllabic nouns which it was painfully evident had been selected more with a view to euphony of verse than any actual resemblance of the objects themselves —in short, in which there was a great deal more of rhyme than reason. There were certain ancient ditties, too, connected with love, libations, and loyalty, of which we only heard fragmentary stanzas, as—

> 'Come, let us dance and sing,
> While all Barbadoes' bells shall ring—
> Love strikes the fiddle-string,
> And Venus plays the lute.
> Maidens gay, trip away,
> Happy on our wedding-day,' &c. &c.

or,

> 'The Universe well may be jealous
> Of England, where Liberty sings;
> For the King is the king of good fellows,
> And—*all* our good fellows are kings.
> Fol lol de rol, lol de rol liddle,' &c. &c.

Under the genial influence of a bowl of 'rack punch my worthy relative proceeded with the musical entertainment, until he was seized with a violent fit of coughing, which warned him to desist, for he was inclined to be asthmatical, and was, as I have before remarked, of very portly dimensions about the region of the waistcoat. Ten minutes having been then kindly accorded to Grampus in order that he might recover himself (which he did at length after a deal of puffing and blowing and using sundry ejaculations apparently selected from the Litany), it became the duty of my eldest sister Kate to replenish his tumbler—an operation of which he always pretended to deprecate the necessity either by faintly remonstrating with her—placing his hand over the glass in such an ingenious manner that there was ample room for a stream of grog to be poured between his fingers; or suddenly starting up to poke the fire with great energy, he would affect the greatest indignation to find another half-pint of the reeking compound on returning to his arm-chair. Whatever his object may have been in executing these remarkable manœuvres, one fact is worthy of note, and that is, that he always succeeded in drinking his second allowance of punch. I don't say it is anything to boast of, but he did it. Whether he would have been prepared for a third—whether he ever *did* take a third after we were all gone—just to

make himself comfortable, you know, before he turned into bed for the night—this, I say, is more than I can tell you, but it was during the second when he always told his story—and so I will confine myself to the fact.

www.libtool.com.cn

'Are you all ready?' asked Grampus, settling himself into his arm-chair, and taking a sort of preparatory pull at the punch.

'Yes, uncle,' piped a chorus of small voices.

'Well then, once upon a time when——halloa there! stop a minute!' said my uncle, suddenly—'Who's cracking nuts?'

'Only me, uncle,' said Tom, slowly emerging from under the table, where he had taken up his position with a handful of filberts.

'Now look here,' said my uncle, 'just you take the crackers and crack 'em all, *all* mind, will you, before I begin—there's a good boy?' Tom did so. 'That's right,' said my uncle, winking at Tom through the tumbler which he had just raised to his lips; 'that's right. Now we shall get on.' And on he went.

'Once upon a time, and years before you little chickabiddies here were born or thought of, I had occasion to make a journey just after Christmas from P—— to Exeter. Travelling, as I dare say you've been told a dozen times by old fogies like me, was a very different thing then to what it is now—you couldn't step into a train to be whisked off from place to place. If you got over the ground at four or five miles an hour it was thought a very fair speed; so that in winter with two horses we could barely reach Exeter between dawn and dusk. As for London, it took the best part of a week to get there, and no one thought of starting on such a journey without making his will. The "Perseverance" coach had been, up to the time I am speaking of, the only public conveyance, except the waggons, between this and Exeter, and a dilatory ramshackled old concern it was, only running every other day. However, a new Company had just started, undertaking to do the journey every day, and in little more than half the time, with four horses. This was a step in the right direction, to be sure; but like most attempts at reform, it met with a deal of opposition at first. Old people shook their heads and predicted that no good would come of the innovation. The "Perseverance" had done well enough for them, they said, and they would stick by it. It was better to travel safely than swiftly, and who could say what might be the fate of this new-fangled concern? However, the "Tantivy"—for that was the name of the rival coach—was started, fulfilled its engagements as to speed, and had performed the journey daily for about three weeks, when I was summoned to Exeter on business, and determined to travel by it.

'It was boasted that the "Tantivy" could start from the Red Lion inn at noon, and passing the old "Perseverance" (which used to leave the King's Arms some hours before) on the road, reach Exeter before it. Even at this time of the day, the weather was intensely cold, and I was pleased to think I had secured an inside place. Winters *were* winters in those days, I can tell you. I don't know what's become of 'em now, they seem to have gone out with the stage-coaches. Many's the time when I've found the water in my bedroom jug covered with ice, and my sponge frozen quite hard, morning after morning. If such a thing happens now, people talk of it as if 'twas a wonder. I remember when we took it as a matter of course. Well, when I got down to the inn, I was anxious to see who my fellow-travellers were. That was a much more important and interesting question than it is now. If you get a disagreeable fellow or a squealing infant in a railway-carriage you may change your place now-a-days, but then it was impossible. You had to endure your company, whatever it was. Luckily I found mine pretty decent people—a stout bagman who went to sleep almost the instant he got inside the carriage, and a little middle-aged lady very comfortably wrapped up in a boa, a fur pelisse, and a travelling hood. When I say that she was comfortably wrapped up I am

only referring to her bodily condition. She seemed anything but comfortable in her mind. I thought I never saw such a restless little soul in my life. She was fidgeting about in and out of the coach half a dozen times before we started. Now she wanted to sit with her back to the horses—then on the opposite seat; now she changed corners with the bagman—now with me. When I add to this that she kept popping her head out of the window every two or three minutes and asking the guard the most ridiculous questions about the probabilities of the weather, the state of the roads, and the temper of the horses, you will reasonably infer that I had some doubt of her sanity.

'"Law bless you, mum," said the guard, on being interrogated for the third time, "they're as quiet as lambs every one of 'em—as I told you jist now. You might drive 'em blindfold a'most and leave your whip at home to be mended; and as for work, I never see such beastesses at the collar—never in my born days: they're wot you may term slap-uppers and no mistake!"

'"What is a slap-upper?" asked the little lady, doubtfully.

'"Good 'uns to go, mum—no shirking their duty—no jibbing—no shying—no nothing o' vice about 'em as you may say."

'"Oh!" said the little lady, somewhat relieved, "I thought you might mean that they kicked. One of them seems a little frisky."

'"Which is that, mum? The grey mare, I 'spose, now?"

'"Really I don't know!" said the little lady, sharply. "It was one of the front ones."

'"Ah! you mean the off leader," said the guard—yis—that is the grey mare: she only wants to be off, that's all, mum: a little restless and nervous-like, till she's on the road—similar to many other of her sex, mum," added the guard, with a very slight wink at the bagman. "Now, Bill, *be* you ready? time's up!" cried he to the coachman; "blest if I ever see sich a feller for lush—come on."

'"Allright Shtephens, awright myboy," answered a very bloated-looking man in three or four top-coats and a red belcher handkerchief wound round his neck, just under a redder nose. "Awright Shtephens, I'm acummin, Shtephens," and emptying his glass at the bar door, he slowly, and with apparently some difficulty, climbed up into his seat. Mr. Stephens jumped up behind, and producing a French horn from a leather case which dangled over the side of the coach, performed a series of variations on "Away with Melancholy," as we drove off.

'"A very impertinent man, that guard!" exclaimed the little lady to me, when we got outside the town.

'"I'm afraid he was rather inclined to be so," said I, as gravely as I could, for the bagman was purple with suppressed laughter. "May I take the liberty, madam, of inquiring whether you are accustomed to travelling in this way? I'm afraid you seemed a little nervous."

'"It is because I am accustomed to travel," answered the little lady, "that I *do* feel a little nervous."

'"Indeed! and why?" I asked.

'"Because," said the little lady, emphatically, and with great deliberation, "I never was in a stage-coach yet in my life which was not upset, that's all."

'"If that is really the case, you have indeed been unfortunate," I remarked; "but let us hope you will have better luck to-day."

'"We shall meet with an accident, sir, I am convinced," she answered. "Only mark my words. However, I am accustomed to it."

'It was in vain the bagman and I tried to reason her out of this melancholy conviction. She remained firmly persuaded of our impending fate, and declared that nothing would induce her to change her mind. This being the case, I naturally thought the next best thing to do was to change the subject; and accordingly we began to talk upon general topics of the day, in which the bagman joined us until he fell asleep, and then we relapsed into silence. Meanwhile, the coach rolled over hill and dale, between hedges bristling with frost, over roads so hard that the horses' hoofs rang

upon them like a blacksmith's hammer. Ice lay an inch thick upon many a ditch and duckpond that we passed; last week's snow still lingered on the distant hills. The leafless trees looked hard and brittle with the cold, and our horses' breath came floating past us in a crisp blue cloud upon the winter air. On we sped through what is, in summer, the most picturesque part of Devonshire, and which even the bleak and gloomy aspect of the weather could not altogether rob of its beauty. We had stopped once or twice to change horses, and it was now getting dusk, when the little lady resumed her apprehensions. The bagman had begun to snore, and I confess I felt a little drowsy myself. Indeed, I think I should have fallen asleep before if they had not been making such a terrible noise outside. There were two or three of them up there on the roof or box, laughing, shouting, and singing, as if they had just escaped from Bedlam. I felt convinced that the driver was one. At every inn we stopped at on the road he had been down and asked for "sixpen'orth of rum and milk;" "liqueur of brandy neat;" "three of gin 'ot;" "small glass of shrub and bitters;" all, doubtless, admirable cordials in their way, if taken singly; but open to objection in their combined effect. However, whether it was that I was too weary to listen, or that their spirits actually did become more subdued at last, I can't say, but the noise seemed gradually to grow fainter and fainter, and then I fell into a deep sleep. How long I remained in this condition I cannot say; but I was in the midst of a long dream, in which I imagined that I had entered into partnership with the late Captain Cook, and was on a voyage of discovery, tossing about on the Atlantic Ocean, in a fearful storm, when the vessel, as I thought, gave a tremendous lurch over, and I was awoke by a shrill voice crying—

'"There, sir! I told you how it would be. I knew it from the first—you wouldn't believe me, and now we are——"

'The rest of the sentence was lost in a tremendous crash of breaking timbers and smashed windows, with which, female screams, anathemas from the opposite sex, and the sound of kicking horses, were plentifully mingled.

'The little lady was right; WE WERE UPSET, and no mistake. It would be quite impossible for me to describe the confusion which ensued. Removing the broken glass as well as I could, I first raised myself up from the coach window and then extricated the little lady.

'"My dear madam, are you much hurt?" I asked.

'"Oh, sir!" she groaned, pointing to her neck; "look here!" and fainted away in my arms.

'Her collar was saturated with blood, and I really was very much alarmed. When we got her inside a neighbouring inn and farmhouse, however, it turned out that beyond a little shaking and a great deal of fright, she had not suffered much. The blood had flowed from the bagman's cheek, which was badly lacerated by broken glass; and begging the farmer's wife to give her a cup of tea, I hastened off to the relief of my less fortunate companion. Luckily, one of the outside passengers was a young surgeon, who immediately strapped up the wound, and rendered all the assistance in his power to the injured.

'I am happy to say he was soon able to give a good report of his patients, most of whom had only been bruised. Our coachman, the source of this disaster, was sitting hopelessly drunk on a hedge where he had been pitched. Some one asked how it happened.

'"Ah, ole feller!" said the inebriated rascal, shaking his head very solemnly and holding up one finger; "ah, olf—olf eller; you—you want to—to know-too-mush. How'd it happen? howshdino; nofoltomine; thasallinobout it; tol de rol," he continued, looking round with an expression of intense humour on his face; "tol de rol, I wish you all—all merry Krishmas and—and," he added, very solemnly, after a hiccup, "and a appy new year. There now."

'This flagrant conduct naturally roused the indignation of the bystanders, some of whom, taking me

aside, informed me that one of the proprietors of the coach had himself sat upon the box-seat and had been drinking with this fellow on the road. He was now in a terrible fright, well knowing that if we brought an action against him, and this fact came out in evidence, it would seriously damage his interests; in fact, might do for the "Tantivy" altogether. He came to me as the senior inside passenger and begged I would use my influence to prevent such a calamity, which he said would ruin him if it got into the papers. He further hinted that he was prepared to offer any reasonable compensation for the affair, and that he had despatched a messenger at once to Exeter for another vehicle, which would be on the spot shortly.

'After a conference with the "fares," to whom I retailed this information, I was empowered to treat with him according to my discretion. The general wish appeared to be that he should be made to pay in some form or another for his neglect, but that as no one except the bagman had been seriously injured, no personal compensation would be exacted.

'It was a little puzzling to know what to do under these circumstances. However, I made up my mind and went back.

'Mr. Bowler, for that was the proprietor's name, received me very graciously, and inaugurated the proceedings by asking me whether I would take anything to drink. I thanked him, but declined his offer.

'"Better have something short," urged Mr. Bowler, "after your exertions; I'm sure, sir, I don't know what we should have done without you. I've got a little brandy in this here flask; do 'ave a little—a little drop neat; it won't hurt you."

'"It *has* hurt a good many of us already, Mr. Bowler," said I, rather sternly. "If there had not been so much drinking going on outside the coach, this wouldn't have happened."

'Mr. Bowler looked rather ashamed of himself, and muttered something about a drop too much.

'"Mr. Bowler," said I, "there is no doubt that you have been much to blame in this matter, as you would find out to your cost if we proceeded against you."

'"I am painfully aware of the fact, sir," said Mr. Bowler, very humbly; "and if I can do any——"

'"My fellow-passengers, I continued, "are unwilling to accept any bribe (here Mr. Bowler's face brightened), but, on the other hand, we think it is but fair that you should make some voluntary sacrifice in a pecuniary form to express your regret, and by way of apology for this occurrence. Do you understand me?"

'"Well, not exackly," said Mr. Bowler, after a pause.

'"I will endeavour to explain," said I. "In the first place, you are aware that the commercial traveller who was with me inside has been badly cut about the face and otherwise injured. I have reason to believe that he is not in very good circumstances, and this accident may interfere for some time with the discharge of his duties. I wish you distinctly to understand that he has made no claim himself, but I think you cannot do less than beg, under these circumstances, that he will do you the favour of accepting twenty pounds."

'Mr. Bowler signified his assent to this proposition with apparent cheerfulness.

'"The rest of us," I continued, "wish that any pecuniary compensation which you may feel it your duty to offer should be bestowed in a direction where you will have the double satisfaction of exercising real charity, while you discharge your obligations to those who have suffered from your negligence."

Mr. Bowler looked puzzled.

'"You have doubtless," I said, "heard of the Devon and Cornwall hospital?"

'Mr. Bowler nodded.

'"It is an excellent institution, Mr. Bowler," said I, "and well worthy of your notice. You will not, I am sure, have any objection to make it a donation of ten pounds."

'Here Mr. Bowler winced a little, but remarked, if the gentlemen wished to do business that way it was their affair, and the money should be paid.

'"Very well," said I. "Now, in the town from which we started this morning there is another charitable institution for the relief of those who are in danger of being deprived of sight. I allude to the Eye Infirmary, with which I am in some degree connected. Allow me, as governor, to put your name down for five guineas."

'"Very well, sir, as you like," said Mr. Bowler, testily, and taking up his hat.

'"Stop a minute," said I, "I won't detain you much longer; but—have you ever been over the Female Orphan Asylum at P——?"

'"No, I have *not*, sir; and what's more, I ——"

'"Would like to do so, no doubt," I said. "Very well, any donor of ten guineas ——"

'"Come, I say," cried Mr. Bowler, who was making a little sum of compound addition in his pocket-book.

'"—may have," I continued, without noticing the interruption, "may have that privilege, of which, no doubt, you will be glad to avail yourself. Indeed, what greater pleasure can there be than in seeing so excellent and practical a result arise from one's benevolence? But I beg your pardon, I really was forgetting the soup and blanket societies, and the Dorcas Fund for supplying the poor with coals in winter. You'll subscribe a couple of guineas a-piece to those, won't you?"'

'"If I do," cried Mr. Bowler, closing up his pocket-book, "If I do, I'm d——"

'"Doing no more than what is fair and honourable, and what any gentleman would do under the circumstances; that's what you were going to say, isn't it?" said I.

'"Well, not *exackly*," said Mr. Bowler. "You see ——"

'"You see," said I, "it would be such an uncommonly disagreeable thing to have this matter taken up legally by any of the passengers and so get into the papers, wouldn't it?"

'"All right," exclaimed Mr. Bowler, suddenly reopening his pocket-book; "anything more in that line? name your terms."

'"Nothing else, thank you," I answered, "except to beg that you will discharge that driver for the sake of public safety, and (if I may be permitted to say so) be yourself more temperate in future for your own. As soon as you have remitted those sums to the several societies which I mentioned, you shall have a receipt in full. Good-evening."

'"*Good*-evening, sir," said Mr. Bowler, emphasizing the adjective as if he was determined not to be outdone in civility.

'After a short interval, during which I prevailed upon the little lady (who had by this time recovered from her fright) to take some refreshment, the messenger who had been despatched for assistance returned with a carriage and pair. Into this vehicle most of the passengers stowed themselves—the rest following in a cart with the luggage. We reached Exeter late at night, and you may be sure were glad to get comfortably to bed. The next morning, Mr. Bowler kept his promise faithfully, and finding this to be the case, we fulfilled our part of the contract by saying as little about the accident as possible. The affair was hushed up. The "Tantivy" continued to run under the guidance of a steadier charioteer, and I made a point of travelling by it whenever I went up to Exeter.'

'And what became of the little lady?' asked Tom, who had listened with great attention to the narrative.

'Upon my word,' said Grampus, 'that is more than I can tell you. I never saw her from that day to this; but I question very much whether she ventured in a stage-coach again.'

At this moment, Peter entered the room to say that my Aunt Tab's sedan-chair had arrived, together with two flies which were to convey our party home. We therefore rose to put on our coats and wrappers, went through the usual form of salutation with my uncle, and drove home over the white, crisp snow, to dream of the "Tantivy" and its passengers. So ended our Christmas with Grampus.

JACK EASEL.

Types of English Beauty.

V.—ROSE.

www.libtool.com.cn

ONLY dear old England
Boasts such maids as Rosie;
Eyes that drowse with dreamy splendour,
Cheeks with roseleaf-tintings tender,
Lips a fragrant posy.
I would barter years of youth
For the kisses of her mouth.

Of those nut-brown tresses,
One lock would she yield me,
On my faithful heart reposing,
All my life long till its closing,
'Twould from sorrow shield me.
Though she binds them in a snood,
See how wanton winds have wooed!

Darling English maiden!
With your pure, frank beauty,
(There's no treachery in that dimple)—
Honest, as your dress is simple,
Loyal to each duty;
He, whose wife you shall become,
Shall have sunshine in his home!

Oh, your smiles are magic,—
Moonlight on life's ocean;
As the pale moon sways the waters,
So the love of England's daughters
Rules our fond devotion.
Mothers, sweethearts, wives like you,
Make our hearts so stanch and true!

Type of English beauty,
Trusting, true, and tender!
Be it lofty, be it lowly,
Every English fireside holy
Your rare virtues render:
Love of that fair face of yours,
England's liberty secures.

THE STORY OF THEKLA,

FROM SCHILLER'S 'WALLENSTEIN.'—(*Illustrated.*)

AMONGST Schiller's ballads 'The Maiden's Lament' differs in style and tone from the others. Schiller is not generally musical in his lyric vein, and but few of his poems invite the composer. This one, however, in its simplicity of feeling and its dramatic contrasts between the suffering child and the departed mother, who comforts her from the celestial regions, is musical even in a high degree, and so the poet intended it to be. The two first staves are sung to the guitar in the poet's greatest drama by Wallenstein's daughter Thekla. In the blooming spring of her love with Max Piccolomini she forebodes the tragic shadow that will overcast the bright sky of her young life. She perceives the cruel play with her feelings on the part of her aunt, the Countess

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by Lucy Meadows.

TYPES OF ENGLISH BEAUTY.

See "Rose."

www.libtool.com.cn

Terzky, who from political motives fosters a love which she well knows will never be crowned by a happy union. It seems that Schiller afterwards added the two last verses to complete the poem, and thus placed it with his other ballads in the edition of lyric poems, under the title of

The Maiden's Lament.

[The first two stanzas of this poem are sung by Thekla, in the Third Act of the *Piccolomini*.]

The oak-wood is waving,
The clouds gather o'er;
There sitteth a maiden
Beside the green shore;
The breakers are dashing with might—with might:
And she sighs out aloud in the gloomy night,
And weeping, thus walleth she—

'My heart it is broken,
The world is a void,
Nothing more can it give me,
For hope is destroyed.
All the bliss that the earth can bestow I have proved;
Heavenly Father—Oh! take—I have lived—I have loved—*
Oh! take back thy child to thee.

'The tears that thou weepest
Must vainly be shed;
For no sorrow awakens
The sleep of the Dead!
Yet say, what can solace and comfort the breast,
When it mourns for the love by which once it was blest,
And the balm shall descend from above.

'Let the tears I am weeping
Still vainly be shed,
Though my sorrow can wake not
The sleep of the Dead;
Yet all that can solace and comfort the breast,
When it mourns for the love by which once it was blest,
Are the tears and the sorrow of love.'

Translated by Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, Bart.

Of all the great historical dramas of Schiller, 'Wallenstein' is the most admired. Being well versed in the history of modern Europe, and living at a time when the French Revolution and the subsequent events revealed the heart of man, and taught politics on a grand scale, Schiller was enabled to discover the most stirring subjects which the history of modern Europe offers to the tragedian. It will be found that in every one of his historical plays he just hits upon the turning point in the destiny of some great people, and each of the leading nations in Europe has thus furnished him with a plot. From the history of Germany no better subject for a dramatic work could be selected than the life and death of Wallenstein. This great commander of the imperial troops, during the Thirty Years' War, constitutes quite an epoch in the destinies of the people of Germany. Through that war the bond was broken, which during the middle ages, and even through the Reformation, had kept the limbs of the mighty empire together; and as Wallenstein, partly through his own guilt, failed in restoring the central power of the emperor over the many principalities, it was from his time that Germany went to pieces, and, instead of a compact nation, became a weak aggregate of petty states. The character of Wallenstein is in itself essentially dramatic. He was still alive in the memory of Schiller's coevals, as many a destroyed village in Germany, even now, bears frightful testimony to the ravages caused by that suicidal civil war. At the same time the crime of treason, of which Wallenstein was accused by his imperial antagonists, and for which he was doomed to an inglorious death from the hands of assassins, lies still shrouded in mystery; and there is even now a difference of opinion as to the question whether he really intended betraying his master, and through a secret alliance with Sweden and the Protestants in Germany, hoped to obtain for himself the crown of Bohemia, and, at the same time, peace for his country; or whether the court of Vienna, fearing his immense power at the head of an irresistible army, burdened him with the crime of treason in order to justify the most atrocious treachery on their own part. Thus the dramatist was not too closely fettered by evidence, and might deal with the facts more freely than a more modern subject

* This line is misunderstood by the translator. It ought to be:

Oh! *mother in heaven*—I have lived, I have loved,
Oh, take back thy child to thee!

would have allowed him to do. Although Wallenstein may hardly be called a poetical character, yet his immense influence on his age, and the sudden turn in his fortunes, will ever lend to him a deep dramatic interest. The poet has taken great care to show us this character, and lay bare all the roots from which his overwhelming authority rose. Casting the whole subject in a trilogy, it is in the first short play, under the title of 'Wallenstein's Camp,' that he shows us the strong hold of the great commander on the souls of the private soldiers and non-commissioned officers whom he had called from the plough, the counting-house, or the schoolroom; and by wielding them into an irresistible armed body, had made them the arbiters of the nation's fate. In the second play, entitled, 'The Piccolomini,' we are made to feel his influence on the officers, whom he had chosen from all countries of Europe, to be the servants of his will and the companions of his martial glory. In the third play, which bears the title of 'The Death of Wallenstein,' he himself comes before us in all the formidable array of his mental powers, and armed with all that faith in himself and confidence in his star which is even strengthened by his firm belief in astrology. And yet, having to deal with all these energetic agencies, Schiller must have felt that the subject of his great work was prominently political, and that something was wanting in it without which the greatest theatrical effect can never be secured. To say it in one word, much as this struggle for power may occupy our mind, our heart feels but little interest in it. Hence the poet thought it necessary to lend an additional charm to his plot by drawing upon the storehouse of his abundant invention. He made the edge of separation, which divided the political parties, to cut also through two young and noble hearts. To Wallenstein he gave a daughter, the heiress of his fortune and his expectations, and bound her in fatal love to Max Piccolomini, the son of Wallenstein's most cunning, most treacherous, and most destructive enemy. Neither of these two characters exist in history, for Octavio Piccolomini, who in the play is the presumed father of Max, was at the time still a young man, being but thirty-five years old when Wallenstein died; and although Wallenstein had a daughter of his second marriage (whose name, by the way, was not Thekla, but Mary Elizabeth), she was only about fourteen years old at her father's death. The introduction of such fictitious characters in a play which otherwise closely clings to history, may not stand before the verdict of the critic; but Schiller obtained his aim fully—for it is to these two parts that his work owes its great popular success. Max is placed in a conflict between Love and Duty, which drags his noble soul into unavoidable destruction, and Thekla, renouncing him, that his honour may not be sullied, rises to a height of character which shows us the noblest aim of tragedy, the glorification of personal liberty of decision in the midst of the most heart-rending conflicts, to which we may be doomed by merciless Fate.

The engraving in our present number, referring to Thekla's song, is taken from the beautiful photographs after drawings designed by some of the best German artists of the day, which accompany the new edition of Schiller's poems. The plan of this edition was formed by the celebrated firm of Cotta, on occasion of the centenary celebration of the poet's birthday, in 1859, and it has just been finished in a superior style, being one of the finest specimens of continental typography and ornamentation. The artist has not adhered to the costume of the time of Wallenstein, but dressed his weeping maiden in rather a modern and elegant attire; a liberty with which we are not inclined to find fault, seeing that the poem is of a universal character, and does not attach itself to any limited period in history.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

THE MAIDEN'S LAMENT.

See "The Story of T

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

AT SWINDON.

See "The Ordeal for Wives."

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

By the Author of 'The Morals of Mayfair.'

www.libtool.com.cn

CHAPTER I.

AT SWINDON.

'WHAT is the supposed origin of ladies' carriages, Miss Bates? They are a time-honoured institution, of course; but in these days one likes to know more about things than that they exist—one likes derivations. What are ladies' carriages derived from, and what is their supposed object?'

'My dear Miss Dashwood—I really—so very amusing!'

'Milly, listen to Miss Bates "On Ladies' Carriages." She says, *imprimis*, they are amusing.'

'My dear, I mean't nothing of the kind. I mean't, you know, that they are very proper——'

'And you separate the two ideas? You think that nothing that is right can be pleasant. Oh, Miss Bates, Miss Bates, what a fast person you are growing! How fearfully the last four years have degenerated you!'

'What spirits!' was Miss Bates's response to this little attack upon her character; 'what charming spirits dear Miss Dashwood continued to enjoy! just as full of life and fun as ever!' And then, the last bell having rung, Miss Bates insisted upon getting into the carriage once more to kiss all her dear young friends before their departure; and, finally, in the forgetfulness of affection, was very near being locked in, and borne away with them in the express train—an accident which all her very dear young friends seemed remarkably anxious to prevent.

'She means well, I believe,' said Milly Dashwood, as they caught the last sight of the Bates struggling wildly among a crowd of porters upon the platform of the Paddington terminus. 'She means well, but she is very unpleasant. Oh, how glad I am to be free from her!'

'She is detestable,' said Jane, curtly. 'I hate her—as she hates me! That is right, Miss Fleming, open the windows on both sides. We have need of a good fresh draught upon us after all the Bates' kisses!' And here Miss Dashwood threw her hat off with visible impatience at the mere recollection of her friend's caresses, and held her face to the open window, through which the summer morning wind was blowing freshly.

It was a lovely face! I speak advisedly; for few faces are lovely in real life; but hers undoubtedly was so. Such brilliant colouring! such abundance of dark fine hair! such liquid hazel eyes! I don't think there was anything at all in the expression of the features, collectively, that charmed you as you looked at her. You thought of eyes and lips and blooming cheeks alone. I am quite sure you read nothing whatever of beauty of mind or soul, as one does in romance, upon Jane Dashwood's face. You were quite content with the beauty of the outward material, without going deeper, or seeking for the exact inward charms she did not possess; and at this moment, when I first introduce her to you, dressed in a simple rose-coloured muslin, and with the broad June morning resting full upon her faultlessly pure complexion, she formed, altogether, about as favourable a type of a fair young Englishwoman in the freshness of her first maturity as you would meet, or desire to meet with anywhere.

Her sister Millicent at her side was also pretty, *mignonne*, and delicate—even more frailly delicate than Jane—but with less perfect features—perhaps with a somewhat sweeter and less restless expression than her elder sister. At the few balls to which Milly had ever been (she was only seventeen, and yesterday was a school-girl), she had had

quite as many partners as Miss Dashwood; and had, on the whole, been better liked by the men who danced with her. Jane was beautiful enough to give herself royal airs, and took full advantage of the prerogative. Millicent was only pretty enough to be shy and coaxing and good-tempered, with, at times, a slight dash of wilfulness flavouring the good-temper: but Milly found these subjective charms quite as powerful in their way as Jane's objective ones, and she was not only thoroughly unenvious of her sister's superior beauty, but, possessed of the conviction—as deep down in her mind as Milly's little mind had depth—that she would, one day or another, rule quite as triumphantly over a limited empire of her own as Jane, in all the pride of her beauty and arrogance and one-and-twenty years, was reigning over hers now.

This empire, reader, did not extend over the very first London society, of which the Dashwood girls knew nothing, but over that outlying and somewhat mouldering province of fashion, Bath, where their father, Colonel Dashwood, had been a shining light during the last twenty years. Jane had now been staying a fortnight in town with distant relatives to see the exhibitions, for which she cared nothing, and to go to see one or two operas, for which she cared a great deal: Jane Dashwood assisted a very little, you see, in white silk and jasmine-wreath, at the latter entertainments, not at all at the former ones. And she was this day chaperoning Milly home to Bath, that young person's apprenticeship at the finishing establishment of Miss Bates, Kensington Gravel Pits, having just expired.

'Yes, you are finished, Milly,' Jane remarked, when her indignant recollection of Miss Bates had had time to cool. 'Poor little Milly, of seventeen, finished! I never kissed you before Miss Bates, child; I couldn't. Let me look at you. Milly, dear, I think you look stronger than you used to do;' and Jane put her arms round her, and kissed her with one of those long, silent caresses that she never bestowed upon any living being but her sister. 'Milly, we shan't be parted any more now.'

'And I shall have to learn nothing more, Jane. I hate learning!'

'So did I, Milly. I had seven years of it—you have only had four.'

'But you were clever. You could win prizes and make progress.'

'And enemies, Milly. Now I dare say you have had some real friends at school. I never had one.'

'I have Esther,' said Milly, glancing at their young companion, who had betaken herself to the farther compartment of the carriage. 'Esther is worth a dozen common friends. I like her better than any one in the world but you, Jane, although I've only known her six months. She is so clever—did my exercises like a key, and mended my stockings most beautifully, every other thread—but not pretty, Jane, eh?'

'She is distinguished-looking,' replied Miss Dashwood, who, like all unequivocally handsome women, could afford, at times, to be generous; 'pretty is not a word for her. She has just that *air noble* which papa is always trying to impress upon our minds as so essentially aristocratic—as though little things like you and me, Milly, could be statuesque, if we tried.'

'Oh, papa!' repeated Milly, the parental image evidently coming before her mind for the first time. 'Papa—how is he?—I quite forgot to ask—and mamma?'

'Much as usual,' answered Jane,' shortly. 'Philanthropy and nerves, title-hunting and polemical tea-parties: the old routine of our house, Milly, from which I, as of old, escape as much as usual.'

'Where to, Jane? Who are your dear, intimate friends at present? What have I got to look forward to?'

'I have no friends at all,' answered Miss Dashwood. 'I never do have any; and I shall want them less than ever now that I have got you back, Milly. But I am usefully intimate with one or two young women of my own age, and

in their society I walk about the streets in winter and the park in summer. *You* know! Then in the winter old Mrs. Blantyre took me to the balls, when papa was laid up with the gout, and in the summer young Mrs. Strangways has promised to take us both to the archery-meetings and the subscription pic-nics.'

'What! the Mrs. Strangways you used to dislike so?'

'The same,' said Jane, with a somewhat hard laugh; 'and with the same amiable feelings still going on between us! She is a capital chaperon, Milly. Young married women always are—particularly when they dislike one very heartily.'

'I can understand that,' replied Milly, after giving the subject sufficient attention to grapple duly with its mysteries. 'If they take you they amuse themselves, and let you do exactly as you like, of course. But why does a woman like Mrs. Strangways care to be troubled with you at all, Jane?'

'Because new lights may bring back old worshippers to the neglected shrine, because a little stray incense—oh, Milly, darling, don't let's talk of these people now! You will learn enough of such tactics as Mrs. Strangways' without my teaching you! Do you know, child, your hair has grown darker? I am quite positive it has. I wonder whether Mrs. Dashwood will see it.'

And Miss Dashwood stroked down her sister's hair with loving hands, looking into its texture and colour with something of that close, long scrutiny with which children's hair and cheeks and eyes are scrutinized when they come back to their mother, grown and altered, after every six months' absence at school.

'Fancy Mrs. Dashwood thinking of such earthly vanities as a shade of difference in my tawny locks!' cried Milly. 'Papa, of course, would like to see the article "daughter" [generally improved and more marketable, but no one on earth besides you, Jane, ever feels any concern about me or my looks when I come and go. Luckily, it does not break my heart! I really wonder sometimes whether I have much feeling or not. Oh, Jane, talking of feelings, where is Paul?'

'Milly!'

'Oh, never mind Esther—Esther knows nothing about it, and if she did it wouldn't signify. Don't be angry, Jenny. If I thought you really cared about him I should have said nothing, but as you are only——'

'Only engaged to him it does not matter,' cried Miss Dashwood, with her short laugh. 'Miss Fleming, what nonsense has Milly been telling you about me?'

'Only nonsense, I am sure,' answered a calm, sonorous voice, singularly different in its ring and cadence to the Dashwoods'. 'I should be sorry to believe it anything else.'

'Oh, you dear, steady, severe old Esther!' cried Miss Milly. 'Please don't be so like Miss Bates on the first day of our freedom. I feel the prison-chill steal over me again when you come out with those awful moral sentiments—"I should be sorry to believe it anything else." Really it seemed like Miss Bates in person, didn't it, Jane?'

'I think no two human beings in the world could be so unlike as Miss Fleming and the Bates,' said Jane, quickly. 'If I were any judge of such matters I should say that I think both you and I, Milly, have a great many more Bates qualities than Miss Fleming has. Miss Bates is worldly; so are we: yes, Milly, dear, even you, in spite of your blue eyes and your seventeen years: Miss Bates's life is acting, every hour of it; so is ours: Miss Bates has only one object—to seem what she is not; our ambition, directed into another channel, is the same. She is odious and we are delightful, certainly; but these are adventitious conditions beyond our own control. At heart——'

'We are both of us selfish, sordid, wicked, worldly hypocrites,' interrupted Milly, laughing. 'How I do like to hear you in your sudden fits of repentance, Jenny. Come over here, Esther,' she added, turning to her friend, 'and hear Miss Dashwood holding forth on our

family virtues. Don't be shy—oh, I forgot! I have not introduced you. Jane, Esther. Esther, Jane. What a colour you have got, Mistress Fleming, with holding your face outside the window all this time. You don't look very much like Miss Bates, I must confess.'

Not very like, certainly; Miss Bates being parchment-hued, withered, forty-five; Esther Fleming fresh, full of life and health, and only just eighteen. Still Jane Dashwood had been right in applying the qualified terms 'noble' and 'distinguished-looking' to Miss Fleming's style of beauty. Handsome though she was when you came to know her face by heart, not two persons out of a hundred would have hesitated, at first sight, to pronounce her face inferior in good looks to either of the Dashwood girls. She had, as Milly told her, a colour at this moment, but ordinarily she was pale; and colour is after all the standard commonplace criterion of beauty. Then she possessed none of the little piquant graces that formed so many charms in the Dashwood girls. She was rather large, and decidedly strongly built: and beside their two little fragile figures you would inevitably have been possessed, during the first ten minutes or so, with the idea that she was not perfectly refined. With good room to study the three young women in—an open moorland, say, with sky for roof and heather for carpet—you must soon have reversed your first judgment; for every line in Esther's well-grown frame was duly proportioned; finer far, in fact, than the Dashwoods'. Her hands had the brown healthy look of hands that have lived much out of doors, but they were not too large for her size, and in shape were perfect as a gipsy's, while the Dashwoods' hands were only short-fingered, and small, and white. Her walk—on the moor, mind, I don't mean in a ball-room—was free and stately as a Tyrol peasant girl's. The Dashwood's paces were good as far as they went, but they were paces still. Then Esther Fleming's head was small and admirably formed, and this is a beauty possessed by not one otherwise handsome Englishwoman in a hundred. Her hair was fairer by many shades than you would have expected from her dark clear skin; brown waving hair, growing golden almost in a very full light. Her face—no, I will leave *that* alone; all descriptions of faces are a mistake. I may tell you of a cheek serene and clear, of black-grey eyes, of a delicate firm-cut mouth; I can never bring the living Esther Fleming herself one whit nearer to you. You will not see her smile, half shy, half serious; you will not see the expression of her loving thoughtful eyes, with all my catalogue of charms. Read, instead, the expression of the face that you were enamoured of when you first left school, and you will see before you a more loveable heroine than any that words of mine can by any possibility set forth.

'This is the wild woman of the woods that I have written to you about,' said Milly, addressing her sister, and possessing herself, schoolgirl like, of Miss Fleming's hand. 'Doesn't she look as if she had lived in the wilds of Exmoor all her life? Esther, what do you think of Jane?'

'Your sister is like you, Milly, but——'

'Prettier. Of course; I have heard that since I was a baby, and have quite left off being jealous. That brings us round—I don't know by what road—to Paul again. Don't try to blush, Jenny; where is he?'

'Mr. Chichester is in Bath,' Jane replied; 'or rather, he was there when I left. He never stays more than two or three days at a time. I can't think what in the world makes him come there at all.'

'But does he really visit at our house, Jane?'

'Of course.'

'Whenever he comes to Bath?'

'Yes, I believe so.'

'Then it is a positive engagement. Oh, Jane, and you never told me! When is it to be?'

'Never, Milly, if by "it" you mean my marriage with Mr. Chichester.'

'Yet you are engaged, with Papa's consent!'

'Yes, that is the thing,—with

papa's consent,' said Miss Dashwood, with emphasis; 'I am looked upon for the time being as settled, and am accorded leave to be at peace, sometimes even to refuse a ball if I like it. Oh, Milly, it gives the whole house such a strange air of repose, this little dream about Mr. Chichester. Papa actually allowed himself an attack of the gout last winter. Fancy his succumbing to such a weakness if he had had a disengaged daughter upon his hands!'

'As he will have now, Jane,' said Milly, after some consideration. 'I believe—only I don't like to think even you so cruel—that you are letting this engagement go on simply to mystify papa, and be at rest yourself.'

Jane Dashwood laughed. 'It is a good piece of strategy, is it not, Milly? Peace and freedom for the present, relief for the parental mind, and if everything else fails, Paul to fall back upon at the last. I don't believe he has a farthing in the world, but as soon as it entered into my head to be engaged to him—Mrs. Strangways was trying to take him up, and it amused me to assist her—I got one or two obedient little birds of mine to whisper into papa's ear that he is to have eight hundred a year when some fabulously old person shall die. And so, nous voilà!'

'And Mr. Chichester?' cried Esther, aghast with horror at hearing things which she held so sacred desecrated in such fashion. 'Mr. Chichester—what of him?'

'Oh, he is not ill-looking,' said Jane, calmly, 'and yet not strictly handsome. Dark, slight, rather grizzled hair, eyes that see a great deal farther into one's thoughts than is agreeable, and a by no means good-tempered mouth. For the rest, one could wish of course that he had a large prospective income; still, eight hundred a year, with management, is not so bad.'

'But his feelings!' cried Esther, who could not hide her indignation at such alarming levity. 'His feelings; do they go quite for nothing?'

'Most entirely and absolutely for nothing,' said Jane. 'I see you are not of the world, Miss Fleming. You believe that men die, as young ladies are represented to do in novels, from blighted affection. It is an exploded belief, I assure you. Nobody dies from any other than strictly material causes in these days. If Mr. Chichester were here I should talk in the same way that I am doing now, and he wouldn't mind it in the least.'

'He must have strange ideas of honour, then,' thought Esther; 'a strange kind of reverence for the woman he means to make his wife.' Then aloud, 'You must make allowance for the ignorance of my questions, Miss Dashwood. I begin to see that I belong to a generation gone by. I have never lived out of a country village till the last six months. I know nothing of love matters. I know nothing of the world.'

'Nor need you wish to do so, Miss Fleming,' said Jane, quickly. 'Nor, if you were thrown on the world, would you ever be what Milly and I are now. We have had unusual advantages from our cradles, and, with great natural aptitude, have improved them to the uttermost. I am twenty-one, Milly is seventeen, and we are both as entirely free from all youthful foolish extravagances in the way of sentiment as though we were middle-aged women. Are we not, Milly?'

'I know that I have got a most youthful desire for food, at all events,' replied Miss Millicent; 'and also that I am delighted to look forward to the prospect of Swindon. What shall we have, Jenny?—sausage-rolls or Bath buns, or both?'

'I never eat in the morning,' said Miss Dashwood, languidly. 'What a school-girl you are, Milly.'

'But it will be one o'clock when we get to Swindon,' remarked Esther, apologetically. 'One o'clock—dinner time—and Milly and I have had nothing since eight.'

'And then only a Bates' breakfast,' added Milly. 'It's all very well for you, a come-out young lady, to be so grand, Jenny. Esther and I are not at all above being hungry.'

Accordingly, when the train stopped at Swindon, these two

young persons got out, and with the eagerness of veritable school-girls made their way to the pastry, Miss Dashwood remaining alone in a dignified manner in the carriage. She was a great deal too *blasé* to care for eating at one o'clock; perhaps the admiring looks her pretty face attracted from the crowded platfrom formed sustenance of a more easily assimilated nature than Bath buns. At all events she bore all scrutiny with the most perfectly unruffled coolness, leaning her head back so that her brown hair and delicate profile came out in excellent relief against the dark cushions of the carriage, and seemed unusually well satisfied and complacent when the two other girls returned.

'One sausage-roll, two Bath buns, a raspberry-tart, and a pint of strawberries,' Milly enumerated, taking these little refreshments one by one out of her bag, 'that is my lunch. Esther the same; but sandwiches instead of *saucissons*. Oh, Jenny, how dreadful it must be to be a used-up victim of society like you, or a heroine in a novel, in neither of which capacities is hearty eating allowed. Then we have had an adventure, too; haven't we, Esther? Jenny missed more than Bath buns by insisting on being grand.'

'An adventure at Swindon must be so thrilling,' remarked Miss Dashwood. 'The accessories are all of such a romantic nature; fat old gentlemen swearing at their boiling soup, fast young Oxonians calling for their morning beer, nurses wildly entreating the pert waiting-girls for bottles of milk, frenzied single women imploring the guard to listen to them, or choking themselves on bad pastry in their fear of being left behind.'

'To neither of which class did he belong,' interrupted Milly. 'Did he, Esther?'

Miss Fleming thought 'he' might have been an Oxonian; but he certainly was not drinking beer, at least not then.

'And pray who is "he?" asked Jane, with sovereign contempt. 'Which of your numerous acquaintance have you met with, Milly?'

'No acquaintance at all, Jane, but an exceedingly gentlemanly interesting-looking person. You shall not put down our adventure in that envious and malignant way.'

'And what did the interesting gentleman with whom you are not acquainted say to you, Milly?'

'It was to Esther.'

'I was trying to make my way to the counter, and the people pushed me back,' said Miss Fleming, with a decided accession of colouring in her face, 'and a tall man who stood near us asked me if he could help me.'

'And Esther said "yes," in her simple way, Jenny, and he made room for us. Wasn't it thoughtful of him?'

'And is that all?'

'All! why, would you have a stranger do more, Jane? I say it was *most* attentive. And then he was so thoroughly gentlemanly in his manner.'

'So interesting!' cried Miss Dashwood, with her little mocking laugh. 'How angry I am with myself for having missed this Swindon Bayard.'

'Interesting is a dreadful word to apply to any man,' Esther remarked with deliberation. 'It makes one think of white hands, and hair parted like a girl's, and a lisp.'

'None of which our stranger possessed,' cried Millicent. 'He was a great broad-shouldered man, with a sunburnt face and hands. Much too manly-looking for your style, Jenny; you like——'

'Eat another of those saffron lumps of indigestion, Milly dear,' interrupted Miss Dashwood, 'and don't chatter. I shall have to chaperon you with more care if you take up these sudden fancies for attentive strangers.'

'Don't be frightened, Jane; he never thought of me at all—never looked at me, I believe. The whole of the attention was to Esther, who received it just as coolly as she is now eating her strawberries. I never saw any one with undeniable teeth smile so rarely as Esther does.'

'Smile! why, Milly, you would not have had me smile at a strange young man for an act of common civility! I thanked him sufficiently, I believe.'

'Quite sufficiently, I am sure,' remarked Miss Dashwood, looking closely at Esther. 'He was, no doubt, some excellent young Wiltshire farmer going down to a pig-fair, if there are such things, and —'

'No,' interrupted Miss Fleming, quite firmly, although she smiled. 'The stranger was a gentleman, Miss Dashwood.'

'With black hands and high shoulders.'

'With brown hands and broad shoulders. A manly-looking young Englishman.'

'A true descendant of the Vikings,' interrupted Milly.

'Say it out, Esther. One of your favourite muscular heroes, all sinews and high principles.'

'Of which I could form such admirable judgment while I waited for my change,' said Esther, with a hearty laugh. 'I think we had better give up our adventure, hero and all, Milly. Your sister is only drawing us out in order to make us feel how thoroughly ridiculous we have been afterwards.'

'No,' said Jane, quite gravely, 'I was thinking—thinking how oddly such chance meetings do sometimes turn out. You may meet this stranger some day, and know him, Miss Fleming.'

'As you met Arthur Peel,' interrupted Milly. 'It was in a railway carriage you first saw each other, wasn't it? And then you stayed with him in the same house, and then it all came on——'

'Milly!'

Millicent Dashwood was never conspicuously watchful of any feelings or sufferings save her own; but the moment she caught sight of her sister's face now, she became sensible that her last light words had taken effect too deep. Miss Dashwood's cheeks were burning red, her lips quivering.

'Do think of what you say, Milly,' she remarked, very low. 'You are so heedless.'

'But Esther knows nothing about Arthur Peel, Jenny. I never mentioned it before; and besides, it's all off now.'

'Milly,' cried Miss Dashwood, passionately, 'I beg you will be silent. I do not choose these jests—they are in bad taste.' And moving abruptly to the other side of the carriage, she leaned her hot face towards the open window and quite away from her two companions' scrutiny.

Millicent went on silently with her luncheon: Esther mused.

'It is good fun to laugh at the man to whom one is engaged,' she thought; 'but bad taste even to speak of some love affair that is "all off," and about which one blushes crimson. How glad I am that I know nothing of the world!'

'It came to grief about money, and papa would not hear of it,' whispered Milly; 'and Jane liked him awfully—that's all. Don't look so solemn, Esther.'

'Milly, I *am* sorry for your sister.'

'Sorry for her? sorry for our proud, handsome Jane? She would not thank you for pitying her.'

But Millicent was mistaken. Miss Dashwood caught the meaning of Esther's low, kind words, and she turned round quickly with an altered and a softened expression on her flushed face.

'You pity me, Miss Fleming,' she said. 'You are right—I need it. How glad I should be to meet you again!' she went on, after waiting a minute or two, during which Esther made no response. 'I am sure we should get on together in time. You don't think so, Miss Fleming: your face speaks for you. You don't think you would care for any further acquaintance with such an unprincipled heartless character as mine?'

'I never thought anything like that,' said Esther shyly, for the girl, in truth, was quite unused to any sudden demonstrations of violent attachment. 'I think it is impossible for pople who have only just met to say whether they will get on together or not on further acquaintance.'

'So like our dear, wise, old Esther!' cried Milly. 'You see you can't steal her from me, Jane. She is my own particular friend, and means to continue so. We shall write each other two long, crossed letters a week all the summer, and

in the winter meet in Bath, and be Damon and Pythias again, as we were at school.'

'Young ladies' friendships being famed for their powers of endurance,' remarked Miss Dashwood, who had quickly rallied from her passing touch of sentiment, 'I prophesy that in six weeks the letters will have died a natural death, and that by the winter you will have forgotten each other.'

'Not so bad as that, I think,' said Esther; 'I never forget any one.'

'What a disagreeable faculty,' remarked Jane, carelessly. 'The great secret of happiness in life is to forget everybody, except those who happen to be amusing one for the moment. Milly, dear, it is time to begin hunting out our thousand and one parcels. That wretched Bates stuffed them with her own hands into every impossible place she could think of.'

'And nothing makes papa so cross as to see heaps of things being showered upon him out of a railway carriage,' said Milly. 'It spoils the tableau of re-union. Esther, by the way, I predict that you will fall desperately in love with Colonel Dashwood the moment you see him: all young ladies do.'

And Milly was right. When Colonel Dashwood came up to meet his daughters at the Bath Station, Miss Fleming thought him the most perfectly charming old man she had ever seen in her life. It was quite impossible that a *père noble* with such a benevolent, silvery head, and who exclaimed, 'My children!' in a voice of such honest, heartfelt emotion, could have a single mean, false, or worldly attribute in his whole composition.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE COACH-BOX.

The intelligent reader must clearly see that Esther Fleming had possessed few of those educational advantages which, in this generation, make most young persons so profoundly versed in life long before the time that they are eighteen. The Shibboleth of girls like the Dashwoods was, for the most part, unintelligible to her; and what she did understand of it was little to her taste. Nearly all the eighteen years of her life had been passed in a remote village in one of the wildest parts of North Devonshire; and, until the last six months, she had been profoundly ignorant even of the rudiments of ordinary young-lady knowledge. I don't by this mean that she was uneducated: she had, on the contrary, read fewer, and understood more, books than ninety-nine 'finished' young women out of a hundred. She was thoroughly competent in household work; she could use her needle; she had learnt facts, at first hand, concerning all the common things of nature. She was well-educated, if by education one means the process that is to fit, not unfit, young persons for the life that lies before them. But in showy, superficial accomplishments — in knowledge, so called, of the world— she was, as Milly Dashwood often declared, deplorably, heathenishly deficient. She had never been to a ball; she did not know the financial difference between elder and younger sons; she had honest, romantic, old-fashioned notions (poor Esther!) about people always being in love with the people they married; she had never read any French book but 'Telamache;' she held that old persons ought to be respected; she could blush—she could feel shy. Her six months' incarceration in a Kensington boarding-school had, of course, shown her what a great number of prejudices there were for her to overcome, how much information to be acquired, if she ever hoped to come up at all to the standard of her young companions. But here the evil of these six months' probation ended. Strong, healthy natures do not take infection very readily from weaker ones. And in spite of her close friendship with Milly Dashwood, and the companionship of a dozen other girls, all more or less well up in mundane experience, Esther Fleming was bringing back just the same honest simple heart to her Devonshire home, this bright June day, as she had carried with her when she

quitted it last in the month of January.

'Be sure you write to me to-morrow,' were Millicent Dashwood's last words to her, after an indefinite number of parting kisses; 'and pray give my love to cousin David; and mind you don't think any more of that fair-haired Viking, Esther, dear. It would be so dreadful if he was only a Wiltshire farmer after all!'

Millicent, like many other very lively, good-tempered people, had a knack of saying something not perfectly agreeable at parting from her friends; something that, childish and unpremeditated though it might seem, contained a lurking bitterness at bottom. Jane, on the other hand, after being far from amiable in her manner to Esther during the last half-hour of the journey, took leave of her with a really warm hand-pressure, and with a few words about her having been kind to Milly at school, which went straight to Esther's heart.

'Poor Jane Dashwood! I believe hers is the best character of the two,' she thought, when she had seen the last of their two bright faces on the Bath platform. 'And yet, Jane's will be the most ruined by such a life as they seem to lead. Milly hasn't depth enough to be thoroughly spoilt. She will never do anything very good or very bad while she lives. Poor Jane! I should like to know more about her and this Arthur Peel; and I do hope she will marry him, and not Mr. Chichester. That was not a nice allusion of Miss Milly's to Wiltshire farmers. I am quite sure none but a gentleman could speak as that young man spoke.'

From which soliloquy you have, I hope, gathered, reader, that Esther is not to be a model heroine in spite of all the good things I have been saying of her. What model heroine would be annoyed at a little friendly playful spite? What model heroine would have the impropriety to vindicate, even to herself, a good-looking member of the other sex, of whose name, not to say station in life, she was wholly ignorant?

'I wish I could find out the truth of this subject,' pursued Miss Fleming, in thought, 'if it were only for the sake of having a small triumph over Milly. What a school-girl I have become, though, to care about such nonsense; as if it can matter in the least to me whether that fair-haired, broad-shouldered, young gentleman, whom I shall never see again, is the son of a farmer or of a bishop.'

Esther drew herself up in imagination at the bare supposition her own brain had hazarded; and, I have no doubt, would have forgotten the stranger's existence long before she reached her own home had fate and the exigencies of railway travelling so willed it; but at Exeter she happened to pass and repass him on the platform about twenty-eight times while waiting for the North Devon train; and at Barnstable she had scarcely taken her place outside the Lynton coach before the Viking himself was seated opposite her. If these were not inexorable workings of fate what else were they? Esther took no trouble to contend against a destiny so obviously forced upon her; and answered in a very cheerful and unforbidding manner when the young stranger began some of those meteorological remarks with which all Englishmen find it easiest to get over the first or inaugural difficulties of chance made acquaintanceship.

Never having myself had personal intercourse with a Viking, I am, of course, unable to say whether the stranger bore, or did not bear, upon his face that marked hereditary resemblance which Milly Dashwood had made out for him. He was, at all events, a fine, handsome-looking, English lad—well-grown, sunburnt, fair-haired, with more perhaps of vigorous strength and health than of intellect upon his face; but with an open smile upon his rather large mouth, and a keen slightly-audacious hardihood in his blue eyes, which were not at all displeasing in Miss Fleming's sight.

'I am sure my fishing-rod is in your way,' he remarked, when as much had been got out of the weather and the immediate neighbourhood of Barnstable as was possible.

'Let me stow it away down here—there's plenty of room.'

'Not unless you wish it ground to impalpable powder,' interrupted Esther, glancing as she spoke at the feet of a huge Devonshire farmer who occupied the third place in the seat. 'I am not in the least inconvenienced. I only got up to look away across the country to the left. It is a favourite view of mine. You can see Lundy on a clear bright day, but the sun is too low and hazy now.'

'You know this part of the country, then?'

'I have lived here all my life, sir, until the last six months.'

'At Lynton?'

'No, among the Countisbury Hills, about halfway between the valley and Exmoor.'

'Rather a lonely place to live in, is it not?'

'Well, it is my home; and North Devonshire is often thought the most beautiful part of England,' added the girl a little proudly.

'Ah! so I hear,' the stranger answered. 'I have never myself been in this part of the world before.'

'And you are too early to see it in its greatest beauty now. August is the time: when the valleys are white with the harvest, and the dwarf furze makes the combes and hillsides golden, and the broad moorlands seem all afire with one grand sweep of ruby purple. If you look straight away over that low hill upon our right you can catch an outlying ridge of Exmoor already. Do you see?'

'No, not exactly,' replied the young man, whose eyes happened to be fixed at that moment upon Esther's own profile. 'I am rather near-sighted.'

'You will have a better view a mile or two further on. Don't you like travelling outside a coach?'

'Yes, under some circumstances. I have not been on one since I was a schoolboy.'

'Which must be a great many years ago,' thought Esther, glancing shyly at his fresh face. 'I hope you, too, are not going to turn out wearied of everything "blazé," as the Dashwoods call it.'

'You are accustomed to coaches, no doubt,' went on the stranger, who seemed determined not to let the conversation stand still. 'I suppose they are still an acknowledged institution in these primitive regions?'

'Our country is too grand for railways, sir. When you see—I mean,' colouring a little, 'if you ever see the hills about our house you will say that we can safely defy the best engineers in the world. What a nice cold breeze is coming up from the north! doesn't it seem like another world after that stifling heated air of London? John Hartman,' leaning over, and speaking to the coachman, 'what sort of weather has it been at home this spring?'

'Main fine, Miss Esther,' answered John Hartman, in a great cheery voice, and turning round a red face smooth as a cider-apple; 'dry and open for the sowing, and wet from first o' March up to Easter. The hay 's down to farmer Litson's already, Miss Esther.'

'And more fule he!' remarked the gentleman with the feet, sententiously.

'Why, Mr. Vellicot?' asked Esther, to whom all the red jolly faces on the coach were evidently familiar ones. 'Why shouldn't Litson cut his hay when he likes?'

'I never said he weren't to cut it, Miss Fleming; I said he were a fule *for* cutting it.' And Mr. Vellicot pointed, with a significant colossal finger, towards a distant line of intensely blue uplands on the right.

'Ah, there is Exmoor,' said Esther to the stranger; 'and our seeing it so plainly now is a sign that we shall have rain by to-morrow. Such rain we have here! I don't think drops of the same size fall in any other place in the world. You get wet through in about a minute and a half.'

'What a charming climate it must be! Bitterly cold, as far as I understand our friend in front, until March; rain for the remainder of the spring; and daily showers that wet you through in a minute and a half in the summer.'

'Oh, but sportsmen don't care for getting wet,' said Esther, laughing.

'And you know the fish always rise best after rain. Is there good sport this season, Mr. Vellicot?'

'Depends on what folk reckon sport,' replied the farmer, laconically.

www.libtool.com.cn

'Well, are there many fish, I mean?'

'Yes, there be fish, Miss Fleming.'

'And don't they rise?'

'They do to them they knows,' said Mr. Vellicot, looking with stolid sarcasm at his young neighbour's bran new and elaborately-scientific London rod. 'Though there's scores of strangers already a-lashing and a-fuling about the fish, Master David killed four brace last Monday.'

'He did better than that, end of May, 'fore the visitors come,' begun the coachman; then a sudden recollection of the indelicacy of the remark, or of the possible half-crown he was risking, seemed to overcome him, and he corrected himself; 'before the weather turned off so dry. Mrs. Engleheart be looking spracker than ever this spring, Miss Esther, and Miss Joan the same.'

'And Mr. David?'

'Oh, Master David, he keeps much as usual—much as usual, Miss Esther, thank ye.'

'Will he be at the mill to meet me, do you think, John?'

'Not much fear of that,' remarked the farmer. 'He were up to our house last night in the dark, Mr. David were, after a pair of young pigeons for you, Miss Fleming.' And Mr. Vellicot followed up this information with a far-off smothered sound which, when it first left its destination, might possibly have been intended by its originator for a laugh.

Miss Fleming received the intelligence without the faintest symptom of embarrassment; but the young stranger nevertheless conceived an instant dislike towards this unknown David. The male cousins of very pretty girls are always objectionable. David, with his pastoral gallantries of young pigeons and wayside trysts at mills, was, no doubt, some red-cheeked rustic fool, to whom this young woman had been engaged since she was seven years old. She was not so very handsome, after all, when you got accustomed to her face; and her hands were awfully sunburnt, although tolerably well shaped.

'Does the coach pass close to your house?' he asked her in a very fine-gentleman and patronizing manner. 'I suppose we are getting near Lynton now.'

'We are still four miles away from Lynton,' answered Esther, utterly indifferent to any change in his manner: 'and nearly as far from my home, which lies among the Countisbury hills, straight away before us. But I shall get down when we reach the valley that you see yonder;' and she pointed down a steep leafy chasm close beside the road, through which the distant roar of unseen waters could be heard. 'The mill down below is the nearest point to my home, and the rest of the way I shall walk.'

'With cousin David,' thought the stranger promptly. 'Philomel and Baucis, Chloe and Strephon, among the woods.' And, although he had just decided that Esther possessed very few personal attractions, he remained uncommonly silent during the next quarter of an hour. This travelling outside a coach, after all, was frightfully boring work; particularly when the close neighbourhood of a young and loquacious woman made it imperative on one's own sense of gallantry not to smoke.

'There he is!' cried Esther, in immense excitement, as a sudden turn of the road brought them to the bottom of the hill; and the coachman pulled up close beside a little mouldering foot-plank across the river. 'There is David, standing on the bridge! Good-bye, Mr. Vellicot; love to Maggie, and tell her to come and see me soon. Good evening, sir,' and she turned with a shy but not ungraceful salutation to the stranger. 'I hope you will have good sport, and like our country when you come to know it better.'

But the young man's eyes were intently fixed on a most remarkable-looking figure which, too diffident as it seemed to approach nearer, was standing in an attitude ludicrously expressive at once of unbounded delight and utter helplessness upon the little bridge. Cousin David,

then, was no fair-faced handsome lad of twenty; but a man of grotesque exterior, with a loose slovenly gait, with long shambling limbs, with a vacuous childish face: a man of almost idiotic manner, and of middle age. How sweet Miss Fleming's voice broke upon him with its hearty 'Good evening,' just as he attained to this culminating point of his investigation! What a beautiful frank face it was that turned to him for a moment before she left his side!

'Good evening. I—I perhaps may have the pleasure of meeting you some day while I am in this neighbourhood?' And he actually caught himself—he, a man of the world of two-and-twenty—feeling embarrassed under the girl's steady eyes.

'It is very likely, I think. I often go out fishing with my cousin.' And then Esther, after making this straightforward reply, blushed rather unnecessarily as the stranger offered his hand to assist her in her descent.

Simple though she was, some fine intuition had, I suppose, instructed her as to the meaning of the young man's altered manner. At all events, her eyes drooped beneath his, and during the half minute that he firmly held her hand the colour on her face deepened into quite a guilty crimson. Then he saw how wonderfully handsome that delicate dark face really was: beauty is so much heightened by its consciousness of our own regard: and, I am forced to confess, his hand lingered a moment longer than was strictly necessary on Miss Fleming's while he aided her descent into the extended arms of the great rosy country girl who stood ready to receive her.

'Is this yours *tu*, Miss Fleming?' inquired the coachman, taking out a small black valise from the inside of the coach, where he was struggling after Esther's possessions among the *objecta membra* of the four outraged inside passengers: 'I can't make more than seven parcels if it isn't.'

'No; that is mine,' cried the young stranger; but, I imagine, without deceitful emphasis; for Miss Fleming's eyes were at that moment engaged in reading the name upon the label; 'perhaps this is the missing parcel.' And he handed down Esther's travelling plaid, which in her hurry of saying good-bye she had left beside him on the seat.

She thanked him with a smile in which, naturally, there was a whole world more of acquaintanceship now that she had learnt his name, and in another minute John Hartman was on the box, and the coach had started towards Lynton.

CHAPTER III.

A MUSCULAR HEROINE.

THE sinking sun was shining, warm and golden, upon the farm at Countisbury when Esther and her cousin first caught sight of it from the valley.

It was an irregular low-built stone house, entirely hemmed in by desolate hills save on the west, where the landscape opened by a wild and precipitous ravine into the wooded valley of the Lynn: its only approach a rugged moorland track, never traversed save by the carts of peat-cutters or herds of cattle on their way down from the moors: its only neighbours the weird and giant forms of the overhanging barren cliffs. The first question that an indweller of towns would involuntarily ask himself on seeing it was, how any human being could build a habitation in such a spot? the second, how any other human being could choose the habitation, when built, to live in? And yet, as Esther caught the first glimpse of its low gray walls this summer evening it came upon her strongly that she had seen nothing half so charming as her own home during the six months she had been away from it. The rosy white of the blossoming thorn before the door; the lichened pointed roof glowing orange in the sunset; the masses of delicate gray stone upon the neighbouring hillside; the fading purple of the moorlands far above—all smote her with so much of the pathetic clearness of familiar faces, for a time grown unfamiliar, that, somewhat to her companion's embarrassment, she leaned

heavily on his arm just when they reached the wicket of the garden; and without volunteering any explanation whatever of her reasons for doing so, began to cry.

'Don't, if you please, Esther,' whispered David Engleheart, softly. 'There is Joan coming out of the house to meet us. She is quite sure to see you have been crying, and you know her objection to tears.'

'I can't help it, David, dear,' said Esther; 'it is only out of joy to be back again with you. Joan herself couldn't mind that.'

However, she turned aside before entering the garden gate; and under pretence of addressing Patty, who, weighed down by the portmanteau and all other parcels, was walking cheerily beside them, managed to wipe away every trace of obnoxious and foolish emotion before Joan Engleheart came up.

'Here you are,' cried a voice, not so much loud as persistently strong and unmodulated in its tones. 'Half an hour behind your time, at least. Patty, girl, don't carry the portmanteau by the handles; it drags 'em to pieces. Esther, how do you do? you look pale.'

And Miss Joan bestowed what she doubtless would herself have termed a kiss upon her young relation's forehead. It felt more like the push from a stick or other hard material, than the contact of frail flesh-and-blood lips; however, since Esther had been accustomed to it at intervals from her infancy, she took it in its mystical or figurative meaning.

'How is Aunt Engleheart, Joan? I saw Mr. Vellicot on the coach, and he and John Hartman told me she was looking better than ever this summer. What do you think?'

'My mother is perfectly well,' replied Miss Joan. It was a way of hers always to answer questions by making an independent statement of general facts. 'Yes' or 'no' might be very well for persons who allowed themselves to be led by others in conversation: Miss Joan was not going to be led by others in anything. 'My mother is well, and able to exert herself as much as ever. What other affair of ours did Mr. Vellicot take the trouble to express his opinion about?'

'Nothing at all, Joan, except——' and the girl turned round with a smile to David; 'except your kindness in getting me the pigeons, cousin. I have so often wished for some nice white pigeons like Maggie's.'

David blushed in a manner ludicrously conscious for a man of his age and appearance: Miss Joan gave a single and by no means pleasant-sounding laugh. 'Pigeons!' she repeated, with an emphatic irony that seemed to redouble David's confusion. 'Pigeons! I think I see them, picking the mortar out of the chimneys, and eating my early peas! However, I needn't alarm myself. None but a fool, or David Engleheart, would think of full-fledged pigeons stopping in a new cot, a mile away from where they were bred. There's only one way to keep them.'

'A little salt,' suggested David, feebly. 'I have heard if a little salt is sprinkled under their new cot, it will make them——'

'Rubbish!' remarked Joan; 'rubbish! Put 'em in a pie and eat 'em; that's the only thing to prevent them flying away. Go in by the window, Esther. At David's wish, and in spite of my mother's rheumatism, we have had the tea set in the house-place to-night.'

The house-place was a large stone-flagged room in the centre of the building. In winter it was horribly cold, and made all the rest of the house cold from its northerly aspect and ill-fitting doors; but for three months of the year it got an hour or two of warmth and light at sunset, and from the time when Esther was a little child it had always been an especial jubilee for her when Miss Joan would allow the supper to be placed there on a summer evening. The small comfortable sitting-room to the south, which the elder members of the family had the good sense to prefer, possessed no charms for her like the grotesque corners and closets, the huge old-fashioned fire-place, the low rafted ceiling, the many-paned lozenged windows of the house-place: and she felt duly

sensible of poor David's kindness and crafty generalship in having tea ready for her there on this first evening of her return. Miss Joan, herself, had no taste whatever for the picturesque; and it took a good deal of argument to bring her into changing any of the routine arrangements of the household. And no one knew better than Esther what it was to argue with Miss Engleheart.

At the present moment, however, with the rich rays of the level sun streaming through the open window—transmuting its odorous frame of roses into gold, and lighting up the old oak-panneled walls into ruddiest orange-brown—even Miss Joan herself could not accuse the house-place of looking chill or gloomy. To Esther, following upon the horrible gentility of her Kensington school-room, the hearty, homely look of the old house was like going back to the familiar enchantment of a fairy story, after the chilling, although improving, atmosphere of Mangnall's Questions. She could scarcely believe that she had been enjoying the first advantages of Kensington Gravel-pits for six long months. Miss Bates, and all belonging to her, seemed a bad dream. The old house-place in the setting sun, David's kind face, Miss Joan herself, were the pleasant home realities to which she was awakening.

A reality of a very forcible nature Joan Engleheart undoubtedly was. If muscular heroines happen to come into fashion during the present generation, her form would, I am sure, serve as a perfect model for any novelist bent upon pleasing the popular taste to draw from. Strong, sharp, and spare, there was not an ounce of superfluous flesh on her body. Muscles, bones, a tough outside covering of dark skin, indomitable eyes, and a general stoniness of feature, were her leading and characteristic charms. She looked like a woman, who having found life unpleasant, had every intention of making other people share her own opinion: and such was, in truth, the key-note of her character. Human creatures, as a general rule, are not hard and angular merely that they may make amusing studies for other human creatures to speak or write about, but because untoward accidents have, at one time or another, beaten and crushed them into their angularity. Doubtless, when she was a baby, Miss Joan had the roundness of soul and body which it is normal for the young of our species to possess during the first two years of existence; doubtless, as a child, she had enjoyed mischief and sweet food like other children: as a young girl—no, a young girl she never was! Before she was sixteen, Joan Engleheart knew that her lot had fallen upon hard and barren places; that she was plain, ungraceful, reputed sullen, and, worse than all—poor. From that time until the present—how many gray, cold, bitter years that period embraced, she, herself, only knew! Joan Engleheart, soul and body, had been progressing in the process of ossification. When Esther was little, she used to beg to be whipt with a rod instead of Miss Joan's fingers; 'they stung so.' And this peculiar stinging property belonged quite as much to her heart and tongue as to her fingers. 'Life is too short to attend to such fiddle-faddles,' she used to say, when any one writhed, visibly, under her bitter home-truths. 'Delicate discrimination, fine sensibilities! does any one get on better in the world for possessing such a mighty thin skin, I should like to know? Certainly not. Then, why should I lose my time in trying to avoid pricking it? No one ever tried to avoid hurting me, and, I am thankful to say, no one could hurt me if they wished. Life is a battle: let every one make use of their own arms in fighting it. Mine are not flowers of speech and flattery.'

Certainly they were not. If the opinion be true, that to be utterly disagreeable is to be a fine character—Joan Engleheart's was a noble one. She was wonderfully disagreeable. She did everything against which human nature, ordinarily, revolts. She rose at unearthly hours in the depth of winter. She could sit without winking through

the longest sermons, and afterwards repeat them, verbatim, to her family in the evening. She, voluntarily, was treasurer of a clothing-club. She never forgot dates. She was always willing to break bad news to any one: fond of cold water, of training young servants, and giving servants notice, and keeping accounts, and detecting mistakes in bills, and, generally, hurting the feelings and taking down the self-esteem of every person with whom she came in contact. Such words as the 'Battle of Life' contained no metaphor for her. Her whole life *was* a battle. All the sordid struggles, all the hard exertion, which frail human nature, in its unregenerate condition seeks to evade, Miss Joan met half-way—nay, seemed to court with warmth; as though she knew that her nature derived vigour from every fresh buffeting she had to encounter. Poor David said it made him tired to look at her, there was such a fearful amount of spiteful, iron energy written on her whole appearance. And her moral nature was, of a truth, in strictest accordance with her hard, relentless face. To the persons she loved—and she did love two or three persons in the world—Miss Joan never made what the wildest imagination could call, a pleasant speech. She would nurse them with grim fidelity if they were sick; would sit up with them, night after night; would physic them, blister them, bleed them, close their eyelids, if necessary, with unerring nerve and fortitude. But not at the very portals of death itself would she have softened. About once a year she was in the habit of taking cold — a vindictive cruel species of cold, quite peculiar to her own organization; and the sight of Miss Joan, with red and tearful eyes, used quite to awe all the other members of the family on these occasions. If poor David had suddenly made a witty speech, the phenomenon would not have been more strange and disconcerting than was the unwonted appearance of softening or tears within Miss Engleheart's eyes.

So, at this first moment of her return, Esther only felt that Joan's face was something natural, homely, and familiar, and never missed from it the kindly affectionate smile with which David had welcomed her. 'Home looks so bright and comfortable, Joan,' she cried, as together they entered the house-place, where the best tea-service and old Mrs. Engleheart were awaiting them.

'Dear aunt, how kind of you to have everything in such nice order for me! You are looking better than ever.' And she ran up and threw her arms in her hearty way round Mrs. Engleheart's neck.

'You look chilled, mother,' remarked Miss Joan, with her own happy knack of being as crushing as every occasion permitted. 'Put on my clogs, immediately. David, I will trouble you to shut the window while Esther helps me to carry up the luggage. Patty,' addressing the girl, who with round eager eyes was staring into Esther's face, 'why are you not seeing to the kettle? You idiot!'

Mrs. Engleheart—a very passive, poverty-bowed woman of nearly eighty — had never for the last quarter of a century disputed a single fiat of Joan's, and meekly did as she was desired at once; but David, who rarely rebelled on small occasions, hesitated. 'The air is so warm, Joan, and the smell of the hawthorns must be such a treat to Esther.'

'Which is of such extreme importance compared to my mother's rheumatism,' remarked Joan, bristling.

'Oh, I think it is quite time to shut the window,' cried the girl, quickly. 'The air always gets chill at sunset. What lovely strawberries, Joan. I have not tasted a strawberry yet this summer. Are they from our own garden?'

'We always send to Exeter for our forced fruits,' remarked Miss Joan. 'Persons in our position can't wait for the sun's plebeian operations like common folk.'

Notwithstanding which gentle irony, Miss Joan felt as much mollified as it was possible for her ever to feel. A compliment to her garden or her household was the one thing that, at times, could turn aside the sharp edge of her temper;

and the sunshine of Esther's face, her radiant, childish happiness at returning home, were influences that even Joan found it impossible quite to withstand.

'You have not grown, child, and I don't think that you have improved,' was the remark with which she testified to her softened spirit, when they were all seated round the tea-table. 'It is to be hoped Aunt Thalia's fifty pounds have done more for your mental, than they have for your bodily development.

'Not much, I am afraid,' answered Esther. 'I have forgotten some of the things I knew when I went to school, and have not learnt very much in their place. I suppose I was too old to be finished, or else that finishing can't be done in six months. Perhaps I play the piano a very little better than I did when I went, and I have certainly learnt to dance. For the rest——'

'You dress your hair much neater than you used, Esther,' said old Mrs. Engleheart, who seldom heard more than Joan's very high notes in any conversation. 'David, don't you think the child a vast deal improved in her looks?'

David was, undoubtedly, in a position to pronounce a competent judgment, his eyes being fixed straight upon the 'child's' face as she sat, not in, but scarce apart from the yellow sunlight, which, partially intercepted by the waving thorn-boughs, threw a mosaic of fantastic, softly-changing lights upon the wall above her head. But the old lady had to repeat the question twice before he was aroused from his own thoughts; and then, instead of answering promptly, he coloured up, and smiled, and rubbed his huge hands, and, finally, delivered himself to the effect that he believed —he meant he rather thought— Esther was grown.

'Not an inch,' said Joan, decisively. 'Young women never do grow after seventeen. I was as tall and well-knit at fourteen as I am now. Esther has got pads in her hair, which makes her head look bigger: that's all. Talking of pads, Esther, what do you think of Patty Simmons?'

'She has improved wonderfully, Joan. You are making quite a good servant of her. What has become of William Tillyer? I remember at Christmas Patty thought herself engaged to him.'

'Engaged!' repeated Joan. 'He! he!'—actually she, Joan Engleheart, laughed. 'A girl of mine engaged! Well, she is disengaged long ago, I can assure you.'

All servant-girls were sources of genial, vital refreshment to the unflagging energies of Miss Joan's mind, but a servant-girl with a lover was a perfect well-spring to her. Waking or sleeping, a young woman thus situated gave her, so to speak, a new spite in life. The howlings of midnight winter blasts she took for whistles of assignation demanding her own immediate presence, in a flannel-jacket and clogs, outside the house-door. The crowing of Farmer Vellicot's cocks at sunrise startled her into sudden action from her bed with the well-known war-whoop 'There he is!' on her lips. Miserable though she was when inactive, she would stand in ambush for a whole summer evening behind one of the garden trees, never moving, and scarcely breathing, until that intensely-longed-for moment came, when she could pounce out upon the lovers, and shame and trample upon the man to his face, and drive the frail, detected Molly before her, with bitterest degradation and contumely, to the house. No servant could outwit her: nothing could escape her. Lovers and broken crockery, flaws in the character and in the tea-cups, were alike brought to light by her unsleeping vigilance. I believe she would have scented a 'grease-pot,' that *ne plus ultra* of domestic infamy, quicker than any other woman in Europe. She saw villanous plots in every one of the servants' actions, and accomplices in every one of their relations. Once, years ago, when they first came to Countisbury, an old man— the grandfather of the Molly for the time being—came and asked in a deprecating voice if he might have 'the wash.' I wish you could have seen Miss Joan's smile: she only

smiled in reply. As if such a woman as herself ever *had* 'a wash;' or, if she had had, would have encouraged old men who wanted 'washes' about the house?

'Yes, Esther, I got rid of William Tillyer on quite a new principle, and one that I mean to adopt for the future. "Show your sweetheart into the kitchen the next evening he comes," I said to Patty; "I like all these things to be quite open and above board." Patty, great fool, did as she was bid, and I went out and found them there together. "You are coming after my servant, William Tillyer," I said; "do you want to marry her?" Patty signed to him to say "Yes," and he said it, after hanging his tongue out, and diving in his pockets for an answer for about five minutes. "Very well," I remarked, "then I'll step up to Parson Justin's to-morrow, and you shall be asked next Sunday. Good-night." I wish you had seen his face, Esther. He begged and prayed, and promised he'd never set foot inside our doors if I'd only let him off that time. This, of course, was what I wanted; and since then Patty has had no more lovers.'

'Poor thing!' said David, kindly. 'And she really is young, and not ill-favoured to look upon.'

'Oh, David thinks it very hard servants should not have their lovers to supper every evening, and wear black velvet tails in their hair, and hoops under their dirty gowns!' said Joan, with kindling eyes. 'Esther, will you believe me that Patty wore a hoop last Easter Sunday? I had my eye on her as she walked down the aisle, because I suspected her of having pink ribbons inside her bonnet; but when I caught sight of the red merino skirt shaking to and fro about her feet over something hard and angular, it quite took my breath away. However, I followed her out, and in the porch, with half a dozen of her friends round her, I twitched up her skirts, by accident, with the hook of my umbrella. "You have been at my hen-coop again, then, Patty," I said, very kindly, but holding up the hoop for the observation of all her friends, among whom I remember was William Tillyer's new sweetheart. She cried and sulked right into the middle of the next week, but has been less strict in her adherence to fashion ever since.'

'I don't think servants want hoops,' said Esther, laughing; 'but I never have seen, and never can see, why they should not have lovers.'

'Nor I,' put in David, boldly. 'Here you have poor, honest, enduring, obliging creatures, who get up for you at horrible hours of a winter's morning, and stay out of their beds late, working for you at night, and yet you expect them to give up, not only their strength and their youth, but their human feeling to your service. It is too bad, Joan. Why shouldn't servants have lovers?'

'Because the lovers eat my bread and cheese and cold meat, and we have not quite two hundred a year, cousin,' answered Miss Joan, as she rose from table. 'What makes *you* so wonderfully lenient upon lovers all at once, David? I should have thought it was a subject that, at your time of life, you might have ceased to trouble your head about.'

I think this side-wind disconcerted David Engleheart somewhat, for he rushed away immediately, and began thrumming a very mild tune upon the window-pane with his fingers, which was an invariable sign that Miss Joan was 'telling' upon him. Esther waited until Mrs. Engleheart and her daughter had betaken themselves to the parlour, where Joan nightly inflicted a lengthened process that she termed 'readings' upon the patient old lady before carrying her off to bed; then she went, softly, up to David's side.

'Cousin, shall we go out in the garden for an hour? I long to see how all the flowers are looking, and you have not had your evening pipe yet.'

He turned and caught her hand, fondly, between both his own enormous ones. 'Dear little Esther! how glad I am to have you back

again! You must never go away again, child!'

'No, David.'

'Life at Countisbury is a poor—a wintry affair without you, Esther. The first really warm sun I have felt, since last summer, was—just at the moment when I first caught sight of you on the coach. You were smiling, Esther.'

'Oh, yes! Mr. Vellicot was making some of his quaint remarks,' said the girl, with a quick evasiveness that had never entered within the limits of her narrow mental experiences until that moment. 'I remember quite well.'

'But it was not Farmer Vellicot who was seated next you, Esther.'

'No? Who was it, then? Oh, to be sure! I recollect;' and Miss Fleming's manner became wonderfully careless and indifferent. 'That was a stranger, cousin David.'

'Ah! You don't know his name, of course?'

'Well! yes. I happened—I did not want to know it in the least—but I happened to see the direction on his luggage as I was getting down from the coach, and—let us go into the garden, cousin. Everything smells so sweet and fresh, and the stars are out already.'

'And his name was?'

'Oliver Carew.' Esther opened the window-latch, and leaned her face out, doubtless to see the stars more clearly.

'Did he talk to you much on the road, Esther?'

'Yes, a little. He has come here to fish; and I told him you fished—and so——'

'And so, no doubt, Mr. Oliver Carew hopes that he will meet Miss Fleming again?'

'I really don't know: it is very unimportant,' she answered; but, notwithstanding the uncertain light, he could see the colour rising in her face. 'Wait one minute, David dear, till I have got my hat, and then we will have one of our nice starlit walks, just to bring us back to old times again.' And she left him, and ran upstairs with all her accustomed childish spirits, the burthen of one of the familiar childish songs that he had taught her upon her lips.

'Changed, changed for ever!' thought David Engleheart. 'I ought to have prepared myself for this, and I didn't. I was a fool!'

And a sudden, sharp spasm of pain struck through poor David's simple heart.

THE SPIRIT CHILD:

A Bridegroom's Tale of the New Year.

www.libtool.com.cn

I.

'TWAS midnight, in a haunted house. I had no fears: dear heart!
The chambers of the soul are foul when shadows make us start.
A pine-log sparkled on the hearth: the dying wind moaned low;
And, lapping 'gainst the old gray rocks, I heard the sea-waves flow.

Half shrouded by a curtain's folds, at distance far away,
I sat and watched the stars of fire fade out in ashes gray;
When, ushered by a trail of light that seemed to ride on air,
A footstep with a music fall stole up the household stair.

That was no fall of living foot,—that was no mortal tread,
That, like dropped notes from some weird harp, betrayed a silence fled!
Such notes as o'er the muffled chords the low harmonic flings,
When some skilled hand, with sidelong beat, has softly struck the strings.

The door swung back without a sound,—slid slowly from its place,
Smooth as a plank that o'er a stream the rippled waters chase;
And through the unbarred portal stole a vision sweet as new,
A child-like form in mist-white robes,—a lily bathed in dew.

It was not that her face was fair as angel faces be,
Her floating locks like tendrils strayed from a wine-fruited tree,
Her meek eyes like the still blue heavens new-opened to the day,—
It was not these, dear heart of mine! that bore *my* heart away.

It was that to my lonely hearth, in such a world as this,
Should come, in pure and child-like faith, a tender soul from bliss—
Should pass unshrinking, self-sustained, with God's permission given,
The quicksand drift that fills the rift between this world and heaven!

For it was on a New Year's night, when evil souls are awed,
And spirits touched by God alone in glory walk abroad.
So, out into the darkness, love! I cast the demon Fear,
While to the glowing embers slow my vision sweet drew near.

Low sitting by the flashing wood, with hands like folded prayers
That lie at rest about the breast, then open unawares,
She basked; and, breaking into smiles, seemed with full grasp to hold
The genial heat that feels so sweet to one whose hearth is cold.

No movement made I: not for worlds would I the spell have broke.
She turned: she stooped; the conscious air she softly seemed to stroke;
As one who chased by peril stands, sole championed by a hound—
As one who knows by some fine touch where faithfulness is found.

A gladdened soul within her eyes, with spirit-pinions stirred,
Half settling where the fire-light flickered, fluttered like a bird;
Radiant as a butterfly among the meadow-rings,
Tranced in one moment's rapturous clasp and unclasp of wings!

But now, the hearth-light dying low, she rose like some new day:
The shadowy finger of the dark slow motioned her away;
And, striking on my heartstrings, love! she trod the visioned air,
And throbbing, throbbing died those wild notes down the music stair!

II.

A vassal of my father's house, an orphan child of tears,
Stood where the water lance-rush quivered, guarded by the spears;
When, blowing merry bugle blasts, urging a courser fleet,
I sought a noble hound I lost—and found him at her feet.

Familiar round his silken ears I watched her fingers curl;
Her idler hand upon his head lay like a new-dropped pearl:
As round the oak the mistletoe, that owns no native root,
Her need of love had twined her round the dumb love of the brute.

Swift fancy to the future flew!—I slipped my courser's rein.
Grave manhood at my heart stood still, and youth was come again!
The prophet in my spirit worked—so true, I seemed to know
To what a flower, in sheltered nook, this drooping bud might blow.

I stole her with a tender touch: I looked into her eyes,
From whose clear depths a fount of joy leaped up in sweet surprise.
My noble hound I gave to her, about her steps to roam;
I set her on my courser's back, and led her smiling home.

Was it the dazzling daylight glare a strange confusion made?
Or was this sweet sunlighted soul the soul that walked in shade
On ice-bound rivers heap the fires, the frozen waters flow:
So, melting in my bosom's warmth, I knew my child of snow!

Rich joy was ours! The happy hours along life's dial stealing
Left not a mark to streak with dark the kindled light of feeling.
To me whose days soared up the prime, to her whose days were few,
The young spring died at summer's side, and still the Year was New.

Through books the old dead oracles of youth did we explore;
From mount and mine, 'neath oak and vine, I taught her living lore.
The glad morn long, with flowers of song, we wreathed the budding weather;
On winter eves, from old dead leaves, we crushed the sweets together.

With day her heart in frankness shared the gladness that she brought:
At night we knew a parted hour, but not a parted thought;
Till, rising from some dream disturbed, she breathed that midnight's breath
That fanned my lone hearth's failing fires—a moving Life-in-Death!

Bursting the bonds of sleep, like one escaped from prison bars;
With smiles and sighs,—with open eyes that never saw the stars;
Swimming a sea of crystal thoughts, like a white snow-drop drowned,
Each night she came, and breathed my name, and stroked her phantom hound.

Soon fell a change. Her heart at rest, too happy now for dreams,
Went floating down the tide of sleep, like waifs on silent streams.
One night I missed her, as we miss the white foot on the floor,
When, launched afar on heaven's blue sea, Life's angels come no more!

III.

Lift, lift those eyes, my one-day's bride! where love sits throned in youth;
Bid echo speak without a voice, and give back truth for truth:
And pardon that dear treachery, which hoarded as a vow,
A spirit-secret, dark to thee, and never breathed till now!

O, answering kiss!—Leave, leave those lips to linger where they light,
Not waft and go like restless birds bound on a passing flight:
Here let them cling like birds of spring, storm-drifted on a spray,
Make summer in the winter's heart, and fold their wings and stay!

Like thee, too, spirit-guided once I wandered in a dream,
And musing strayed, and found a maid lost by a haunted stream;
Her brows with shining innocence, like some rich jewel, crowned,
Girt by lances of the angels, love! that kept the guarded ground.

She, to whose soul all loving words were relics laid at rest,
Stole a dumb love in silent faith, and clasped it to her breast.
A Christmas rose snatched from the snows that bound a grave, she smiled
With dew upon her eyelids, love!—a spirit, yet a child!

She met me with the cruel hunter's flush upon my face;
She plucked the arrow from my hand, and set a reed in place.
She garlanded my father's hall with lilies of the field:
She chained with ivy to the wall my helm, my sword, my shield.

She took my heart and moulded it; to spirit turned the clay,
Till like another Memnon, love! I felt the touch of day,
As stealing with the steps of dawn, each step a music-beat,
She walked the chambers of my soul with light about her feet!

Though wrecked like him whose ruins mock the old Egyptian sod,
I knew the hand that kindled while it lifted me to God,
Clasped in life's stony desert, love! each silent pulse would thrill
And quicken with immortal fire, and make a music still.

I wake! I hear a voice whose music dies not with the sun!
One vision lost, a sweeter vision whispers all I won:
Dear heart!—the heart that beats to mine, the soul to Heaven true,
The wifehood of my wildest dream—the child and spirit too!

E. L. H.

A COFFEE-ROOM CHRISTMAS.

THE ANGEL INN, IRONSTOWN.

LOOKING out through the darkness on the main deck of the 'Royal Consort,' paddle steamer, at the files of lamps which were passing us by as we came up the Channel of Ironstown, Captain Cocker repeated his asseveration—

'Trains! Lots of trains, I tell you: five-and-twenty in the day. Bless you, in these times they must put one on every quarter of an hour or so, to meet the traffic.'

This was a great relief; for I had embarked late on Christmas Eve at an Irish port. My good friends the Plushers had written me to come to their house, halfway between Ironstown and London, and keep Christmas Day with them. My own family were in France; so I should have had a solemn dismal day of it, quite alone at my Irish home, far inland. The idea had been sudden; and on the Christmas Eve I embarked with Captain Cocker.

It was about half-past seven of this Christmas morning, and we were coming in to the cumbrous mammoth town of Ironstown—the Tyre and Sidon of England: Tyre being at one side of the river, Sidon at the other. It was pitch dark. As we went along slowly by, Tyre was dotted over with a spray of yellow lights, like a punctured card. Here were the docks and wharves, dim and indistinct; and we stopped opposite a huge tower, with a blazing clock-face that seemed hung high in the air, like an illuminated ball.

We were put ashore. No cabs—Christmas morning. No porters—Christmas morning again. A stray man was found who did not recognise the festival as a matter of observance, save in one respect—the remuneration for his services. He shouldered my mails. The last words of Captain Cocker were, 'Lots of trains. Bless you! five-and-twenty in the day.' The first words of the porter who did 'not recognize festivals were, 'It's an early one as goes to-day.'

This remark having reference to the departure of the train, disturbed me a little; and I suggested that we should direct our course to the sta-

tion, an arrangement to which he acceded. It was very, very dark, like the middle of the night, and clocks were chiming in all directions. We came to dead walls occasionally, decorated with such flaming posters, so fiery in their vermilion, that they actually lit themselves up like glow-worms of preternatural size. I saw they had reference to the pantomimic revels that would set in the night following. I read as I ran, for we were pushing on fast, and thought, with a sort of delight, of these revels. This note of preparation has always a charm, and set the chime of Christmas bells within me a ringing. For with me happily they are not yet cracked.

Here was the terminus of the Great London and Ironstown Railway, huge and towering, but closed. We were too soon. The porter who disregarded festivals went round to the side, and returned presently.

'Wot hotel?' he asked.

'Why—have we to wait so long?' I said.

'There ain't none,' he answered ungrammatically.

'Ain't none what?' I asked impatiently, adapting myself to his peculiar phraseology.

'They're all gone,' he said: 'there'll be no more to-day, until eleven-five to-night.'

I was crushed by this blow, and went round to see somebody in person myself. There was one officer of the watch, as it were, left, the rest were away. 'Christmas Day, you know,' he said.

It was quite true. No more trains until eleven-five at night: Christmas Day, you know.

I did not feel it so acutely at first. 'The Angel Hotel,' I told the porter indifferent as to festivals to lead me to. He did so.

There was a large square lamp hung out over the door like a sign. We had to ring a good deal. The streets were beginning to fill a little, and the gasmen were flying up ladders putting out the lamps. The grey of the morning was taking the place of the pitch darkness of night. The door was opened after the third ring by a chambermaid, who 'carried' her broom much as a soldier 'carries arms.' The apologetic 'Christmas morning, you know. We so rarely have folks.'

The coffee-room fire was just lighted, so I sat there until the day set fairly in—until it got bright and light and fresh. The general furbishing and polishing of that apartment was not completed, but went on in my presence. I was indifferent, being a prey to the lowest and most morbid state of despondency. It was only now I was beginning to realize the situation.

Nine o'clock: I went to the window. The day was now quite fresh and bright and clear; the streets full—a perfect procession of people, hurrying every way and from every way, each person suggesting the idea of vigorous scouring and burnishing over night. The cleanest, robustest, most cheerful company I had seen for a long time. No wonder—*they* had not come over in a 'Royal Consort,' with a Captain Cocker, to be cast adrift miserably in a great commercial wilderness, without a friend. I turned away from the window. The dungeon—I called the coffee-room the dungeon—was of the true pattern; paper, a gloomy dining-room crimson; curtains dingy; half a dozen tables, like islands, all round, where you might dine like Robinson Crusoe in strict solitude. I remarked with a grim complacency the weak idiosyncracy of all coffee-rooms—a lavish development of Worcestershire sauce bottles. That article was displayed with a profuseness that amounted to recklessness. Why Worcestershire? The selection seemed invidious: it was characteristic of the place; but, of course, 'John Dunton' knew best what concerned him most.

John Dunton, I found, kept the Royal Angel. (A Royal Angel! how ludicrous!) J. D., in taking on the establishment, kept for many years by the widow of the late W. Maddocks, hoped for a continuance of the generous patronage hitherto bestowed. J. D. would spare nothing, &c. How loathsome these platitudes, which are the common failing of all hotel-keepers! I read no more.

On the chimneypiece the programme of the limited Impartial Insurance Company, in a gold frame. There were pictures of the various residences of the Impartial — at London, at Dublin, at Canada; and for the moment a comparison of the various styles of these edifices interested me. Then I read the whole of their officers, the sums they had divided, the advantages they offered, and other particulars—it was a device to banish care.

The waiter was now in the room —a dry perked man with frizzled hair that stuck out, and a curious way of putting each of his sides forward alternately as he walked. He was uneasy on the subject of breakfast, and made disturbance among the cruet-stands to attract me; finally—an unworthy subterfuge—he asked the number of my room.

'I have no number,' I said moodily. 'I am—I am not *quite* come to that.'

Half-past nine: Breakfast—not a creditable specimen of that meal; but, the fact was, 'Christmas, you know, sir,' &c. I *did* know; I understood him.

Half-past ten: I went out into the streets. The bells ringing furiously; every one was hurrying away to church and chapel—I myself languidly wandered to a church or chapel, according to my own special rite. There was a kind of frosty sun abroad, and it might be called a cheerful day on the whole. For them I have no doubt it was. There was a festive look over the men and women of the congregation (we all know that Christmas morning look—born of the special good-humour of the season), and even the children seemed to say, We have pudding for dinner to-day—orders to an unlimited extent will be taken.

I came back; I read the pantomime posters again on the dead walls: many boys were reading them too, with a sort of unctuous licking of their lips, as though it was the dinner list. There were many houses—the Prince of Wales among the rest—who offered two columbines to public notice; and I distinctly recal the name of the leading lady of the ballet, under whose 'sole direction' that branch of the entertainment had been produced, 'Miss M'Gusty of the Theatres Royal London and Bath.'

I came back. In the bar I saw the landlord, John Dunton—J. D., bright and busy, shining as though he had been well burnished up with plate powder and a polishing brush. Sunbeams of good-humour played over his face. I found comfort in speaking to him.

'We have absolutely nobody dining in the hotel,' he said, 'to-day. A most unfortunate accident: so odd. My son-in-law, Brown, dines with us to-day. We have a *noble* pudding. Mrs. D. mixed the suet and currants two months ago.'

I found a relief in telling him my story. He said it was unlucky: I said it was wretched. He agreed with me. He was a plain man; but no—it was no matter. He must speak to Mrs. D. for a moment.

Two P.M.: I went up to the coffee-room (odious chamber). The horrid monotony of its objects began to affect me. The Worcestershire sauce, so stolid and imperturbable, irritated me. I went over to the chimneypiece and read the Royal Impartial Insurance Co.'s programme again. I began to be familiar with the directors: the name of the Chairman amused me grimly, 'The Lord Leightonbuzzard.'

I discovered, too, an unworthy ruse. In the sketch of the office at Quebec or Montreal a public building next door was brought in prominently, misleading the spectator or possible insurer. The 'Ironstown Albion,' five days old, was on the table; and I thought of addressing a letter of exposure to the editor.

Four o'clock: Darkness was beginning: a calm, gloomy, cosy-like Christmas darkness. The lamps were being lighted again. I began to think of Plusher and his merry house. What festival was just setting in! what high jinks! He always had a bursting house: young girls, young boys, young ladies, young children—young everybody. Plusher's Christmas was known to all — so warm, so genial, so jovial! By dwelling on the details of the picture I reduced myself to the very verge of despair. There was a large carver lying on the sideboard!

Four-twenty: Scarcely secure from the horrid suggestions presented by the carver. I went down again to the bar. An unusual bustle pervaded that department. An unusual savour proceeded from some indistinct direction within. I had just a glimpse of something with gorgeous ribbons, and timidly asked, was that Mrs. Dunton.

'You are going to be very happy, Dunton,' I said. 'You will have a pleasant, warm, social meeting: holly, redberries, pudding, and all the rest of it.'

I turned away sadly, and went up to the gaol coffee-room. It had grown dusky, and the sauce-bottle stood out indistinctly. I began to feel towards them as the late Mr. Poe did to his raven. I discovered another in a corner. 'Bottle,' said I, 'thing of evil, bottle, be thou bird or devil—.' Thus adapting that powerful lyric to the situation; but I was fast breaking down. It was a ghastly attempt: I felt horribly dispirited and gloomy; and the human imagination began to rest with equanimity on the large carver.

Suddenly the perked waiter entered. Please, sir, a note. I took it from him calmly. It ran to this effect:

'*Royal Angel Hotel,*
'*Christmas Day.*

'Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Dunton request the pleasure of Mr. H. Guest's company to dinner at half-past five. They expect Mr. Brown, J. W. D.'s son-in-law, and a few friends.

'An answer will oblige.'

I wrote an answer with enthusiasm. Mr. H. Guest would have the honour. Three quarters of the load seemed taken from my heart. I went to my room, unpacked, and dressed as I would for a ball, to do as much honour as I could to these good, considerate people. I found myself getting a little cheerful as I dressed. I went down at half-past five, and was announced in all form by the perked waiter.

The good nature, the kindness, the heartiness of these honest folk I shall never forget. The first view, as it might be called, was even inspiriting. J. D. himself, in a white waistcoat, warmed you better than his own fire. There were J. D.'s children—five in number—graduated ages, J. D.'s grandfather, J. D.'s wife's grandmother; J. D.'s wife's cousin; and J. D.'s own son-in-law, Brown, an honest, cheerful soul, with a turn for jokes, and who came with his wife.

I took in Mrs. J. W. Dunton—this compliment being due to my quality as guest. As we arranged ourselves at table we got 'clubbed,' and there was a roar—a compound roar made up of many keys, bass and treble. We tried to deploy: and Mrs. J. W. and I, moving towards the same seat, mutually sat down upon one another. A roar again—rather a shriek. These little incidents I merely mention to give an idea of the tone of mind of the company.

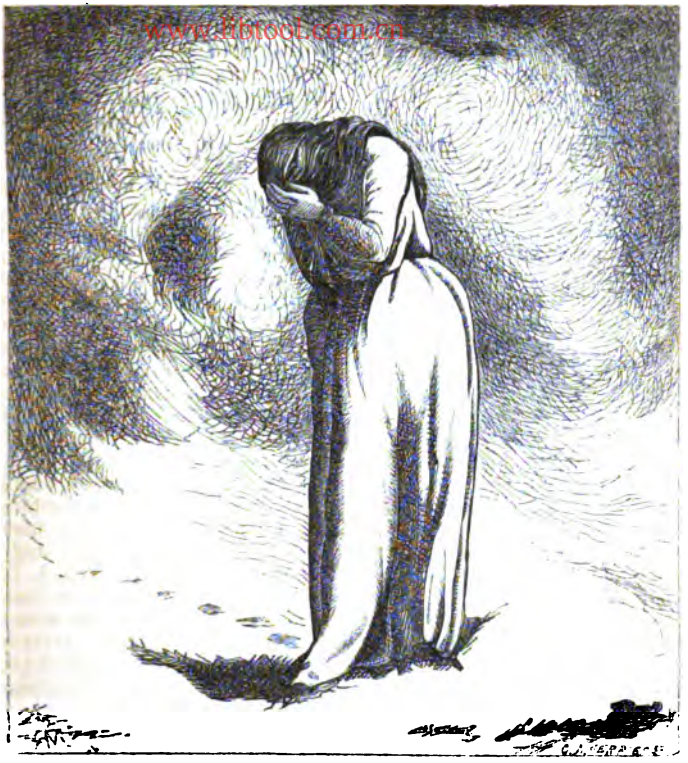
I spent a very happy evening. We had roast beef, a noble pudding (that long putting-by of the materials was indeed judicious), and a turkey which really rivalled the Irish bird in its capacity of being 'fit to draw a gig.' The strength of limb in this remarkable creature would have rendered it not disproportionate to a good-sized brougham. We had songs and merriment, and a stream of laughter, as J. D. himself put it happily 'always on tap.' The children were charming, and everybody was agreeable.

At half-past twelve we shook hands all round; and J. D. himself took me up-stairs to the best room in his house, and left me sitting at a cheerful fire, in a very cheerful and grateful mood.

I often think that when I come to making my will—a disagreeable operation, which I put off as long as I can—that I will put in the following bequest: 'And I do further give and bequeath to John Dunton, of the Royal Angel Hotel, Ironstown, the sum of fifty pounds as a trifling token of my sense of his good nature on a certain Christmas Day.'

P. F.

THE SNOWY CHRISTMAS.



SNOWED up in a lonely inn amongst Irish mountains, the writer of this little record paid a dreamy heed to the loose scraps of romantic retrospect which floated about from the lips of those who came and went about the hearth-place. They leaped and fell in fitful snatches, just as did the blaze in the shadows; and amongst the rest the following little history glimmered forth from the smoke, and wrought itself for the listener into a lasting shape in the embers. Referring to the fearful fall of 18—, which is remembered with horror in the district, they called it the story of the Snowy Christmas. Knowing what the words mean, it seems hard to turn one's eyes from the blank of the end, and dash warmly into the beginning: for the beginning was warm and bright, and this page should open, as a small door opens, into a garden of sunshine.

It was August, the glorious golden month. Hills were flushed with crimson ether, and glens were dim with purple mystery. Valley rivers ran red at sunset, and rainbows hung about the waterfalls. The bronzed corn-fields palpitated faint for joy when a stray breeze crept over a hedge and fanned their hot hearts, and in the cabin doorways the women joined their brown hands above their eyes whilst looking for the reapers coming home.

It was a sultry afternoon. The curlews on the burning beach below had not energy to scream as the flowing tide flashed like fire to their feet, where they perched luxuriously on the wet stones, and the fisher-

men's boats drifted idly out into the dazzling western haze, as though toil and trouble were a bygone dream, and they steered to the shores of eternal rest. High up on a stretch of golden moor a white cottage flung the shadow of its gable on the hot ground, and the faint smoke from its chimney hovered sleepily above in the lustrous air. The door lay open, and the threshold-stone was boldly marked with a red breadth of light. Beyond it there was a cool little hall, at present deliciously filled with the murmurous echoes of a pleasant voice ebbing and flowing from somewhere near. A white door opened from either side of the passage. In one of the rooms beyond these, a pretty little chintz-draperied parlour, a pale lady was lying on a sofa. A great vase of fern stood beside her on the floor, and the green blinds were half let down, filling the place with a cool, dreamy atmosphere. The other room was the cottage kitchen, tiny, white, and glittering. A strong-featured old woman, wearing a brilliant handkerchief folded like a turban over her white cap, sat by the hearth tending some cakes which were 'browning' over the fire, and at the white-curtained window, flung wide open to the top, a young girl was baking at a table. Her gown was brown gingham, no brooch fastened her collar, a white apron was tied round her waist, and her sleeves were rolled up over her arms, past her elbows. Many housemaids would have been discontented to wear her dress, yet a glance must convince the most dull of comprehension that this little baker was a lady.

She prattled gaily as she baked, now and again tossing her head to shake back the waving dark hair from her throat and forehead, or flashing round a merry look from her bright face at the old servant.

'It's very ominous certainly,' she said, cutting out her cakes with an air of mock seriousness; 'the tongs have twice fallen right across the hearth without any awkwardness of yours, therefore most surely a stranger is to come. And then you had an awful dream last week, which makes it doubly sure that if a stranger does come something terrible will be the consequence. What do you think he will do, Bab—decapitate us all? or bring an enchanter's wand, and change us into ducks and geese? That would not be so bad this hot weather. It would be so nice to swim in the lake all day!'

Bab shook her head. 'It's all very well for you to have your fun out of it, Miss Elsie,' she said, 'but I hope he mayn't darken our door: that's all!'

Elsie laughed blithely as she untied her apron, and laughed again as she ran up the one little flight of white-painted steps to her small bedroom under the eaves. Coming quickly down again, in her outdoor dress, with a basket in her hand, she looked in at the kitchen, and said—

'I am going for some moss and flowers, Bab. Have the kettle boiling, for mamma will want her tea. And, Bab, if I meet the stranger I'll send him to you. Oh, perhaps he is coming to take The House!'

Not waiting to see the result of this suggestion, Elsie tripped through the door out on the sunshiny heath. 'The House' was a large pile, standing solitary in a wooded recess between hills, not far distant. It stood upon the lands of Elsie's ancestors, and the setting sun was just now blazing on the windows of her old nursery. In that nursery Bab had sung her to sleep and taught her her prayers; and if Elsie's bright youth cared little that her life had fallen from its worldly high estate, the faithful servant fretted sorely over the cruel chance, and could not tolerate the idea of a stranger in the old house.

Elsie sauntered slowly along in the sun, filling her basket with mosses and water-lilies. She stood up to her waist amongst the rushes, and, shading her eyes, gazed round and round the welkin. All the earth was quiet; heavily, sultrily still, and at rest. Eternal ridges of mountains prisoned it between purple walls. A dull fever throbbed in its veins, but there was no effort, no varied action. Elsie had heard of the 'busy world,' and often won-

dered what it must be to behold the works of men, to be one in a crowd, to have variety in one's days, to see new faces, to make new friends. 'It is so still,' she murmured; 'so eternally, intolerably still. Nothing changing, nothing renewing, nothing passing away. Nature going through her slow, monotonous courses; time making us older; and still the same dull, dull, quiet life! Oh, that I had a pair of wings to fly over yonder mountain, with its smiling, denying face, half amused at and half pitying my restlessness, or that I could paddle a boat right over that golden line, out so far, where the ships pass like ghosts! There are plenty of paths to cloudland streaming down the air in coloured labyrinths ending in golden vistas; and they are crowded with travellers, fancies, and wishes, and hopes, coming and going; but on that one weary, drowsy, yellow road that leads out into the world where men and women live and work there is never a shadow, never a speck! Bab's tongs!' she repeated, smiling to herself. 'I wish some one—man, woman, or child—would come and rouse us up a little, before we die of stagnation. Heigho! Mamma says she had plenty of friends once; but nobody minds us now. Well! I don't care; only one does tire of baking bread, and gathering flowers, and going out for walks. And I wish I had not read that novel. It was a delightful treat, but I don't think it was good for me.'

She smiled again as she came near the house, and looked up at the windows. 'Now, if I were in earnest with all this grumbling,' she said, 'how wicked I should be! For it is a blessed thing to have such a pleasant little home to come to, and a dear, patient mother waiting for her tea!'

At this moment Bab appeared on the threshold gesticulating wildly and mysteriously.

'Why, what is the matter?' cried Elsie.

'He's come!' gasped Bab, while her turban nodded with frenzied impulse.

'Who?' asked Elsie, opening her eyes wide.

'The stranger. He came up the road a bit ago, as tall and as grand as you please. And he asks, "Is this Mrs. Leonard's house?" And I don't know what come over me that I said "Yes," or I might have sent him about his business. But he's in the parlour; and oh! Miss Elsie, dear, hurry in and get him out of this as fast as you can!'

Bab opened the parlour door, and Elsie advanced to it, mechanically, quite bewildered, and only half understanding the old servant, only half prepared to see a real stranger in the room with her mother. She walked in, fresh and bright after her ramble, with her curly hair, somewhat tossed, straying in picturesque rings and tendrils from under her slouched hat, and with her basket of mosses on her arm. A gentleman was sitting by her mother's couch, and as he rose up at her entrance the girl almost sank into the earth with shyness. She heard her mother say, 'Elsie, this is Mr. North, the son of your father's friend who went to India. He has only been a short time in England, and has kindly come to see us.'

Elsie, having nothing to say, gave him her hand, and then sat down. Too shy to look, she sat gazing at the fire and listening to the pleasant bass voice which was so unheard-of a novelty in that small parlour. She fell into a reverie of pleased wonder at the strange, new sensation of having a friend. Where had he come from? Had he really travelled that speckless yellow road; or had he landed with a fleet in the bay, or strode across the hills?

'You are not perhaps aware,' said Elsie's mother, 'that there is no hotel for very many miles from here. If you will accept such mountain hospitality as we have to offer it will be given most gladly.'

The pale lady said this with a pink flush on her white cheek, whilst there hovered about her an echo of that sweet, stately dignity which in past years had so well become the mistress of 'The House.'

And then the stranger, having gladly accepted the invitation, went into the hall to look after his gun;

and Elsie, trying to shake off her bewilderment, went upstairs to lay aside her hat. She brushed back her curls, and shook out her dress, and tied a blue ribbon under her collar, and then her toilet was complete; for Elsie in summer time, except on Sundays, never thought of wearing anything better than a gingham gown. As she came down stairs the stranger stood at the open hall-door, and Elsie, having conquered her first impulse to turn and fly up again, came soberly down, and saw him plainly for the first time; for before he had only been to her a vague, kindly presence. He was tall and strongly made, handsome and brave-looking, with a bronzed skin and sunny eyes. The light fell on the little maiden herself as she came down the stairs with a strange spell checking her steps and veiling the frank light in her eyes. Elsie did not realize what a miniature place it must seem to him altogether, this travelled man: a miniature house, and a miniature young lady (not more so in stature than in the very small amount of the usual requirements which sufficed to proclaim her the lady) who dared to wear gingham at tea-time, and yet approached with as stately a little step as though she were clad in silks and laces. Philip North must however have found it a pleasant picture which the sunset illumined before him, for his eyes kindled, and a delicate thrill of appreciation hovered tenderly on his lip. Elsie tried to say something polite as she passed close by, but meeting those warm observant eyes fixed upon her she relapsed into shyness, and retreated to the kitchen, where Bab was preparing tea.

A glass dish of water-lilies stood in the centre of the tea-table, and Philip North said, 'I think I saw you gathering these.' They were the first words he had spoken to her; and Elsie coloured and overflowed a cup, and then looked up in surprise and said, 'Did you? Where?'

'Down by the side of a little lake. And after you had got them you stood for a long time in a brown study, looking at the sky.'

And this was all the conversation they had till after tea. Then Elsie's mother, having conversed too much and too eagerly for her strength, lay resting on her sofa; and Elsie, looking out into the starry shades of the twilight from the open window, forgot her reserve, and found herself talking quite frankly to the stranger, telling him how she spent her time (not concealing the fact that she baked the bread), what books she read, and a number of other small things too trifling to be recorded. And then the moon appeared between two mountains, large and yellow in the soft purple night; and Philip North enraptured Elsie by telling her that he had beheld no finer scene in any land. Then he described to her countries whose very names made her cheek throb. Poor little Elsie! that was a night never to be forgotten while the light stayed in those earnest eyes.

One evening soon afterwards it happened that Elsie came to the door just as Philip North arrived from the moors with his gun and his dogs and his day's spoil. He stooped and laid the dead game at her feet, and passed on to put away his gun. Some wild idea suggesting the poem of 'Hiawatha' flashed fierily through her brain, and sent a fearful delight tingling through her veins. She stood pale and trembling, like one who had got a blow, then rushed upstairs, and threw herself on her bed in a passion of tears—why, she did not dare to know. She felt something cold on her face, and looking up saw one of Philip's dogs staring at her with mute sympathy. She leaned forward to kiss his rough face, but checked herself, pushed him fiercely from her, and drove him from the room.

Weeks passed, and still Philip North stayed, and still Mrs. Leonard observing him, weighing his words and his looks, and studying his character—still Elsie's mother was glad that he stayed. And even Bab had forgotten her dream and blessed him for a kindly gentleman. And Elsie, tripping happily about her household work, did not care if he saw her through the open window

baking her bread; nor was she ashamed when one day he came in and asked her for one of her cakes, fresh from the fire. And so her life wore on towards that sunniest point where the glad feet were to stop, where the music was to be hushed, and the light to go down. Oh, dead eyes! if you can look back on life, how do you thank God for the blissful brightness that blinded you to the end and let the grave open beneath you unawares!

Was it the creeping on of the shadow of death, that restlessness which would not let Elsie be happy in 'peace? or was it the ghost of Bab's foolish superstition rising after she herself had laid it? At evening, when she closed the door upon the sad mountains, Elsie longed so to shut out the world that they three might stay together thus for ever. At night she lay broad awake assuring herself 'Our friend is here.' Then the shadow would reply, 'How long will he be here? He will go, and you will never behold him again, never, never, till the last trumpet shall sound.' And weary and feverish she would rise when the dawn had swept away the night-clouds, and in the fresh pale morning, while the birds chirruped sleepily under the eaves, she would haunt the restful house, stealing out to feed and pet Philip's dogs; and then in again to watch the sunrise, now from one window and now from another, reading the pale scrolls of early clouds, and wondering at how recklessly we sleep away half our bright youth, drowning in dull dreams happy moments whose fast-waning measure has been meted out to us with a nice balance. And at last when her eyes grew pained with vigil she would steal to the garden and bring a handful of flowers and place them on her pillow, and, laying her cheek against their cool sweetness, would fall asleep.

One day Elsie, having been down on the beach, came in with a glorious light on her face and told her mother a story, over which the pale lady cried, as women sometimes do when very happy. But Elsie could only look out upon the mountains with a transfigured countenance, and whisper triumphantly, 'What can come now, unless death?' The glory vanished from her face and she crept away to pray for that which God saw not right to give.

Philip North bought 'The House,' and thither Elsie's mother was to return in the spring, when Elsie had become its mistress. So, being mercifully blinded, they planned in the gladness of their hearts. And Elsie went with Philip one evening to view the old place and arrange about alterations and furnishing. She went in her pretty simple dress and straw hat, walking by Philip's side over the moors, and through the wood, and across the threshold into the deserted house, flinging back shutters, and letting in the light, and making the silent old rooms ring back the echoes of her quick feet and merry voice. And so they agreed how this room and that should be appointed, and Philip made notes of all, for he was going back to the world to make many arrangements before Christmas Day, which was to see their wedding.

November came and Philip went, and in the joy of receiving his first letter Elsie forgot the pain of parting. One week went by, wet and dreary, and the next set in with heavy snows; falling, falling, whirling and drifting night and day, till dykes were filled up, and roads were blocked, and all landmarks were lost. On the first white morning Elsie stood at the window, with some dainty needlework in her hand, watching and smiling at the eddying flakes, thinking little of how soon their cruel white sting would freeze up her young life, how soon the pitiless drifts would seal her dead eyes.

There were no more letters; the mails were stopped. Thick and unceasing the snow fell. The valleys, like overflowing seas, rose to the knees of the mountains. Dwellers in the lowlands fled for shelter to their friends on the hills and forgot where their homes had been. Streams and rivers lay congealed like blood in the veins of the dead.

Every morning the day stared in at Elsie with its white blank face where she sat holding her mother's

hand—her mother, whom the long piercing cold of that cruel snow was killing, whilst with daily sullen denial it forbade all aid to approach her. Day after day she sat so, holding the thin hand while weeks went on and December was half spent, gazing out at the imploring hills and the mourning trees, trying to pray with patient courage while her eyes searched the relentless sky in vain for mercy.

Downstairs a lamp burned constantly in the garnished parlour. Christmas decorations had been made, and white curtains were looped with the red and green of the holly. Bab kept the fire burning and the lamp trimmed, and Elsie stole down now and again to see that all was neat and bright, for the thaw might come any day, and Philip might arrive, and her mother recover.

And the pale lady who lay upstairs, knowing herself to be dying, spoke bright words to the child whom she feared to leave lonely, urging her to omit no preparation, to have all things brightly in readiness, so that when the thaw should come and Philip arrive, her own wasting life might yet have a little time to burn, even until she beheld that which her heart craved to see accomplished.

'Christmas Day will be bright, love,' she would murmur, stroking the faithful little hand that held hers so strongly, as if it would not give up its grasp to death. 'I dreamed this morning that the day had come, and the sun was shining, and you and I were both dressed in white, and I was quite well again. I know it will be a bright day!'

And then the pale lady would turn her fast-changing face to where she could see the chimneys of her old home, and, thinking who knows what thoughts of the happy days passed under its roof-tree, she would gaze away above the white hills beyond with the eyes of one whose soul goes with them, trying to learn the track, trying to grow accustomed to the path by which it soon must go on its lonely journey to the unknown land.

And so the hearth was swept and the walls were garnished, and the lamp and fire burned brightly downstairs; and above, Elsie's white dress lay in her room like a wreath from the pitiless snow outside, which had drifted in through the window and remained there undisturbed. And the wind moaned round the house, rattling at the locks of the doors as if to warn that one was coming to whom closed doors were nothing. And that one came in the dead of a dark night and summoned the pale lady from sleep. And opening her eyes, she recognized the call, and, riveting one last prayerful gaze upon the dear face beside her, she turned her own from the world and followed the messenger.

Oh, pulseless earth! oh, tearless sky! you had no pity for the longing life that would fain have lingered yet a little space, how then could you melt for the unpraying dead that lay there, meekly defying you in its shroud, with its patient hands folded, waiting so stilly till you vouchsafed it a grave; or for the stricken figure that sat at its feet with a brain dulled from studying hour by hour the changed features in their unsympathizing repose, where all the floodgates of warmth had been suddenly locked and set with the seal of that chill, unheeding smile?

So Elsie sat at her dead mother's feet, and old Bab came and went heartbroken, and could not coax her to weep nor to rest. And still the wedding gown lay in the next room, and the lamp burned downstairs, and the wind rattled at the locks, and still the earth and sky were a blank.

At last the thaw commenced slowly to work. Life began to appear, and passages were cleared here and there. And one or two of those kind Christians, the poor, with difficulty found Elsie's mother a grave. And after that was done, Elsie, shunning the garnished parlour and the lorn bedroom, crept into the kitchen and laid her head on Bab's knees.

Late in the evening she roused herself and asked if it was not Christmas Eve. Yes, it was the eve of her wedding-day.

'Then, Bab,' she said, 'we must

have everything ready. Mr. North will be here to-night.'

Bab shook her head. 'No, no, Miss Elsie. The thaw has done something, but not so much as that. It's dark already, and no human bein' could know his way from the moor beyond where the roads cross. He'd most likely take the one that goes out to the Black Crags, and if he did he'd go down headlong as sure as heaven and earth!'

Elsie sat up straight and stared at the old woman, and then put up her hand to her head as if to collect her poor shattered wits.

'Some one must go,' she said, 'and watch on the moor all night, to show him the way when he comes. He will be there as sure as God is above us. I feel it, Bab! I know it! Cannot some one go?'

'Oh, no, no, Miss Elsie!' cried Bab, wringing her hands at her young mistress's white distraught face; 'no one could stay there the night through, he'd be foundered dead before mornin'.'

'You are sure of it? Ask some one; I must know.'

Bab went to inquire, and came back. It was as she had said; no one dared venture to pass a night on the moor. The snow might come on again at any moment.

'Then God help me!' moaned Elsie, as she crept from the kitchen and felt her way up stairs in the dark. She went into her own room, where the wedding-gown still lay, and she could see from the window that line of moor where the roads met. There, with hands locked in her lap, and strained eyes fixed on the distance, and white cheek close to the pane, she sat. The sky had cleared a little, and the moon had ventured out, looking pale and meek, as if she, too, had had her troubles and wept away all her brightness.

Twelve o'clock struck; and Bab, who had vainly tried to move her mistress, had perforce laid her own weary old head on a bed in the room off Elsie's and fallen asleep. One o'clock, and the night had brightened, and the moon shone clear and brilliant on the white ridges and levels of mountains and valleys. Two, and still Elsie sat fixed, and nothing had changed. Three, and the moon began to sink away among cloud-drifts low on the hills.

Four struck in the hall, and the sound roused Elsie from a state of numbness like stupor into which she had fallen. Was it the shock that made her start to her feet and, with bent brows and strained eyes, gaze towards the moor, whilst all her frame shook with the agony of suspense? Was it fate that pointed to her a black something moving in the dim distance like one riding on with difficulty? Another instant and the window is flung open and head and shoulders are thrust out. A low groan, 'My God!' bursts from her as the shadow seems to pause and then move away into that dim distance. Fleet as thought she has left the window, dashed from the room, and is gone.

Till her death poor old Bab remembered with remorse how heavily she slept that night, till she seemed to dream that Miss Elsie's figure flashed past her through the room in which she lay. The vision made her sleep uneasily, and she awoke troubled, and, rising to reassure herself, searched the house for her young mistress. In vain; one room was empty, and another was empty. Elsie was gone.

Who shall tell where? The moor-fowls that screamed past her as she struggled on, fired to supernatural effort by the strength of her purpose, plunging through snow-wreaths, stumbling over fences and clogged marshes, with her eyes fixed on those Black Crags? Or the moon that pitied her as she fell and bled, and rose and fought on again, as she must have done terribly, piteously often, ere those fatal rocks were won?

Oh, those pitiless white wastes, how they must have frozen the blood in that brave battling young heart! How they must have stung that daring soul with bitter wounds ere it could acknowledge its defeat! How they must have torn the plodding feet with treacherous stones and rocks ere they carried her to her goal—death!

But the moon waned, and the grey Christmas dawn broke, and a

traveller, riding with difficulty along the partially-cleared road, paused suddenly, thinking he heard his own name called, a sharp, clear, bitter cry, fading suddenly into silence—'Philip! Philip!'

www.libtool.com.cn

He wheeled about and gazed seaward, just as the red sun bared his brow above the eastern mountains, and glared fiercely over the crimson-stained wastes of whiteness like a ruthless conqueror exulting after the carnage is done. And out, out far, just by the Black Crags, he thought he saw a slight dark figure standing in the red light against the snow But his eyes were dazed with the sun, and when he looked again the form was gone. He pressed on his horse eagerly and thought no more of his odd fancy.

'Philip! Philip!' Oh, that last woeful cry, falling unheeded into stillness just as the poor heart broke! And he, the watched and prayed for, entered at last that garnished home; but the hearth that had glowed so brightly for him all through the long, long weeks was quenched for ever, and the heart whose love had fed its flame, and the fingers that had trimmed the lamp, and the lips that had kissed the little love-gifts lying about, where were they?

Ay, where? Who shall guess from what hollow gulf of snow, from the feet of what cruel rock, the tide carried the dead girl? The sea-gulls may scream her *misereres*, and the waves roll their muffled drums over her head, but no human mourner will ever kneel at her grave, for the body of Elsie Leonard was never found.

Philip North still lives, but wherever he goes the vision of that figure out on the snow in the red dawn will haunt him till death, and the echo of that last bitter cry, 'Philip! Philip!' ring in his ears.

This is the story of the Snowy Christmas. It is told over the logs in the cabins at night; and children will turn pale if, in the wintry gloaming, a plover sobs from seaward or a curlew cries over the Black Crags.

R. M.

PICTURESQUE LONDON.

No. I.—FROM THE GOLDEN GALLERY.

'I have vowed to spend all my life in London. People do really live nowhere else; they breathe, and move, and have a kind of insipid, dull being, but there is no life but in London.'—*Epsom Wells, by T. Shadwell*, 1676.

AM not a musician, not even a student of music, nor, so say my detractors, a lover of music. They gloze over this bit of criticism, and hug themselves with delight; they point at me the finger of scorn, and they shrug the shoulders of contempt, and they laugh the sneer of spite as they say to each other, 'Look at him! he don't know Beethoven, from Mozart, nor Sebastian Bach from Donizetti; he has no soul for music!' I don't know whether I have; I do know that when people play sonatas and motetts and symphonies I go to sleep; and that when they play *tunes*—say the '*Che faro*,' from Gluck's 'Orféo,' or the 'Harmonious Blacksmith,' or anything from 'Lucrezia' or 'Lucia,' my tears flow very easily, and I can sit and listen to them by the hour. I am afraid I have a weakness for tune; I have no doubt that a perpetual tumty-tum without definite object or aim is a good thing; but then a little of it goes a long way. I become thoroughly somnolent before a symphony is one third played; whereas I can bear to hear my favourite tunes over and over again. I sit placidly by, and murmur *da capo*. It is one of the few bits of Italian I know, and it has been learnt from patiently standing over young ladies' shoulders at the piano, and turning over the leaves of their music-books when they give an impatient kind of jerk; for I cannot read the notes, and should be otherwise quite abroad. I know, too, its meaning—'all over again,' or 'from the beginning;' and that is why I have begun this essay in this manner, simply because it is all *da capo*. *Da capo*, ladies and gentlemen! all over again! If I don't call it out you will accuse me of it; and it is much better to confess your own crime than to have it narrated by somebody else. Picturesque 'London,' you will say; 'don't we know all about it? haven't we had enough of London sketches, and London people, and London life? have we not had books about London, ancient and modern? can we not refer to Strype and Hollinshed, to Strutt and Stow, and Camden and Burgess? have we not Ned Ward, "the London Spy," Asmodeus-like, to unroof the houses for us? Will this writer be able to combine the vigour of Johnson with the soundness of Addison, the playfulness of Steele, the sentiment of Goldsmith—all of whom have written about London? can he prattle as pleasantly as Mr. Secretary Pepys, as quaintly as Evelyn? does he know as much of low life and the "fancy" as did Mr. Pierce Egan, when he sketched, "Tom and Jerry; or, Life in London," for our delectation? is he prepared to give us the antiquarian research of Mr. Peter Cunningham, or the life-long labours of Mr. John Timbs? Finally, has he the faculty for observation, the wondrous memory, the power of transcribing his impressions, possessed by Mr. George Augustus Sala, who has given a closely-written description of the twenty-four hours of the day and night as passed in London, in his "Twice round the Clock?"

Picturesque London, does this new sketcher say? We have had it all before, and are not going to have it all over again.'

In all meekness and humility I cry you mercy, and beseech you to think no such hard things. I have read the authors, and the books you quote, and am thoroughly aware of my inability to cope with them; therefore I make no such pretence. While they, purple-clad and palfrey-riding, caracole down the grand streets, we shall slip by back ways, and tread devious lanes; while they float in golden galleys in mid Thames, we shall take oars at Hungerford, and dodge in and out, floating with the tide, and seeing all sorts of quaint out-o'-the-way bits that in their grand voyage they pass by: the noise of the band on board their worships' barge is so great as to drown half the human cries which shall reach us, floating in our little boat: the awning to keep the sun from my lord and his friends hides numerous little nooks into which we shall penetrate, and prevents many glimpses of odd bits of light and shade, of glow here and reflection there, which in our little skiff we catch: the accommodation is of the homeliest, and you may chance to sit on an ill-swabbed seat; but I believe the craft is safe; and at all events we will keep a sharp look-out ahead, and take care not to run foul of any one else.

Again, I purpose to write of Picturesque London; and forthwith I am assailed by a yelping chorus of curs, all protesting against the analogy of the two words. 'Picturesque! do you know what the word means?' they ask; 'do you know how Webster defines it?' '"Expressing that peculiar kind of beauty which is agreeable in a picture, natural or artificial; striking the mind with great power or pleasure in representing objects of vision, and in pointing to the imagination any circumstance or event as clearly as if delineated in a picture." Are you going to fulfil all this with your pen?' Spare me, gentlemen! Spare me for one minute, and hear what I purpose doing. Dr. Syntax made a tour in search of the picturesque, a course which has since been extensively followed by many who have been by no means so successful; and in my own experience I have seen many men who left for Switzerland, Norway, Italy, the Nile, all with the same view, who have returned with equally small results. Now, I make no tour at all; my steed is Shanks's mare; my saddle-bags dwindle down into a cigar-case; my hotel expenses resolve themselves into fourpence for a glass of beer and a sandwich at an Alton ale-house; my letters of credit are a few shillings in my portemonnaie; and I have no passport. I leave my home when I list—when my usual work is done, if I list, or in early mornings or pleasant afternoons; and I find myself snugly ensconced in the club in time for the second joint, or cheerfully slippered and shooting-coated at the domestic dinner-table. And as for the picturesque, ah! friend and brother, not merely in Alpine mountains or Italian plains lies the picturesque; not merely in trellised vines or purple hill-side, or stormbeaten ruin, not merely in unkempt *lazzaroni*, or long-haired *Burschen*, or snowy-chemiseted *jödling mädchens*; not merely in jack-booted postilions, or tight corporals of the line, or Arab pipe-bearers, or turbaned Turks. I have seen fine bits of the picturesque from Southwark Bridge, and have marked them in the lanes of Wapping; I have seen the picturesque on the Royal Exchange and in the Stone Yard of Newgate Gaol; I have noted it in the alderman's purple, and in the beggar's rags; in the moonlight on the Pool, and in the trembling reflection of the gas on the wet pavement; in windy railway cuttings, and at dreary stations; in lamp-lit streets, and solemn squares; in Quakers' meeting-houses and public gatherings, I have seen it; but keep your eyes open and watch for it, and only have the soul to appreciate it when it comes, and you will not be long in looking for the picturesque even in London.

It is a bad thing, I thought to myself when I had decided on carrying out this idea, to start with a determination. If you say 'I *will* do'

such and such a thing, ten chances to one if you accomplish it at all, or at least in a satisfactory manner. Happiness, or perhaps more properly pleasure, comes by chance. How many devised schemes of having it have failed; and how successful have been the unthought-of pic-nic parties, dinners, balls, water excursions, long rides, and consequent flirtations, which have 'turned up' by chance! Mr. Micawber had more sense than we generally give him credit for when he waited for something 'to turn up;' and he proved right in the end, as he was enabled to emigrate very comfortably at other people's expense. So, in my search for the picturesque, I determined to make no settled rule or plans, but just simply to leave to chance the direction of my footsteps, certain to find my object before I had gone far. I am not certain that there was not something very picturesque, as I emerged, in the aspect of the quaint old houses in Raymond Buildings, Gray's Inn (the backs of them, I mean), glowing ruddily in the morning sun, like jolly red-faced giants, with their windows trembling like eyes. The grass, too, in the Gray's Inn Gardens is fresh and green, and the fine old trees are the best town imitations of forest oaks and elms. Dotted with very town-made children and dumpy, slatternly housemaids are the walks; noses, too, are, I observe, prominent, which means that middle-class Jewry —a cut below Russell and Tavistock Squares, and a cut above the Minories and Houndsditch—live in Guildford, Coram, and Ormond Streets, and send their Hebraic offspring to play in Gray's Inn Gardens. Ah! the different company seen by the brave old trees when the Gardens were a fashionable promenade, in Charles II.'s time; when Buckingham may have bowed beneath them, whispering soft nothings into the ear of some fair citizeness; when, perchance, the olive complexion and the black eyes of the king himself may have been shaded by them as he stole by on one of his expeditions *incog.*; when bustling little Pepys may have pottered about, taking note of the promenaders, and 'observing fashions of the ladies, because of my wife making some clothes;' or pretty Nelly Gwynne crossed them rapidly on her way to the theatre. Later still, too, they were places of resort, for it was in Gray's Inn Walk that the Spectator found Sir Roger de Coverley 'hemming twice or thrice to himself with great vigour, for he loves to clear his pipes in good air.' Through Gray's Inn Gate, where Jacob Tonson lived, and where a newspaper-shop is even now; so down Fleet Street —Brain Street now—where in the course of the day you may see half the intellect of London threading its way in and out, and rushing up dark courts into newspaper-offices and publishers' shops, up the hill of Lud, choked with the dust blown from the down-coming houses sacrificed to the Dover and Chatham Railway; and now we catch two picturesque views, one of St. Martin's Church, and the other just after passing the bend of the hill, of St. Paul's. St. Paul's! dullard that thou art, that is the place whence to take the first picturesque glance over London! Up there, at once! up to the Golden Gallery!

Lingering one minute to look in at the pretty picture-books in the shop of Messrs. Griffith and Farran, worthy successors of kind, philanthropic, pimple-faced John Newbery, to whose love for children we owe the publication of 'Goody Two Shoes;' glancing at the hideous statue of Queen Anne, as she appeared in her celebrated trick of balancing the globe and sceptre; past the corner where so long the smell from the melting-house in Paternoster Row overcame the odour of the Bath buns in the pastry-cook's, and whence their blent perfume sickened the passer-by, I pass on through Paul's Churchyard until I come to the south door of Paul himself; and after going up a flight of steps broad and originally handsome, but now patched and mended, uncared-for, and in shameful condition, I enter through a very shabby-looking door into the cathedral.

Have you ever been there? If you be a Londoner, I will wager you half a dozen pairs of gloves or a

new hat (according to your sex) that you have not, and you shall get my address at the office of 'London Society,' and there shall be no chicanery in the matter. If you be a provincial, and have come up with a ten days' excursion ticket, and have been staying with friends during the season, or passed a vacation in town, then of course you've seen everything; been up the Monument and down the Thames Tunnel, visited Madame Tussaud's and the Colosseum, and the Polytechnic, and various other wondrous places whither the feet of the true London denizen never stray. What an odd thing it is, that, given the power of realizing a pleasure, a distaste for, or at least a lull in the wish for that pleasure, come simultaneously! Every year we Londoners rush away to the sea-shore for sea-bathing, give up our comfortable homes, and poke ourselves into wretched lodgings or scantily-furnished, windy, draughty, melancholy houses, for the sake of a twenty-minutes' dip every morning and a promenade on the seashore every afternoon; while the regular inhabitants of the watering-place never dream of bathing, and unless they live by lodging-letting, withdraw themselves as far as possible from the sea. And when provincials come to London, they rush off at once, and make out every spare hour of their stay in visiting amusements which the Londoner only knows from the advertisements, and which bud, and blossom, and fade, without his having had any further acquaintance with them than that gleaned from a perusal of the hoardings and dead walls. So it is in every case. I have a friend a theatrical manager, who tells me that there are several men whose presence in his theatre would be gall and wormwood to him, men who inspire him with feelings akin to those which the gaping pig and the harmless necessary cat evoke in others. What does he do? Does he forbid his money-takers to receive their money? Does he caution his check-takers to keep a wary look-out lest they should invade his precincts? No; at the commencement of every season he sends round a note to each of them, telling them *that he has placed them on his free list*, and the consequence is that they never come near him. Having the power and privilege of walking in at any time, they never walk in at all.

I must walk in, however, and at once, if my pilgrimage is to be worth anything. Thirty years, 'man and boy,' as country folks say, have I lived in London, and never have been inside St. Paul's. I was once at the annual meeting of the charity children, when, so far as the cathedral is concerned, the gathering might have taken place anywhere else. I have reminiscences of bygone humour in the columns of 'Punch,' and am prepared to pay twopence for entrance money, and to be severe upon the exacting meanness of the Dean and Chapter; but the shabby swing door opens with my push, and on inquiring of a shabby man in a fur cap who ascends the steps immediately after me as to the charge, I learn that 'it have been took off, and parties is let in gratis now.' I suppose I may conclude that I am a 'party,' and so in I go.

There are several people moving about and looking at the statues, or with bent backs and upturned faces gazing up at the roof. I join one of these groups, and fall immediately into the popular position. What an enormous distance that roof is, and how bare and gaunt and unfurnished is the general aspect of the whole upper part of the building! Immediately under the very centre of the dome, let into the floor, is a metal plate which marks the exact spot where Nelson's remains repose in the crypt. Round the inside of the dome are paintings, in eight different compartments, representing events in the life of St. Paul. These were painted by Sir James Thornhill, whose daughter sturdy little William Hogarth married. They are not of 'much count,' as the Yankees say; but they have been recently cleaned and restored, and are at least intelligible, which I hear they were not a few years ago. I notice, too, that some of the windows of the dome have been improved,

and the little narrow panes removed and replaced with broader sheets. But the neck soon gets tired of the position necessary to inspect the dome from the nave, and I walk leisurely round glancing at the statues. On either side the door I mark a Napier; soldier William, 'the historian of the Punjaub,' to the right; soldier Charles, the conqueror of Scinde, on the left: both eagle-beaked, long-headed, large-souled fellows. Here is ponderous old Samuel Johnson, by Bacon, R.A., 'in a Roman shape,' a style of costume which would very much have disconcerted the eminent lexicographer, had he actually been compelled to wear it, stern, heavy, and massive, with argumentative forefinger pointing to a scroll, which may be the 'copy' of the Dictionary, or 'London,' or the 'Lives of the Poets.' Here is that great genius and kindly man Joshua Reynolds, sculptured by Flaxman, to whom both the foregoing epithets may be applied. But oh, Mr. Flaxman! what were you thinking about when you modelled that tremendous British lion as an adjunct to your memorial of Lord Nelson? The quiet simple little man with the plain earnest face and the straight cut hair is there as we all imagine him, but some of his surroundings are absurd, and the British lion is terrific.

I have heard so much of the importunity of the vergers that I am rather astonished at not being able to find any one who can tell me where I shall commence to make my ascent; and it is not until I have wandered round the monuments before described, that I come upon a mouldy old man who announces himself as the custodian of the stairs, and having heard that I want to penetrate to the 'topmost top,' demands 3*s.* 10*d.* as fees. Of this nearly half (1*s.* 6*d.*) is the charge for ascending into the ball, a service of some difficulty, which the wisdom of the Dean and Chapter discourages by imposing on the aspirant a high fee. As, however, like the rash young gentleman immortalized by Professor Longfellow, who scorned alike the seductions of beauty and the hospitable invitations of the inhabitants of the Alpine valley, my motto happens to be 'Excelsior,' I determine to undergo this Silver Fleece, and pay my money without a murmur. In return for my coin I receive three tickets, and start on my ascent. Easy-going this! the steps are broad and flat, and lying close together; and as I go round and round at one never-varying pace, I am, to my own self-humiliation, reminded of a donkey I once saw at Carisbrooke Castle, who lifts water by perpetually walking round in the interior of a hollow wheel, never making any progress, but apparently sufficiently enjoying himself. Unlike my fellow-donkey, I do, however, make progress, and after a very short and unfatiguing rise, I find myself met by a surly gentleman, who holds his lunch in one hand, and with the other beckons me to follow him. Through a stone room, something like a guard-room in an old castle, we go, and turn sharp to the left into the Library, where I am about to address my guide, when he bursts into the conventional nasal sing-song, favourite tone of every Cicerone. 'The Libery,' says he, 'built by Sir Christopher Wren' (curious and hitherto unknown fact!) 'containin' so many 'underd books; in that hoke case is copies of the Bible in so many langwidges—the portrick over there is (somebody) founder of the Libery. The carved hoke is the work of Grimling Gibbings—take a book containin' an account of the kitheedral!' I decline to purchase a book, thinking that I have spent enough in my 3*s.* 10*d.*; whereupon the sulky man becomes sulkier than ever, and, suddenly aware of the unfinished fragments of his lunch—it was ham sandwich, in which his teeth had worked great bays and Greek tower patterns,—declines to take further notice of me beyond pointing me to the right, and showing me the entrance to a very dark and narrow flight of steps. Very dark and very narrow, but up I go, groping my way with my hands outstretched before me, and feeling as if I were ascending a Brobdignagian corkscrew. Here

and there I get a glimmer of dull light from some semi-opaque window, and at last I arrive in what I see by a label is the Clock Room. Cranks, and wheels, and pulleys; and before me the heart of London, beating away the fleeting minutes of London's life. The operator is at work, winding it up with an enormous winch. It is wound up every day, he tells me, as I stand gazing at it and endeavouring to get up a proper feeling of solemnity, but I fail, and so shorten my stay. Higher up in darkness and groping, until I am received into the Whispering Gallery by a very courteous old gentleman. The Whispering Gallery is in the interior just at the base of the dome. From it you get the best sight of Thornhill's pictures, and a capital view of the body of the church. The old gentleman bids me go round and seat myself on 'the matting yonder,' when he will whisper to me. I obey, and am scarcely seated, when he startles me by a loud cough (unintentional on his part) a cough which tickles my ear and thrills through my being, and sends me off into convulsions of suppressed laughter. I hope the old gentleman does not see me, but when he recovers his coughing fit he begins to whisper. What he says I cannot for the life of me make out, but I nod, and say 'Capital;' and when I go round, I thank him for the treat he has given me, and he pauses in the middle of—oh—such a yawn!—to say I am welcome. Poor old gentleman! to spend so many weary hours daily at such a height above his fellow-creatures, and have to whisper soft nothings to the few he does see, cannot on the whole be a very enlivening task.

Upward again, through much the same kind of staircase until I reach the Stone Gallery which runs outside the base of the dome, and here I pause and take a cursory survey of the panorama around me. Cursory only though, for I am bound to greater heights, and pursuing my way I at last come upon a stout man, who asks me for my ticket for the Ball, and on being furnished with it, precedes me up a worse flight of steps. Bad it is, indeed, until we come to the entrance to the Golden Gallery, which he will not let me enter as yet, but which he says I shall enjoy on my return. He then proceeds to doff his coat, and yields to me the foremost place, following closely at my heels. Now are we in almost pitch darkness, the way narrow, and at length he points out to me a straight, perpendicular ladder, which I ascend, setting my back against the opposite side, and climbing with difficulty. At the top of this I find a kind of iron cage, into which he suggests my insinuating myself. I object, pointing out that my figure has lost its early slimness, and that I doubt the possibility of my getting through the bars. He meets this objection with an axiom—'Where your 'ed can go, your body can foller; try your 'ed.' I am unprepared with a denial to this, and I do 'try my 'ed,' which passes through; presently I insinuate my body, and then he bids me climb up the rungs of this iron cage. With a painful recollection of the bears at the Zoological Gardens, I follow his instructions, and step by step ascend until I find myself standing upright in the Ball of St. Paul's. And then ensues between me and my companion beneath me, a conversation which insensibly reminds me of the dialogue between Punch and his showman. 'Are you up, sir?' asks the man. 'I am,' I reply. 'How do you feel yourself, sir?' 'Quite well, thank you.' 'Are you pretty comfortable, sir?' 'Yes, thank you.' 'You can say you've stood in the Ball of St. Paul's.' 'Yes, thank you; I'll come down, now.' And down I come preceded by the man, whom I find at the door of the Golden Gallery, brushing my hat with an earnestness which nothing less than a shilling could compensate.

In the Golden Gallery at last, and my task accomplished! but what about the panorama and the splendid view? When I left home the morning was magnificent, now far above my head is ethereal blue, 'blue unclouded weather,' such as that in which Sir Launcelot rode by the Lady of Shalott's windows! but over London hangs a thick canopy

of smoke, blowing from the south, and very much limiting the view. Now for the first time do I note how marvellously *vraisemblant* was Mr. Parris's panorama of this view which used to be exhibited at the Colosseum; and now do I mark how the enormous image of warehouses on the south side of the churchyard, newly-built gigantic mansions, are hollow mockeries and shams, being all face, and only one room thick. Looking towards the south-east, the river seems but a narrow stream, and the bridges of Southwark and London are dwarfed and pigmied. I just catch a glimpse of the old Tower, 'London's lasting shame,' in the distance, and mark the top of the masts of the shipping in the pool. Finely stands out the spire of Bow Church, and beyond it I see the Exchange, but the Bank is not visible. That 'tall bully,' the Monument, can be discovered, and scores and scores of City churches, now probably congregationless. Immediately below me I see the General Post Office, well-proportioned and handsome, and behind it the tasty little Goldsmiths' Hall; and moving more round to the north, I come upon Christ's Hospital, so beautiful in its architecture, and looking so much larger than it appears from the street. North-west the view is nothing. I see Ludgate Hill stretching like a thread beneath me, and can trace the half of Fleet Street, but then all is lost. I see a confused mass of steeples and high buildings of all shapes, and looking round towards the south-west I can just catch the outline of the Houses of Parliament, and distinguish the Victoria Tower. As to any distant view, there is not the remotest chance of it, for the smoke is master of the day, and my first pilgrimage in Picturesque London is utterly baffled by it. Nevertheless, I have not been unrewarded; I have had fine exercise, and explored the great Cathedral, and, as the man remarked, can say that I've stood in the Ball of St. Paul's. But in my next journey I will take care that smoke shall not spoil my pleasure, or I will contrive some means *ex fumo dare lucem.*

Q.

ALBERT THE GOOD.

'These to his memory.'

(*With an Illustration by E. H. Corbould.*)

www.libtool.com.cn

STEADFAST, deep-hearted;—nay, not proud.
But set at odds with ill:
One whose great soul could speak aloud:
Yet of a voice most still:
Who through a silence deep as tears,
With courage from above,
Won to the hearts of all his peers,
And made a league with love.

The Christian knight with patient cheek,
Who broke the sword of wrong;
Who took the burthen from the weak,
And laid it on the strong:
Who gave to truth and tenderness
His guidance through the land;
Yet bore a mighty heart no less
While clasping of a hand.

Nor king, nor subject—save to God;
A noble herald he,
Whose word was sacred as the sod
Whereon he bent the knee:
The standard from whose hand might fall
That for a Queen he bore;
But not till death had claimed him all,
And he could rise no more.

So passed he, even as heroes pass,
Who ride without a stain
Through crystal streams, whose waters glass
Fair deeds that live again;
Who stem the tide of passion's sea,
And spurn the shoal of pain,
And lift the banner of the free,
With hand upon the rein.

So, forth he fared, nor swerved aside;
Resolved, with lifted eye,
Still to strive on whate'er betide,
And let sweet life go by;
So, forward pressed with zeal unworn,
Heedless of armour riven,
With 'Duty' for his watchword, borne
On the wing'd winds of heaven.

Far-looking to the conquering day,
He took no pause of breath;
Nor e'er cried 'Halt' upon the way,
But strongly rode to death:
A name dropped from the battle-roll,
It was not his to reck,
Who by the beauty of a soul
Could hold the world in check.

Then, let us deem him living; gone,
As from a well-fought field,
To some more blest Avillion
Where all his wounds are healed:
As one who, toiling near a throne,
Chose still the patriot's part,
And won a kingdom of his own
Deep in the nation's heart.

ELEANORA L. HERVEY.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by E. H. Corbould.

THE ARTIST IN THE LONDON PARKS.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

THE SCHOOL OF MUSKETRY AT FLEETWOOD.

'Now all the youth of England are on fire,
And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies;
Now thrive the *armourers*, and honour's thought
Reigns solely in the breast of every man.'

SHAKESPEARE.—*King Henry V.*

www.jstor.org

ONE fine morning we received a letter from a young friend inviting us to go north and visit him at the School of Musketry, Fleetwood, where he was at the time quartered—an aspirant to qualification as a musketry instructor.

His letter was headed with a novel crest and scroll or inscription. It represented a rifle held in position, topped with the words 'Celer et certus.' The novelty of the crest pleased the fancy and excited an interest in the visit, which decided our acceptance of the invitation.

In times of old, when it was emphatically declared that 'the might of England stood upon archers,' many of the high and noble families of Great Britain had the symbols of archery charged on their escutcheons; and the Government itself adopted the 'Broad Arrow Head' as the brand to identify public property—a mark which is still retained for that purpose, although the arrow has long ceased to be the emblem of England's 'right and might.'

The device to which we have alluded seemed to be an attempt to rectify this anachronism of the arrow as an emblem at the present day. Indeed it seemed to embody the very spirit of the times we live in, whilst it was peculiarly appropriate as an armorial bearing for the establishment from which it emanated. There it was—the far-famed rifle, the victor at Inkermann, the terror of the Sepoy—now grasped by the strong arm of the Volunteer—a most appropriate emblem of the 'National Movement,' whilst the paramount requirements of a modern fire-arm are fully declared by the motto—'Celer et certus'—celerity combined with accuracy being the great desiderata in a military weapon in our days, just as they were in the times of our worthy forefathers, five hundred years ago, when the long-bow was at its zenith, figuring triumphantly at Crescy, Poictiers, and Agincourt; and when, according to good authority, twelve arrows could be shot with accuracy in a minute, at the distance of some six hundred yards.

So much for our young friend's military device and motto. In due time I found myself on the journey northwards, anticipating no little enjoyment from my visit to one of our laborious and ever-active Schools of Musketry. The tedium of a railway journey is everywhere the same—dividing itself, like certain modern epics and romances, into the beginning, the middle, and the end—the last being by far the most interesting part of the performance. On the present occasion, and in due time, my solitary reflections were interrupted by the guard demanding my ticket. On asking him how far it was to Fleetwood, I received the laconic reply, 'Next station, sir;' and bang went the door, and on rushed the iron horse—'on, ever on' through fields of rich pasture-land, prolific in game,—till the green and waving meadows melted away and merged into a lagoon-like swamp, which soon changed to acres of mud on both sides of the rails. Then something like an island came in view, approached by a dilapidated viaduct full of gaps—then a church, warehouses, a square-rigged ship, a steamer, a diminutive forest of masts belonging to sundry small craft in a variety of situations, with a larger forest of pine logs 'taking their rest' on the mud-bank, after their tempestuous transatlantic passage — and behold Fleetwood as first seen by the traveller from his railway carriage-windows.

Fleetwood is situated at the extremity of a spit of land in the north-west of Lancashire, at a point where the river Wyre effects its confluence with the Irish Sea.

On this same spot, only twenty

years ago, all nature ran wild and civilization was not. It was to England almost what Britain was to the ancient Romans—an *ultima Thule* — 'separated from all the world'—*toto orbe divisa*, if we may adapt the quotation.

The burrowing rabbit, the melancholy curlew, and the rapid plover were its only denizens—'monarchs of all they surveyed.' But about that period the enterprising spirit and Aladdin-like genius of one Sir Hesketh Fleetwood suddenly caused a well-built town to spring into existence there, together with a harbour, warehouses, landing-stages, a spacious and magnificent hotel—in short, all the essential accessories of a commercial port were there, save one, and that the most important—namely, *commerce*. You may take the horse to the well, but you can't make him drink; and all the great commercial ports in the world have owed their rise and prosperity to that progressive development which time, events, and circumstances for the most part fortuitous, at all events unpremeditated, can alone secure. Thus arose Venice, Bristol, London, Liverpool, and New York. In spite of all the elaborate calculations of this sanguine enthusiast, cotton would not come to Fleetwood; and so this would-be Liverpool stopped short in its sudden growth; and after sundry spasmodic efforts to maintain its quasi-seaport character, it gradually subsided into a sort of overgrown fishing village.

'Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow.'

There are those who believe that there is an unknown destiny in all the works of man. At all events, 'There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will.' And Sir Hesketh turned out to be building 'On her Majesty's service.'

Fleetwood was not long destined to remain in this lethargic state of inaction, alike 'to fortune and to fame unknown.' For in consequence of the great development of the Volunteer movement, and the universal adoption of the rifle in our army, it became necessary that another School of Musketry should be organized in addition to that already existing at Hythe; and so it came to pass that Fleetwood awoke one morning to find itself famous as the seat of the establishment which forms the subject of this paper, and which imparts to the place an interest not intrinsically its own, for Fleetwood is now the School of Musketry, and the School of Musketry is Fleetwood.

The extensive premises formerly known as the North Euston Hotel, before alluded to as one of Sir Hesketh's grand erections, of prospective importance, were purchased by Government for 20,000*l.*; and they may be considered 'cheap at the money' since their original cost closely approximated 80,000*l.*

The main building has been set aside as quarters for the officers, and as such they are unsurpassed by any in the kingdom, perhaps owing to the simple, though apparently paradoxical reason that they were never intended for their present use and purpose. In England, everything designed for the use of the military is sure to be, first, unwholesome; secondly, most inconvenient; and thirdly, as a matter of course, most costly to the national exchequer.

The building has a semicircular frontage of about 900 feet. Its convex side faces the sea and river, and commands a glorious view of the river with its ever-changing shipping; Morcambe Bay, with its wide expanse of land and quicksand; and the lake district of Cumberland and Westmoreland beyond.

This *quondam* hotel affords accommodation for sixty officers, for whom an excellent mess is always provided in what formerly constituted the hotel coffee-room. Apropos of this transition from its original destination, an amusing incident is related—an instance of our modern Rip-van-Winkle-ism. A swarthy stranger, 'bearded like a pard,' walked into the mess-room, rang the bell, took up a newspaper, and threw himself into an easy-chair with all the nonchalance of 'the world's tired denizen.' Supposing him to be an officer's guest, or an Indian military hero, the mess-waiters promptly complied with his

orders, and he was soon seated at a smoking beefsteak, with oysters and all the other concomitants usually required by an Englishman fresh from foreign climes. Anon, however, the officers of the establishment began to drop in from the musketry practice-ground, where they had been actively engaged in ball-practice; and the stranger's ears were regaled with wondrous stories of unnumbered rounds of ball ammunition expended, 'and how one wing had beaten the other hollow in their volley-firing,' although it was admitted that the other had made more 'hits' in 'skirmishing,' while both sides agreed that the 'file-firing had been marvellously accurate,' *et hoc genus omne*. The man's appetite began to fail him during this terrible recapitulation. Dropping his knife and fork, he slowly rubbed his eyes, and asked himself if it was not all a dream, or had England been really invaded by the Yankees—as so often promised—during his absence, and a devastating war been raging on its soil! Explanations of course ensued, and this pilgrim who had returned from some 'sleepy hollow' in 'the under world,' bowed himself out of his *ci-devant* hostelry with the best 'grace' he could muster, after having partaken of a hearty meal at the expense of her Majesty's School of Musketry.

Leaving the mess-room, a long corridor brings us to a large handsome room, 72 by 33 feet, with a lofty modern Italian ceiling, supported by Corinthian columns. This was the ball-room in 'the light of other days.' The scene is changed now, and it serves as the lecture-room of the School of Musketry, better known to those who have gone through a course of musketry training by the nickname of the Agony, or Rack-room—a title earned from the fact of its being the scene of all the crucial examinations through which a musketry candidate must pass before receiving a certificate of qualification as an instructor in the science of rifle shooting. Here is the ominous black board, before which so many unfortunates have stood in confounded dismay at the discovery of their incompetence to 'lecture'—their faces each 'a tablet of unutterable thoughts.'

Here are strange and curious models with which the neophyte is supposed to illustrate his subject. Here are glass cases containing every possible form, material, and principle of projectile which the human mind has devised or invented, from the days of Robins to Whitworth. Here a Blakely cannon-shot, brought from Fort Sumter, into the solid rivetment of which it is said to have penetrated three feet, and not looking much the worse for the hard butting—like the negro's skull after experimenting in like manner on a stone cheese by mistake.

The walls are fitted with racks, in which are arranged specimens of the fire-arms of all nations, and of all times, almost from the first 'Satanic' specimen, described by the poet Milton—'hollow engines, long and round,' used in the war of heaven, at all events from the first rude 'hande gunne' of the fifteenth century to the all but perfect 'Westley Richards' breech-loader of the present day.

The walls are further decorated with quaint and curious cartoons of the valiant musketeers and stalwart arquebuseers of the Old Mortality.

Amongst other luxuries of the establishment—if we can include the agony room in this category—there is one unheard of heretofore in the annals of barrack life; there are here two large salt-water swimming baths, for the special use of the officers and soldiers. Fleetwood must therefore be considered a sanatorium of the army, where the men at least are tempted to acquire cleanliness, which is said to be a substitute for godliness, and unquestionably very much needed in the army as a promoter of health, of which personal cleanliness is the first rule. A clean shave and cropped hair are all that we insist on, and consequently a march or a drill of the soldiers does not impregnate the air with the 'spice of Araby,' or the refreshing emanations of Piesse and Lubin, of Bond Street.

Apropos of these baths of Fleetwood, perhaps the time will come when in imitation of the French, as in almost all our military improvements, swimming will be taught to the men as a part of their drill and military training. The French teach all the necessary movements before the men go into the water; and in the water they are practised in performing all the feats required in actual warfare, carrying their arms and accoutrements in a variety of ways according to the supposed circumstances of a campaign. It is impossible to overrate the importance of this aquatic training in the French army. If all the men be not thus trained, for the benefit at least of their health, at least we might have a certain number of men in every battalion thus rendered amphibious for the well-known contingencies of a campaign. Instances have occurred where swimming soldiers have crossed a river to surprise a hostile position, and facilitate a disembarkation.

In order still further to propitiate the goddess Hygiene, an Artesian well is being sunk in the adjoining barrack square, with the view of procuring an abundant supply of that most necessary element—pure water—the water at present obtainable having a slightly brackish savour, owing to the proximity of the sea. The contractor has engaged to sink a shaft 600 feet deep, and deeper still—in fact, even to China, as the Yankees say, should the skulking element elude him at that profundity. The boring has already advanced to a depth over 500 feet, without any signs, however, of either rock or its usual concomitant, water; so that this Fleetwood well may yet rival in depth the far-famed Artesian well at Passy, and make a respectable 'figure' in the earth's radius.

Such are the salient points in the material arrangement of this establishment.

The special object of the School of Musketry is to train officers and non-commissioned officers for the post of musketry instructors in their several corps and battalions. For this purpose, therefore, are officers and detachments from different regiments sent, from time to time, to be exercised throughout a systematic course of rifle instruction, theoretical and practical.

On a future occasion we hope to be able to impart to our readers some idea of what is done in this respect, together with some details regarding the soldiers' barracks recently erected, and the superb ranges for shooting. In the meantime we cannot do better than give, in conclusion, the substance of a General Order, recently issued by the Horse Guards, for the information and guidance of applicants for admission to a course of instruction at either School of Musketry—Hythe or Fleetwood.

Classes for musketry instruction are formed at the Schools of Musketry, at the under-mentioned dates:—

1st Term—3rd January.—*Special Class for* 40 *adjutants* and 100 sergeants, one-half of whom will be drawn from Militia and Volunteers.

2nd Term—9th February.—Regular course for 60 officers and 280 men, including 5 officers and 40 sergeants of Militia and Volunteers.

3rd Term—14th April.—Regular course as above, 5 places being reserved for officers of Militia and Volunteers.

4th Term—17th June.—Short course for a class of 100 Volunteers.

5th Term—21st July.—Same as third.

6th Term—20th September.—Same as fourth.

The adjutant of a Volunteer corps, or an administrative regiment, when duly qualified by the possession of a certificate from a school of musketry, is to be considered the regular instructor of musketry of the corps or administrative regiment, but it is competent for a commanding officer to employ as additional instructors any officers or non-commissioned officers of the corps or regiment who may be properly qualified for the duty.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by M. J. Lawless.

NOT FOR YOU.

See the Poem.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

NOT FOR YOU.

YOU tell me I must hear you speak:
What you would say I know;
It brought the rose to this pale cheek,
From *his* lips long ago!

'I love you!' you would tell me this:
Must then our converse end?
You have interpreted amiss
The feelings of a friend.

Love once on these poor lips of mine
Has set his sacred seal,—
A pledge that I will ne'er resign,
Though vainly pledged, I feel!

Against my father's wish I loved,
Against my mother's will;
False, as they prophesied, he proved,
And yet—I love him still!

And so I was alone—alone!
For years I had not heard
One accent fond, one gentle tone,
One cheering kindly word.

You came! your noble nature brought,
An all unhoped-for balm
Of sympathy, and pitying thought,
And councils wise and calm.

But, ah! too well I saw, at length—
I felt—'twould end in this,
And yet my poor heart lacked the strength
To turn from that brief bliss.

I smiled—the smile was not for you;
I sighed—not yours the sigh;
One love for me, my whole life through,
Sufficeth till I die.

Yet o'er the bitter—bitter past,
You flung a garland sweet;
I prized it though it might not last,—
Forgive the poor deceit.

Forgive me for the selfish fears,
That kept me mute so long;
Let me wash out with these hot tears,
The memory of the wrong.

But all your hope to win my love,
For ever, friend, resign;
Onward for aye apart we move,
You your way, and I mine!

MISS MORTON'S MINCE PIES.

I.

AT five minutes to eight precisely, on the morning of December the 21st, 184-, a dark-haired damsel entered a room whose furniture indicated rather a lawyer's or an architect's office than the boudoir of a wealthy young woman who had just completed her twenty-fourth year. The room, too, was small, when compared with the size of the mansion. It was one of those snug nooks into which the owners of great houses love to escape, as a refuge from the solitary vastness of their state apartments.

She looked round the room, and gave half a sigh—not a sigh of sorrow, but of patient weariness. Everything was singularly utilitarian to belong to an elegant unmarried woman. There were book-cases containing gazetteers, dictionaries, and acts of parliament, but not a single smart-bound entertaining work; not one novel, poem, or book of prints.

The only ornaments which tempered the business-like severity of the place were, in the middle of the large table, an old china jar with a bouquet of laurustinas and monthly roses, and at the window which faced the south, a small antique carved oak bench, which was occupied by a cage containing a pair of siskins, and flanked on each side by a large camellia, one covered with pure white, the other with bright crimson blossoms. As daylight brightened the little tenants of the cage woke up. The male bird began his soft and ready song, always cheerful and never noisy. The hen peeped through the wires of her cage, calling to her mistress to notice her as plainly as the voice of bird could speak.

'Ah, yes! I know what *you* want,' said the lady, rising, and taking a cluster of the fruit of the elder-tree from a little box that stood on the bench. 'I wish everybody's wants were as easily supplied.'

An old servant, not in livery, with white, not powdered, hair, slowly opened the door. 'Good morning, Miss Morton,' he said, with a bow. 'If you please, ma'am, Mr. Saunders is here.'

Be it recorded that our heroine expected her personal attendants to wish her good morning every day, which salutation she punctually returned.

'Good morning, Robert,' replied the lady, cordially.

'Come in, dear sir,' she continued, addressing the person outside. 'Good morning to you, and a good stock of courage. The shortest day will be hardly long enough for what we have to do.'

'A good morning to you, madam, and best wishes also. The wedding, I presume, still remains fixed for the twenty-fourth?'

'Of course, dear sir. It has been so arranged, and there is no reason for changing it. It seems sudden, though, as the day draws nigh. On Christmas Eve—I can hardly believe it—I take unto myself a lord and master.'

'A good lord, madam, who makes you Lady Farlington, with a countess's coronet in certain prospect. Not a master, madam—which you do not want—but a husband and a friend—of which you do really stand in need.'

'It is true, dear sir,' replied the lady, gravely; 'although I have found true and good friends in yourself and that worthy woman Curtis.'

'We are only faithful servants, madam; we are confidential attendants, Miss Morton; we simply form part of your suite. We are too old, as well as too far below you in birth and wealth to aspire to more. You will soon enjoy equal companionship.'

The lady was about to make some reply, when the clock in the central turret struck eight, with slow and deliberate strokes, as if exemplifying its own motto—'FESTINA LENTE.' At the third stroke the door again opened to admit an upright elderly lady dressed in russet silk, with a pale and wrinkled countenance animated by clear grey eyes. A pro-

fusion of flaxen hair, which set up a stout resistance to turning grey, was surmounted by a cap pretentious through the quality of its lace, and picturesque and dressy by its ample lappets. She had once been very handsome; and the comforting persuasion that she was handsome still—for her time of life—shed a placid complacency over her countenance. This matronly person was followed by old Robert bearing a well-filled tray, whose contents he arranged on the small table and the dumb waiter, and then retired.

'Good morning, Curtis,' said the younger lady to her *dame de compagnie*, affectionately kissing her on either cheek, as if she had been her aunt or her mother. 'Quite well? Punctual as usual with breakfast on business days. Do you join us, dear sir?'

'I thank you much, madam; but I have already breakfasted.'

'With your habitual economy of time, dear sir.'

Of the three persons here closeted together, the youngest, Angelica Farleigh Morton, was one of those heiresses in whose personality several fortunes naturally converge, exactly as mountain streams, which find no other outlet, contribute to form a lake. She was an only child; her parents, Walter and Angelica Farleigh, had followed each other rapidly to the grave when she was but ten years old. From them she inherited the Madderley Park estate, together with all the rest of their substance. A great uncle and two maiden aunts on her mother's side bequeathed, the former, landed property in Scotland, the latter wide estates in Wales, requesting her to add to her paternal patronymic their family name of Morton. These possessions, well nursed during a long minority, produced a revenue befitting a peerage, and attracted many an aspirant to the hand of their owner. Poor Angelica would have been puzzled to choose, if only from the number of suitors to choose from. But she had heard so much of the misfortunes and miseries of heiresses who had married scamps, that at one time, in despair, she had serious thoughts of escaping that danger by taking sorrowful refuge in maidenhood for life. She had no near relations to whose advice she could listen; distant cousins might only confirm her resolution, as ultimately tending to their own advantage. Mr. Saunders, however, succeeded in convincing her that the heir to an earldom, six years older than herself, an active member of parliament, and holding an under-secretaryship in the ministry, with a handsome person and gentlemanly tastes, really presented a suitable match and reasonable prospects of happiness. After three months' hesitation Lord Farlington's offer had been formally accepted.

The confidential adviser, whose counsel had turned the scale between matrimony and old-maidenhood, had managed the Madderley Park estate before Angelica was born. With her earliest recollections were associated his periodical audiences in her father's study; he was tall and ruddy then; as tall and ruddy, though slightly stooping, now. Upwards of sixty, he was yet hale and vigorous, owing, he said, to his carrying out the maxim, 'Early to bed, and early to rise;' with other favourable circumstances, doubtless, combined. He had received Angelica from her parents almost as a sacred charge, and he regarded the furtherance of her interests as nearly a parental duty. His intercourse with her was marked by great respect. From the moment of her becoming the representative of so much wealth, he mostly addressed the girl as 'Madam.' Nor was his outward respect a piece of acting. He found in her a rectitude of mind, a decision of character, and a love of justice which it delighted him to recognize in the daughter of the house he had served so long. On her part there could only be reverence and attachment for so old and so faithful a friend. She very rarely addressed him by name, but conferred upon him the official title of 'Dear sir,' occasionally expanded into 'My dear sir.'

The lady whom Angelica addressed as 'Curtis,' had been her governess at the time of her parents' death; and, with her guardians'

consent, when the call for tuition ceased, had continued with her ever since as chaperon, companion, and friend. During an illness, through which she had nursed the child, 'Miss' Curtis had been abbreviated into Curtis, simply to save weak breath. The abbreviation survived the weakness, but only in private intercourse. Before visitors and the world in general, Miss Curtis always received the spinsterly title to which she had a right as a power in the establishment. Besides her young charge, Angelica, Miss Curtis had no friends or relations she much cared for, or who she believed cared much for her. A long residence in an aristocratic mansion gradually estranges its inmates from their old acquaintances without. She had once had a lover, a promising young clergyman, and had even engaged to marry him; but the doctors sent him to Italy, for a chest complaint, and he died on his way thither at Thun, in Switzerland. Years afterwards, while on a tour in that country with her pupil, they went unaccountably out of their way, and visited Thun, although not in their itinerary. While Angelica was admiring the famous view from the cemetery, gazing at the white Blumlis Alp and the dark-green Niesen, poor Miss Curtis, regardless of their glories, was shedding bitter tears over a modest grave.

'As you do not partake of our meal,' Miss Morton said, 'perhaps, dear sir, while Curtis and I are despatching our tea and toast, you will have the goodness to run your eye through that pile of letters, and give me your opinion about them. Only twenty-seven begging letters in the course of one week! Applications—appeals to my generosity, they call them; sometimes even, debts due by the rich to the poor, loans to the Lord, and so forth. But in all cases, I am expected to give; which I would do willingly, as far as my means go, supposing the object to be worthy. You, dear sir, have taught me to say "No," when the object appears to be unworthy; and a very useful little word it is. We fill a hard position, do we heiresses. We wish to do good; and we dare not stir a step, for fear of committing blunders. We are afraid to marry, afraid to give, afraid to make new or intimate acquaintances. We are a booty to be scrambled for. Every man's hand is raised against us; and what stranger we can trust, we know not. You must recognise the handwriting of several of them?'

'Perfectly, madam. This; and this, for instance.'

'I have double-crossed those which require no further notice. Please to cause inquiry to be made into them which are crossed only once. On the others, I have marked the sums I think we might give.'

'Amongst these applications for assistance,' the old steward observed, 'I expected to have seen, and wish I had seen, one from your neighbours, the Trimnell family. Their seven acres of land have always been mortgaged, as long as I can remember anything. The father's long illness and death, the son's accident with his broken collarbone, the failure of their potato crop by this new and mysterious disease, and other misfortunes, which never come single, must have reduced them greatly. They have lately involved their little property still more deeply, and have fallen, I suspect, into very bad hands. Henry Trimnell, you remember, madam, voted against you at the last election. It was not his will. He was forced to it by the party who will come down upon him with a crash before very long.'

'Poor fellow! We must try and help him.'

'The only way to help him, Miss Farleigh Morton, is to get possession of his land, and let him remain on it as your tenant. Besides, ever since I have known Madderley, it has been as constant a tradition with the family that the Trimnell's Seven Acres ought to belong to the Hall Estate, as it is with Russia to take Constantinople. You own the whole parish, except his little patch. He and you are the sole parishioners who have rights on the common; that is, the common belongs to two persons only. When you have obtained his seven acres and his common rights, you will carry your belt of trees outside him, and will have

the whole parish within a ring-fence. If I see clearly, the thing may be done before a month is over.'

'The annexation of the Trimnell's Seven Acres, dear sir, is one of the few points about which we differ. *I* don't want their land. It is not contiguous to mine, but it is separated from it by a highway road. I *am* in a ring-fence already. *I* like the common as it is. *You* want to enclose and encircle it with a strip of stifling plantation, although we are overdone with trees. When I am tired of the park, and want air, I go up to the common, and can breathe freely. As to the family traditional policy, it is a mere lawyer's or land-agent's notion. It is unjust and grasping, and I do not adopt it.'

'You are your own mistress, Miss Farleigh Morton,' the steward replied with slight vexation. 'I only do my duty as your man of business, when I watch every circumstance likely to improve the estate. But you may quiet any scruples by being assured that Henry Trimnell must either come to you at last, or go to far worse grief.'

'I hope not, most sincerely.'

'Your hope, madam, will be disappointed. His fate is as certain as that of the lamb in the grasp of the wolf. He is turning over in his mind all sorts of desperate measures. He talks of going to Australia, with his younger brother and the wreck of his property: he won't go to Australia, because he won't leave his mother to die here alone. The Evil One has tempted him to marry the Widow Smithson, who has been making up to him for the last two years, and whose property would set him all right again. He won't marry the Widow Smithson; because he is too fond of Susan Blake, Susan Blake being equally fond of him. No doubt, he has seriously thought of enlisting, likewise of hanging and drowning; but he has good sense enough to see that neither soldiering nor self-destruction will greatly better his plight. Like other people at their wits' end, he looks earnestly for a loop-hole of escape, finds none, and stops where he is.'

Miss Morton merely observed, 'We shall see. I am very sorry for him indeed. To change the subject, were you able, dear sir, to complete the little affair I mentioned?'

'Certainly, madam. Here are the papers at your disposal.'

'Capital! Curtis, this concerns you. My change of position compels me to look to my expenses. You remain with us, you know, exactly on the old footing, but your stipend is to be reduced one half.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed the lady companion, in utter astonishment. 'Certainly, if need were, after so many happy years, I would willingly remain with you without any remuneration whatever. My little patrimony and my savings have made me what people call "independent"—as if any one in this world were independent of others! But may I inquire, Miss Morton, whether you intend carrying out the same reduction throughout your establishment? I fear they will not take it so quietly as I do.'

'I can't afford it, dear Curtis. Listen a moment! We are too busy to-day to waste our time in mystification. You have borne my caprices ever since I was a child, and you have never had more than the 100*l.* a-year which was your salary as governess. But I cannot tell how you will agree with my husband; so I wish you to be at least "independent" of him and me. You are down for a trifle in my will, but I mean to keep you out of that as long as I can, even if my present will were not likely to be good for nothing a few days hence. From the first of January next, forward, you will therefore receive, from Mr. Saunders, no more than fifty pounds per annum; but here is an annuity for your life of 200*l.* a-year, the first half-yearly payment of which will be due to you on the first of January next. There! Are you very cruelly treated? Don't say a word. Leave Mr. Saunders and myself to our work, and try and keep my bridesmaids down stairs in order. Their breakfast-bell will soon be ringing. When we have quite done, I will join you in the little drawing-room. So now good-bye, my good old friend.'

II.

The reader will hardly care to know the arrangements made, the documents gone through, the projects discussed by the queen of the domain and her secretary of state. There was plenty of dust wiped off bundles of papers, plenty of red tape to tie and untie, plenty of signatures to affix, plenty of addition and subtraction to be done. The work went on till after luncheon, of which a modest supply was brought up by Robert, and hastily shared by the parties in council. On returning to remove what was left of the repast, Robert announced the arrival of a messenger, a London jeweller in person, who had been despatched by Lord Farlington with a handsome casket, which he was to deliver to Miss Farleigh Morton's self.

'What is his name?'

'Mr. Poynter, ma'am, of the firm of Rumble and Poynter, —— Street.'

'Curious! They are my own jewellers. Request him to do me the favour to join the ladies downstairs at luncheon. I will come the instant I am at liberty.'

Steady perseverance will level mountains. At last Mr. Saunders's portfolio was closed: the lady was free.

'Apropos of Lord Farlington,' she said, rising from her chair; 'he is to arrive on the afternoon of the twenty-third, he hopes not later than three o'clock, which will still be broad daylight. The arches of welcome, erected over the road at the boundary of the property and at the entrance of the park, were very pretty on paper, but look somewhat meagre when executed. I wish to have them filled out with a heavier garnishing of evergreens. Be so good, dear sir, as to see Henry Trimnell and his brother, and request them to carry out that intention. He has good taste in garden decoration, and will do it well. He will find plenty of materials in the pheasant coverts, and he may send in his bill immediately. Every little will be a help to enable him to meet his payments.'

The steward shook his head, as if to intimate that the matter was hopeless. 'He will be in town,' he said, 'disposing of his garden produce, until late in the afternoon, when I will make a point of seeing him.'

'Thank you. And now, dear sir, let us go and look at this new proof of my future husband's gallantry.'

On entering the little drawing-room they found an ebony casket lying in state in the centre of a circular table, and surrounded by the bridesmaids, marshalled by Miss Curtis, all anxious for a peep at the hidden treasures. The goldsmith, assisted by Robert, superintended the ceremonial. This goldsmith, singular to say, wore no jewellery, except a very simple watch-chain, and that not of the latest fashion. No rings bedecked his fingers, no pins or brooches blazed in his cravat. He did not carry half the stock of his shop upon his person. With a respectful bow, and a smile of recognition, he proceeded to business.

Producing a paper from his pocket-book, 'This,' he said, 'is the list of articles ordered by Lord Farlington. Miss Farleigh Morton will take possession of the key and have the kindness to verify. The way in which the casket opens is a very simple secret—thus.'

'Give *me* the list, to read aloud,' entreated Lady Jane Ogilvie, the youngest of the bridesmaids. 'Oyez, all of you.'

'"Item; A diamond necklace, to match the earrings and brooch belonging to Miss Morton;

'"Item; Two antique cameo bracelets, to match the cameo necklace belonging to Miss Morton, with brooch;

'"Item; A complete set of coral ornaments, Greek pattern, set in gold;

'"Item; An emerald and diamond guard-ring, with brooch and earrings of the same, to match."'

'Not a single pearl!' exclaimed Eleanor M'Dougall, the eldest bridesmaid, a black-haired, blue-eyed daughter of the North.

'I beg your pardon, ladies,' Mr. Poynter politely interposed. 'On turning over the list you will find other items mentioned on the back.'

'Ah, yes!

'"Item; Seven strings of fine pearls, to be arranged according to Miss Morton's wishes;

'"Item; A green velvet purse embroidered with gold."'

'The purse mentioned,' said Mr. Poynter, 'is contained in this secret drawer; but the list says nothing of its contents. On the front, you observe, ladies, is embroidered £500; Lady Farlington's pocket-money. There are ten rouleaux of fifty sovereigns each. The purse opens with a key and closes with a spring. Miss Morton will have the complaisance to take the key and count the rouleaux. I must now point out a contrivance of Lord Farlington's own suggestion. You observe this little gold button; above it is a circular aperture in the velvet, showing a small enamelled plate marked with the figures £500. Lady Farlington is supposed to take one or more rouleaux at a time. By turning the button the figures are changed to £450, £300, and so on, showing the actual contents of the purse. But when the last rouleaux is taken, and the cypher £0 is displayed, a mechanical contrivance prevents the purse from closing. Its open mouth gives Lord Farlington a hint that the time is come to fill it again.'

'Delightful!' sighed Edith Manners, the second bridesmaid; 'but out of the Arabian Nights tales, bridegrooms like Lord Farlington are not often to be found.'

'There is still something more,' Mr. Poynter added, 'not on the list, if Miss Morton will condescend to examine the purse.'

'A letter! No. An unsealed envelope, directed "To our friend Miss Curtis." Satisfy our curiosity, dear Curtis, and tell us at once what it is.'

'A fifty-pound note! How generous and kind!'

'And that, I believe, is all,' said Mr. Poynter. 'My commission is executed, and your ladyship will now permit me to take my leave.'

'I am no ladyship yet,' said Miss Morton, smiling.

'It is exactly the same as if you were,' the goldsmith rejoined.

'Not quite exactly, Mr. Poynter,' interposed little Lady Jane. 'Even if there be no slip between the cup and the lip, it is better when the lip is on the cup than——'

She checked herself, blushing at her own sally. Mr. Poynter, feeling he was stepping on tender ground, made his escape as promptly as possible. Mr. Saunders shortly followed his example.

III.

The guests at Madderley Hall, increased by arrivals during the afternoon, were assembled in the drawing-room. The few gentlemen present had returned from the dinner-table, and tea and coffee were going their round.

A large landed proprietor, at home, if he attends much to his own affairs, has not even his evenings to himself, but is obliged to hear reports, give audience, and decide on measures at hours which more lightly-burdened people devote entirely to relaxation. Miss Morton was not exempt from the penalties of her lot. She often had to leave a group of entertaining visitors to listen to what the doctor, the curate, or the village lawyer had to say. These consultations were always held in the uttermost corner of the drawing-room, to which Lady Jane consequently gave the name of the Cabinet Council Chamber. An unpractised eye would have seen nothing in it. A high-backed sofa, facing the wall, formed, with a few chairs, a small square nook, which imagination might easily convert into a sort of vestry, separated from the rest of the apartment. This sacred corner was rarely entered except by the lady of the house and those who wanted to speak to her in confidence. Seated on the sofa, with her back to the rest of the company, she there heard what people had to say, gave her reply, and then dismissed them.

As soon as Mr. Saunders had emptied his cup, a look from Miss Morton summoned him to the Council Corner. He there informed her that the arches of welcome were likely to prosper under Trimnell's superintendence: moreover, that the poor young man, after a hard struggle between his pride and his poverty, had made a clean breast of all his troubles, had confessed his debts and difficulties, had told how he became entangled in the usurious nets of a money-lending 'Party;' how his

mare and her colt, his cow, and the implements wherewith he gained his livelihood were threatened with seizure by the Party; that the Party's main object was to get the land, in order to sell it again to Miss Morton (who, the Party felt sure, was determined to have it) at an exorbitant price; that the sale of the land, *to somebody*, was now inevitable, and therefore that he (Trimnell) had rather Miss Morton took the land, with its incumbrances, at once, and so thwart the Party's avaricious schemes. To which he (the steward) had agreed, granting favourable conditions, with the promise of a long lease. 'In short, madam, within three months,' he concluded, 'seven acres will be incorporated with the Madderley estate. You may cut up the common into fields, and the surveyor may make a new map showing the enlarged boundary.'

'You have gone a little beyond your credentials; but never mind, it will all come to the same in the end. And so good night, dear sir; I thank you much in the matter of the arches.'

As he retired the four bridesmaids made their way into the lady's sanctuary.

'You here!' said Angelica, rising. 'You and I can talk just as well by the fire.'

'No indeed!' said Lady Jane. 'We are come on business. It must be kept a secret. Do give us just one minute.'

'We have a petition to present,' said Edith Manners, 'which if your Highness will deign to grant, your petitioners will ever pray.'

'The truth is, we want to have a little fun to-morrow,' said Eleanor M'Dougall, coaxingly. 'There will be no fun on Christmas Eve, nothing but form and good-behaviour.'

'And what sort of fun may it please you to have? *My* funny time is almost over.'

'That's the very reason for enjoying it now,' pleaded Cordelia Owen, the third bridesmaid. 'We want, they have told you, to have some fun, and for us girls there's no fun like cooking. Do let us, dear Angelica! Don't you remember how we used to make toffy in the schoolroom, and burn our fingers and smear our pinafores? Don't you remember, when we met abroad, how we made an English pancake, and when you tried to toss it and catch it in the pan how it fell flat upon your head? Don't you remember, another time, Edith's incantation during the grand experiment of the bacon omelette?—

'Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and fry-pan bubble!
Egg of sable Spanish hen,
Powder of fresh bruised cayenne,
Sweet herbs cull'd at full o' moon,
Shred and mix'd with silver spoon;
Pinch of salt, and—dark's the hour!—
Ounce of finest wheaten flour;
Butter sweet, and mince-meat fine
Cut from off the blacken'd chine,
Mingle, mingle as you can,
Ere transferring to the pan.
Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and fry-pan bubble!'

'Do then, pray do let us have a little cooking, for the last time. How delightful it would be, for instance, to make a few mince-pies to-morrow!'

'I will peel and chop the apples,' said Miss M'Dougall.

'I will stone the plums,' said Lady Jane.

'I will mince the beef and the suet,' said Edith.

'I will make the pie-crust,' said Cordelia Owen.

'And I too will heat the oven,' said Lady Jane.

'And by what time do you think your pies will be ready? Certainly not before the end of the week. Your paste will be heavy before your mincemeat is made. I must arrange matters for you differently to that. Mincemeat, you *don't* seem to know, ought to be prepared a month beforehand, and well stirred up every day till used. As a lesson in early rising and punctuality, can you have finished your breakfasts by a quarter to nine to-morrow morning?'

'We can! we can!' cried the chorus of bridesmaids.

'Very well, then, we shall see. Miss Curtis and myself will breakfast alone at eight. Mr. Saunders will occupy me for a quarter of an hour, and then, young ladies, I am at your service. We will try our hands at a little confectionary.'

IV.

'Robert,' said Miss Morton, at her morning meal, 'tell Mrs. Davis to have the oven in the still-room heated, to make me a good quantity of piecrust, to place a large jar of mincemeat on the dresser, with patty-pans and everything needful to make pies. Ask her also to oblige me with the loan of six white aprons and six white caps, and to keep the servants out of the way. When all is ready let me know, and request my young friends to meet me in the still-room.'

To hear was to obey on Robert's part. Mrs. Davis, the housekeeper, less docile, grumbled — she was jealous of invasion on her territory, and dreaded the extortion of her confectionary secrets — but she knew her mistress too well to refuse, even indirectly; she only obeyed with a very bad grace. 'If Miss Morton,' she muttered, 'thinks that I am going to give her lessons in pastry, she will find herself much mistaken.'

Robert, after fulfilling his mission, announced, 'The young ladies, ma'am, are waiting for you, but Mrs. Davis is very cross to-day.'

'Did you ever know a good cook, Robert, who was not very cross at times? Pay no attention to her, and she will soon recover her good humour. You will remain with us

while I amuse the girls. Carry also the casket there, if you please. I wish to look over its contents again.'

The conclave was assembled, the doors were closed, and they merrily proceeded with their task.

'In the first place, my dears,' said the lady of the house, 'we cannot enjoy cooking dressed as we are. While I put on this snowy apron and this neat white cap you and Miss Curtis will do the same. There! Are we not as charming as at a fancy ball, and at considerably less expense? You, Jane, will butter the patty-pans, to prevent the crust from sticking to them; you, Edith, will cut out the paste into rounds as fast as Mrs. Davis rolls it out; you, Eleanor, will put the bottom crust into the pans; and you, Cordelia, will undertake the responsibility of filling them with mincemeat. Miss Curtis and I will put on the top crust, make all secure, and finish off. Robert will do the baking part, and put in and take out our batches from the oven.'

The work commenced and progressed joyously, in spite of the housekeeper's sullen looks. 'How kind of you, Davis, to help us in this way!' said Angelica, opening the casket and displaying its sparkling contents. 'You shall see the present Lord Farlington has sent me. Look at this beautiful diamond necklace! look at these charming earrings and bracelets!'

'Very pretty, indeed, ma'am,' said the matron, relaxing; 'only they are of no earthly use. They're like heaps of money buried in the earth; they give you no interest; you can't help a friend with them. If you want to buy a poor man a coat or to lend him a sovereign, you can't take out one of the jewels to do it with. You mustn't touch them; they are yours, but not your own. You may look at them yourself, and let other people look at them; but looking never yet filled a hungry stomach.'

'True, Davis; but my lord has added something more serviceable for present use. Beside the jewels is a purse full of sovereigns, to gratify any little fancy I may have to-day. Suppose I begin by giving you and Robert a Christmas-box each? There! Put it in your pocket without more ado.'

'Thank you kindly, ma'am,' said the housekeeper, quite softened. 'I hope your heart will always be as light as my crust promises to be to-day.'

'And get on, all of you, as quick as you can; for your day's work will not be finished when I have put my last top crust on my last mince-pie. Those that are glazed and marked with a cross we will eat at home; the rest you shall distribute in the village. It will be a pleasant walk. Robert will accompany you and carry the basket; I cannot go myself, but must remain within doors. Well done, Robert; the last batch. Nicely browned, and not one burnt; Mrs. Davis herself could not have turned them out better.'

V.

The little party of pedestrians, as arranged, left the park by the gate nearest to the foot of the lake, whose surplus water set a mill in motion. While looking over the mill bridge at the white stream of foam which rushed from beneath it, they met the miller's little son and daughter coming out with their maid for their afternoon ramble. Miss Curtis addressed a kind word to them; but the boy, instead of answering to the point, directed his attention to Robert's basket.

'How nice it smells!' said the child, with a roguish look. 'Better than plum-pudding. I should so like to know what it is.'

'Only mince-pies. You know what mince-pies are? The young ladies at the Hall have been making them; and we are now going to give them away to people who cannot make any themselves.'

'I should like to taste one,' pleaded the boy. 'Wouldn't you, Louisa?'

'Please, Miss Curtis, I should indeed,' lisped Louisa, smiling timidly at the official lady.

'You don't want them; you will have some at home. I am sure you will have mince-pies on Christmas Day.'

'Ah! but not so nice as those. Besides, miss, to-day is not Christmas Day.'

'Well, I think I may give you one very small one each. Mind, however, you are not to bite them, but to eat them with a knife and fork.'

The children ran into the house triumphant, each holding in its hand a warm mince-pie. Two minutes afterwards the miller's parlour-window was suddenly thrown open; the miller's wife put out her head, beaming with smiles; the boy waved his cap in the air, giving what he thought a tremendous huzza, while the little girl clapped her hands as if she thought their sound would be audible.

Miss Curtis smiled in token of intelligence, at the same time laying her finger on her lips, to intimate that a secret was to be kept. The miller's wife nodded in a way which said, 'You may do what you like, but it's quite impossible;' and the pie distributors went their way.

They reached the first triumphal

arch, which was awaiting Trimnell's finishing touch; he and his assistants being busy at the second. Close by, on either side of the road, was a group of cottages, at each of which they left one or more mince-pies. The cottagers were mightily puzzled —not at the attention, for they were accustomed to similar acts of kindness, but at the smallness of the gift. What were one, two, or three little bits of plums and pastry, to satisfy three or four sharp-set appetites?

The object of their mission required despatch. The ladies were nimble-footed enough; but poor old Robert, besides his load, was never intended to walk for a wager. Indeed, he was an indoor footman born. He had long arms, to carry a tray; a tolerably clear head, to remember orders; a long body to display ample waistcoats; but he had the shortest of legs. Consequently, to keep up with four brisk bridesmaids, he had to recur to a sort of amble which he had not practised since his boyhood. It was a great relief to his failing breath when the second arch rose in sight. There they found the band of decorators busy at their work of interweaving evergreens.

'How pretty!' said Miss Curtis to her young companions. 'This is a great improvement since yesterday. You have done wonders, Trimnell. But you look pale and tired.'

'Glad you approve, miss,' he replied, with a bow; 'and hope Miss Morton will approve of it likewise. Mr. Saunders has assisted me with his advice, and he promises to return in twenty minutes. I have worked hard at it, miss. To save time, I breakfasted before daylight, and have not yet been home to dinner.'

'Come with us, then, and take some refreshment; we are going straight to Seven Acres.'

The common was soon crossed, and Trimnell's residence reached. The heavy-hearted widow smiled, in spite of her sorrows, at the cheerful looks of her visitors.

'Miss Morton has sent you,' Miss Curtis announced, 'two bottles of good port wine. And here is a Christmas pie for you, James Trimnell, because you are a good lad. Mind, you are not to bite it, but to cut it with a knife. I am glad, Susan Blake, to see you here, giving the widow a helping hand. This pie is for you; and this for you, Mrs. Trimnell. Yours, Henry Trimnell, is a little larger. Taste it at once; it is better than it looks. So good-bye to you all; there will be plenty of time to finish the arches.'

'Cut it with a knife, indeed!' James exclaimed, as soon as the ladies were out of sight. 'I'm not much used to fashionable ways; but it looks good, so I'll just take a bite at it.'

'Aha!' he cried, at the first mouthful. 'What, in the name of goodness, is this? Whoever made the pie didn't stone the plums. It's a golden sovereign! Two, three, four, five sovereigns in my pie! Hurrah! hurrah! for Miss Farleigh Morton!'

'And yours, Susan?' anxiously asked Trimnell, through whose mind a glimpse of hope was darting.

'Ten sovereigns!' said Susan, in astonishment; 'and you know, Henry, what is mine is yours.'

'And yours, mother?'

'The same. Exactly ten.'

'All of no use,' he sighed. '"Twas kindly meant; but 'tis not enough.'

'Look and see what your own contains.'

'Put all together, and it's useless. Twice five-and-twenty is not enough.'

Susan pushed Trimnell's pie towards him. He opened it carefully, and found therein a small circular silver box. Lifting the lid, he took from it a folded paper. As he read it, the blood rushed to his face, and he staggered as if under a blow.

'Look, Susan! Read it! can it be true? I'll go and show it to Mr. Saunders at once.'

With a bounding step and a beating heart, he hastened back across the common. He found the steward quietly admiring the arch, and almost regretting that so tasty a structure should be so ephemeral and so useless. At the sight of the paper fluttering in the wind, Mr. Saunders inquired, 'Your bill for this job? Very well; there can be no

objection to that. Give it me, and you can have the money to-morrow.'

'Oh, no, sir. Not my bill!'

'What's this?' he said, holding it at arm's length, and recognizing the handwriting. 'How did you come by it?'

'Honestly, sir; in this silver box, which Miss Curtis left at my house just now. Read it aloud, sir, if you please, that I may be quite sure it is not a dream.'

'It is no dream,' said the steward, after a pause—'make your mind easy about that. Let us see:—

'"Madderley Park.

'"Dec. 22nd, 184-.

'"To Mr. John Elijah Saunders, steward of the Madderley Park Estate:

'"DEAR SIR,

'"Be pleased to pay off the mortgage or mortgages on Trimnell's Seven Acres; and debit my private account with the same.

'"Tell him that if at any future time he wants money on his land, I hope he will give us the preference over the other party.

'"I remain, dear Sir,

'"Faithfully yours,

'"ANGELICA FARLEIGH MORTON."

'It is quite correct,' Mr. Saunders went on, folding the paper and returning it. 'Rather an expensive freak, although she can well afford it. You are a lucky fellow, Trimnell; and I wish you joy heartily, but you had better not show that box about too much; else every yeoman in difficulties will be down upon us. Come to me the day after Christmas, with all your papers and a full statement of your affairs. And recollect, Trimnell, that at the next election there will now be no "Party" in the way to prevent your voting for Miss Morton's candidate.'

LONDON SOCIETY.

www.libtool.com.cn

FEBRUARY, 1864.

TOM PROBUS AND HIS VALENTINES:

BEING A ROMANTIC EPISODE FROM THE EXPERIENCES OF JACK EASEL, ESQUIRE.

IF any additional and thoroughly selfish reason were wanting among many which have from time to time been adduced to deter young gentlemen from entering prematurely into the connubial state, I believe it would be embodied in the consideration of breakfast. Regarding dinners, I should say a man gained rather than lost by matrimony. A youthful bachelor, to dine well at his club, or *en ville*, must dine expensively; while if he relies on the culinary resources of his landlady in any ordinary lodgings, he will probably have to alternate between pink beefsteaks and carbonized chops. The crisply-roasted joint, and cunning *réchauffés* into which it may be transformed—the

subtly-prepared hash — the savoury curry, and all the delicious metamorphoses of which roast beef and boiled mutton are capable, will be unknown to him, to say nothing of that pleasant companionship without which wine and walnuts are as things of nought.

But breakfast is a different matter. Experience has taught me that, as far as my married friends are concerned, in proportion to the potency of domestic affection there will always be a diminution in the strength of tea. I am of course utterly unable to account for this phenomenon; but that it is a fact, I call upon any disinterested bachelor to deny. There is something, moreover, in the presence of the gentler sex strangely antagonistic to the consumption of solid food at 9 A.M. Why a gentleman who, while single, considered devilled kidneys or grilled drumsticks indispensable to the morning repast should, directly he turns Benedict, suffer such a falling off in his appetite as to induce him to be perfectly content with an egg, is also another mystery which I never could explain. Whether it is that the wedding breakfast is such an elaborate and costly affair as to render retrenchment in all subsequent breakfasts positively necessary, or whether the simplicity of ladies' appetites makes a man ashamed of his own, are questions which I will not take upon myself to answer; but one fact is patent, viz., that the ordinary matutinal meal is an institution of and belonging to bachelorhood, and properly recognized in no other condition of social life. Perhaps Mr. Browne, who, as the French say, 'ranged himself' ten years back, may, as he reads these pages, recal with a sigh the freedom of those early feasts with which 'Bell's Life' and smoking grills are so inseparably associated—may quaff again in imagination the tankard of pale ale which passed from hand to hand —may rekindle at the lamp of Memory that once-loved cutty pipe from which so many rings of smoke ascended high into the morning air. (Gracious powers! what *would* Mrs. B. say if he called for a bottle of Bass or attempted to light a cigar *now* after breakfast!) Ah! those days—those hap——well, let us say those good-for-nothing, idle days are gone and past, never to return; and if I recur to them in the following pages, it is but—dear Mrs. Browne —to show what a blessed change you have wrought in the habits and manners of the partner of your choice.

It was on the 14th of February, eighteen hundred and something more, that I was bidden to breakfast with Tom Probus, then of Berners Street, Oxford Street, in the county of Middlesex, gentleman, and close to the celebrated institution of that name. Probus had chosen this locality in consequence of his being daily engaged in that species of pedestrianism known as hospital-walking, and which, in point of fact, taking the length of each bed into consideration, does involve a tolerable amount of exercise. He had just passed the College of Surgeons with great *éclat*—that is to say, he had satisfied the Examiners of his intimate acquaintance with the name and situation of every bone, nerve, and muscle in the human frame, concerning which he chanced to be questioned, to say nothing of having translated offhand the very page of the Georgics which he had mastered with a crib the night before. The only mistake he made (in demonstrating with the *os humerus* upside down) he turned to such excellent account by becoming convulsed with laughter at Professor M'Carver's venerable joke about the *funny* bone, that the blunder (an egregious one, as I am informed) was overlooked, and he left the room in high favour with the great anatomist.

So, elated by success, he had asked his two most intimate friends Planter (once of Corpus), then reading law in Brick Court, Temple, and myself, to what he called a 'blow-out' at 11 A.M. the morning after his examination. Probus inhabited the second floor at Mrs. Croker's lodgings. The drawing-room floor, consisting of three small rooms *en suite*, was occupied by a young lady and her brother, the

latter being, as Mrs. Croker kindly informed us, engaged in a mercantile 'ouse in the City, and departed thither every morning in a Natlas bus at nine o'clock. As for the parlours, they were rented by an accommodating literary gentleman, who spent the greater part of his time at the Museum, and thus enabled Mrs. Croker to use them for the reception of her own personal acquaintance between the hours of ten and four.

It is a proverbial fact that in London you know nothing of your next-door neighbour; and I believe such is the general apathy and want of inquisitiveness on the part of the British public that the same rule obtains among the inmates of metropolitan lodging-houses. Probus had not sought to cultivate the parlours. The parlours had reposed no confidence in Probus. If they had been separated by the diameter of this terrestrial sphere instead of a flight or two of stairs, they could hardly have been more ignorant of each other's habits. When either of these gentlemen was expected to be out late in the evening (not, by-the-way, an unfrequent occurrence with Probus), good Mrs. Croker placed his bedroom candlestick on the rickety shelf which was dignified with the name of a hall-table. The parlour's candlestick was a brass one, with an extinguisher. That assigned to Mr. Probus was of stone china, without an extinguisher. Such were the individualities which characterized their mutual recognition; and if the parlours had departed to found a colony in Jericho, or taken up a permanent residence in Bath, Mr. Probus would not have been in the least affected.

But the drawing-rooms were differently situated, not only with respect to floors, but in regard to Tom's interest. Miss Webster, the young lady to whom I have already alluded, was young and pretty. Tom had caught transient glimpses of her through half-open doors, or at the window, as he walked up Berners Street. Once, indeed, they had actually met on the stairs as she was descending with her brother on a Sunday morning to go to church; and Tom had privately confided to me that he was on that occasion so struck with her beauty that he felt compelled to retreat to the landing (full eight steps below) to make room for her. It appears that this act of politeness on his part was acknowledged by such a gracious smile and such a graceful bow that they captivated Mr. Probus on the spot; and thenceforth he raved about her to such an extent that my only wonder is how he ever managed to pull through his examination.

However, pull through he did, and we met, as I have said, the next morning at his lodgings to congratulate him. When Planter and I knocked at No. 199, Berners Street, the door was opened by Susan, a female domestic of some personal attractions, with whom that gentleman was in the habit of joking in a manner which, it must be confessed, ill befitted one who had entered on such a learned and serious profession as the law.

Thus it happened that when we had reached the first landing, and Susan, in deprecation of some slight familiarities which I need not particularize, was exclaiming, *sotto voce*, 'Git along with yer nonsense, do, Mr. Planter! ha' done, now;' the sudden opening of the drawing-room door caused that gentleman some confusion, and involved his dropping an umbrella with deliberate purpose, in order to pick it up again, which feat he accomplished with such readily-assumed and superhuman gravity, that I verily believe if Mr. Pollaky himself had been emerging from the drawing-room at that moment for the express purpose of a Private Inquiry, he would have detected nothing unusual in the young lawyer's manner.

'Susan,' said some one, in a very sweet and feminine voice, behind the door.

'Yes, miss,' said Susan, with just the faintest trace of a blush on her features, but with an air of the intensest propriety.

'I shall have some letters for you to post in about ten minutes. I'll leave them on the table outside.'

'Very well, Miss,' answered Susan,

hastily dusting that article with her apron by way of preparation; and a minute afterwards she had mounted to the second floor, ushered us into Tom's front room, and tapped at his bed-room door to announce our arrival.

'Good morning, old boy,' roared Planter through the keyhole. 'How d'ye find yourself after last night's exertions—as young ladies say to their hostess the day after a hop?'

'All right, old fellow,' shouted Mr. Probus, in accents which appeared to proceed from the bottom of a washing-basin, and accompanied by a great slopping of water. 'Right as a trivet!' continued Tom (this time apparently from behind a towel). 'I'll be in directly. Have a pipe. There's some capital bird's-eye on the mantelpiece. Is that Easel with you? Hurray! We'll have some breakfast in ten minutes. I say, Susan! Sooosan! Confound that gal.' Here followed a violent ringing of his bed-room bell, and certain instructions about a raised pie and other domestic matters, during which Planter walked to the window, whistling a popular air.

'Good gracious, what a lot of letters the postmen bring to this district!' said he, at length, watching one of those functionaries in the street below.

'I dare say; and everywhere else this morning,' said I. 'Have you forgotten the day?'

'Day?' said Planter. 'Why, let me see. Tuesday, the 11th, sparring match between the Whitechapel Bruiser and Pimlico Pet; Wednesday, the 12th, old Grimsby's benefit at Drury Lane; 13th, yesterday, rat-fight at——why, by Jove! it's the 14th—it's Valentine's Day! I say, can't we turn it to some account—get up an excitement of some sort? We really ought to do something, you know, on the strength of old Tom's success,' continued Mr. Planter, dancing about the room in exuberant spirits. 'By-the-way, what's the name of that little party on the drawing-room floor?'

'If you mean Miss Webster——' I began.

'Ah! Webster; that's the name. Pretty name, isn't it?—pretty girl, too, for that matter,' mused Mr. Planter, as if concocting some scheme. 'Didn't you tell me old Probus was rather sweet in that quarter?'

'Hush!' said I; 'whatever I told you was in confidence. Besides, he has never even spoken to her.'

'More's the pity,' replied Planter, tossing about Tom's books and newspapers, as if in search of something; 'more's the pity. I only wish *I'd* had the chance. Lots of tin, too, hasn't she? Hang it, where *is* the——'

'I believe they are both pretty well off,' I answered, and was just about to repeat what Probus had heard from Mrs. Croker, viz., that Miss Webster had lately joined her brother in town, in consequence of some business arrangements rendered necessary by a large and unexpected legacy, when I heard Tom bawling for me to come into his room.

One would naturally have supposed that Mr. Probus, after the interesting event of the previous night, would have been eager to communicate the details of his success; but no, not a word about the examination or his good luck. His thoughts were full of the adorable Miss Webster, and he availed himself of the only opportunity which he knew he could have in private with me to ask my advice. What was he to do? He was the most miserable fellow, he vowed, in existence. He couldn't call on *her*, of course, and the brother was only at home in the evening, when he had no opportunity of making their acquaintance.

We talked the matter over for some few minutes together; and, finding poor Probus very much smitten, I promised him to consider what could be done and let him know the result of my deliberations.

'Thank you,' said Tom, 'and I'll follow your advice, old fellow, whatever it is; but for goodness' sake don't say a word to Planter. He's so horribly indiscreet, you see; and besides, I know he would chaff me awfully.'

At this juncture, and feeling that

I had already betrayed poor Tom's confidence in this unfortunate direction, I confess that I was seized with a violent fit of coughing, which of course precluded the necessity of a reply, and then we went in to breakfast.

'Halloa! where's Planter?' cried Tom.

'Where indeed?' said I. 'I left him here just now.'

'Pleasir, Mr. Planter have just gone out to fetch some cigars of a petticlar sort, sir, which he says you can only buy at one shop in London, and that's round the corner in Hoxford Street, sir; and he says would you mind beginning your brexfas, sir, and he'll be back in half a minute,' said Susan, who had just entered the room laden with comestibles.

'Extraordinary fellow that Planter is,' said Tom. 'Why couldn't he smoke my manillas? He was only saying the other day how good they were.'

'Very odd,' said I, not without some misgivings about Mr. P.'s absence.

'Well, it's no use waiting for him,' said Probus. 'Will you pour out the coffee? and let me give you some steak while it's hot.'

Capital steak — capital coffee — capital eggs — bread — butter — everything. We were just going to attack a pigeon pie, when in rushed Planter.

'You're a nice sort of fellow, *you* are,' cried Probus, 'to come to breakfast with a man and then bowl off, just as the things are coming up, to buy weeds. I'll tell you what, it's my belief that— Well there—never mind—pitch into that *pâté*, and make up for lost time.'

Mr. Planter murmured out something which seemed to be intended for an apology, and then burst out into an incontrollable fit of laughter; but as this was his ordinary means of getting out of a difficulty, we took no notice of it. He certainly *did* make up for lost time, and indeed we all succeeded in making an excellent breakfast; enlivened by our volatile friend's conversation, which for fertility of subject, rapidity of delivery, and powers of endurance, I have seldom heard equalled. It is not given to every man to sustain a rapid dialogue during breakfast, nor with ordinary people would it at all become a desirable accomplishment; but the more Mr. Planter ate the more he talked; and the more he talked the greater seemed to be the necessity of satisfying his appetite. He was just tapping the shell of his third egg, after having consumed all the available chops within his reach with about a pint and a half of coffee, and was just entering on his thirteenth anecdote, when we heard a knock at the door, and in walked Mrs. Croker, Tom's landlady.

Mrs. Croker at the best of times is not an attractive-looking person; but at any hour of the forenoon, before she has (as Susan puts it) cleaned herself — in her morning *deshabille*, I say, of yellow gown with black spots, dingy cap and wig awry, she is really an unpleasant spectacle; and there was something particularly disgreeable, we thought, in her manner that morning as she marched up to Probus and put a letter in his hand.

'Halloa! What's this?' said Tom, turning the letter over. 'Did this come by post, Mrs. Croker? Here's a stamp upon it—but no—'

Mrs. Croker shook her head very slowly — mysteriously — I thought even malevolently, as she replied—

'No, Mr. Probis, it have *not* come by post, though it do bear a queen's 'ead, and no doubt were intended for the post. The artfulness of some people cannot deceive me, Mr. Probis, which their pence might as well have been in their pockets at the present moment. *Mark me!*'

With these mysterious words she left the room.

'What on earth does the woman mean?' said Probus, hastily breaking open the seal.

I never shall forget the various changes which passed over Tom's face as he read the letter. He became pink and white by turns. He rose from the table. He walked to the window. He tried to whistle, but broke down miserably before he was half way through the 'Young man from the Country.'

'Anything the matter?' said Planter.

'N—nothing particular!' stammered Tom—'but the fact is that—at least it seems—'

'Oh!' said Planter—'I see—disagreeable news from the country. Sorry for you, old fellow. Won't intrude any longer—must be off to Bedford Row. Lots of work in hand just now—title deeds—marriage settlements—deuce knows what—leave you and Easel to talk it over—ta ta!' And here seizing his hat and lighting a cigar, Mr. Planter took his departure.

'My dear fellow,' said Tom when we were alone, 'this is really the most extraordinary circumstance. Just look at that letter. I am sure I can rely on your discretion.'

I took the paper from Tom's hands and read as follows:—

'T o him who long this throbbing heart
H as won, to keep for evermore,
O speed, sweet Eros, with thy dart—
M y unrequited love deplore;
A nd ask if I must yet remain
S ecluded, sad, and lonely here.

P ray bid him speak, nor still refrain,
R emorseless at my silent tear.
O couldst thou tell him what I say,
B e sure that hand and heart were mine;
U p, god of love! and haste away,
S wift-winged, towards my Valentine!

'AGNES.'

I went through this remarkable effusion (which, as the reader will observe, forms an ingenious acrostic on the name of Mr. Thomas Probus) two or three times, and then looked up into that gentleman's face, expecting to find him amused. To my great surprise, however, he wore an expression of intense gravity.

'Well, what do you think of it?' at length he said.

'What do I *think* of it?' I repeated. 'Why, my dear fellow, you surely don't for an instant suppose that ——'

Just at this juncture, in came Susan to take away the breakfast things, and Tom made a sign to me to stop. There was something very singular about the girl's deportment. She first looked at Probus and then at me, and then began tittering in what seemed to me a very indecorous and unjustifiable manner. Tom noticed it, and perhaps rather nettled at the interruption which her entry caused in our conversation, began—

'What the deuce is the matter with you this morning, Susan?'

'Oh, nothink, sir!' says Susan, getting pinker and pinker with suppressed hilarity.

'But I am sure there *is*, and I insist on knowing *what*,' shouts Probus indignantly. 'How dare you——'

'O pleasir don't be angry, sir. I didn't mean anythink disrexpexful I'm sure,' cries poor Susan; 'but I really couldn't help it; and ho Mr. Probis! whoever would have thought you'd 'er gone and done it!'

'Done WHAT?'

'Why, sent that there valingtine, sir.'

'*I* send a valentine!' roars our hero. 'What on earth do you mean? I never thought of such a thing. I didn't know it was Valentine's Day. Besides, what in the name of goodness ——'

Susan shakes her head doubtfully.

'Well, sir, all *I* can say is, that when I was in Miss Webster's room this morning ——'

(At the mention of this sacred name Tom sank bewildered into a chair.)

'When I was in Miss Webster's room this morning a putting on some coals, a double knock come at the street door that sudden that it giv me quite a turn, and nearly made me spill a whole scuttle-full of Wallsend on the first-floor carpet, and I run down stairs like anythink through knowing it were Valingtine's Day, and expecting a little billy from the young man which I keep company with; and sure enough, when I got down there was something like a half-dozen for my young lady. Well, I carried 'em upstairs to the droring-room and giv 'em to Miss Webster, and she opens them one after another; but all at wunst, just as I was sweeping up the hearth, I heard her give a little scream-like, and I turns round and says to her, "Lor, Miss Webster, I says, whathiver is the matter?"'

And she says to me she says, "Ho Susing," she says, "would you have the goodness to tell me if there's any one in this house by the name of Probus?" "Probis, Miss, I says, why in course there is. Mr. Probis is our second floor, and a very nice gentleman he is." "*Indeed!*" she says, quite satterical-like, and the words was scarce out of her mouth when she took and tore up the letter she'd been reading into little scraps and threw them on the floor indignant, and asks me for her portfolio which I giv her, sir, and left the room, and that's how I come to know about your valingtine, which of course, sir, you must have signed your name or how *could* she have found out who it come from?'

'By Jove!' cried Tom, starting from his seat, 'there's some infernal mystery about this, and I'll find it out. Leave the room, Susan, if you please, and send up Mrs. Croker.'

This request seemed hardly necessary, for the door had no sooner closed than it was reopened by that lady herself, who stepped in with a letter in her hand and anything but an amiable expression of countenance.

'Mrs. Croker!' began Tom, hysterically.

'Mr. Probis!' interrupted Mrs. C., wrathfully. 'I've kep this 'ouse three-and-twenty year come Michaelmas, and I hope I've always kep it respectable. I didn't ask for no rifferences when you took these apartments, sir, because I looked on you as a puffick gentleman, and trusted you'd always behave as such.'

'Con—found it!' Tom gasped.

'Bad language will not intimerate ME, Mr. Probus, and as for hoaths I scorn them. But maintain the 'ouse quiet and respectable *I will*, as long as I've breath in my body,' continued Mrs. C., who did not appear to possess at that moment any superfluity of the article in question.

'I think everybody is mad,' said Tom, getting more and more desperate. 'Mrs. Croker, I feel convinced you're a lunatic; and, upon my word, if you don't explain yourself, I'll do my best to get you a strait-waistcoat——'

'Don't westcot *me*, Mr. Probis, if *you* please,' retorted the landlady. 'But just you read that letter, and answer me, sir, *as* a gentleman, do you think clandestine correspondence is a proper and a decent thing to be going on between parties as calls theirselves gentlefolks in a Christian lodging-ouse?'

'Clandestine correspondence!' cries Tom. 'Why, good heavens——!'

'Don't appeal to hevings in my presence, sir,' interrupts Mrs. Croker, 'when you must be well aweer that I brought you a letter from Miss Webster this very morning, with these silf-same 'ands, which, though intended for the post, and left on the first-floor bracket along with the rest, I see at once was intended for you, and brought it to its destination.

'I don't believe——' begins Tom.

'You *don't believe* is all very well, Mr. Probis,' continues the lady; 'but *I do* believe; and, what's more, *I know*. And here's another, which I see her give Susan with my own eyes. But such goings on shall not be tolerated in *my* ouse if *I* can prevent it; and the sun does not go down this day before I make it my business to acquaint Mr. Webster.'

So saying, she flounced out of the room, leaving Tom aghast with the letter. When she had gone, he tore it open, and read aloud as follows:—

'SIR,—I have this morning received a letter signed with your name, and of which it would be difficult to say whether the contents were more distinguished for their folly or impertinence. I should have referred the matter at once to my brother, but he is unfortunately out of town, and will not return for some days. I therefore take the earliest and the only means in my power to demand an instant explanation of what at present I can only look upon as an unwarrantable liberty on your part.

'Awaiting the favour of a reply,

'I am, Sir,

'Yours indignantly,

'AGNES WEBSTER.'

If Tom had been angry before, he was perfectly dumbfounded now. He paced the room in a state of the greatest agitation for a minute or two, and then, suddenly turning to me, said—

'My dear Easel, what on earth is the meaning of all this? Am I awake or dreaming? Have you got such a thing as a pin, or a penknife, or any sharp instrument about you? Because, if so, you would confer an immense obligation by sticking me with it—just to prove to me that this is reality, and *not* the nightmare. I ask a man to breakfast, and when we are just going to begin he runs out for weeds to smoke, and never smokes 'em, but bowls off before one can say Jack Robinson. He is no sooner gone than in comes my landlady, looking as black as thunder, with a letter from a young lady whom I had fondly imagined—— Well, there—never mind—let us say from a young lady. Letter turns out to be a valentine—"throbbing heart"—"God of Love"—deuce knows what—heap of rubbish—don't believe a word of it. Exit landlady. Enter Susan, grinning like a Cheshire cat—tells me a lot of lies about a valentine—send her about her business. Exit Susan, re-enter landlady, looking blacker than ever, with another letter—talks like a lunatic about clandestine correspondence—and when I open the letter, by Jove! I find myself accused of impertinence to the very girl who——. Oh, it's too

www.libtool.com.cn

MRS. CROKER BRINGING IN THE SECOND LETTER.

bad, it's infamous! I'll run down to Miss Webster at once, and explain everything.'

* * * * *

Tom did so; and the result was a full and honourable acquittal of the charge which had been brought against him.

Nor was this all; for the young lady—partly, perhaps, from a conviction that she had been too hasty, and owed him some compensation for his outraged feelings—and partly, perhaps, because Tom on this occasion made himself so agreeable—(you must know he is an exceedingly good-looking young fellow, and stands about five feet eleven in his Balmorals)—our heroine of the drawing-room floor, I say, from some cause or another was graciously pleased to express her entire approbation of Tom's conduct, and furthermore intimated to him that her brother was desirous of making his acquaintance.

On Webster's return from the country the gentlemen exchanged calls; and from thenceforth Tom (who had had up to this time an unconquerable aversion to tea) sipped his souchong at least twice a week on the drawing-room floor with extraordinary relish.

It was not very difficult to see how this sort of thing would end; and a few days after the anniversary of St. Valentine in the next year the following paragraph appeared in the 'Times':—

'On the 14th inst., at St. George's Church, Hanover Square, by the Rev. Andrew M'Carver (uncle to the bridegroom and brother of Professor M'Carver, F.R.C.S.), Thomas Probus, Esq., M.D., M.R.C.S., to Agnes, only daughter of the late Major Webster, R.E., of Harkaway Hall, Huntingdon.'

Planter and I were both asked to the breakfast; and the former, after the conclusion of that ceremony, and when the nuptial knot had been duly tied, took Probus aside to congratulate him, and at the same time to unbosom himself of a secret which I had long suspected, but which, if the reader has not himself divined, I do not feel myself called upon to reveal. It is sufficient to say that the mysterious appearance of the two valentines was fully accounted for, and their real author heartily forgiven. For had he not been the means of making two people happy for life, and securing for Tom (who, by-the-way, is now in capital practice) one of the prettiest and dearest little wives in existence?

JACK EASEL.

AT THE WESTMINSTER PLAY.

THE *Loyal* Westminster, remember, not the '*Royal* Westminster;' not that wonderful theatre on the Surrey side of the water which, under Mr. Boucicault's ingenious management, invalids could reach without leaving the Parks; which presented such extraordinary conveniences for old ladies, country visitors, and fathers of families; which had morning performances for little boys and girls; which was elevated from a circus into a sensation shop; which was at last shut up, and sold nothing and nobody any more, until the indefatigable Mr. E. T. Smith took the shutters down. No; not Astley's; no vulgar arena full of sawdust and spangles, but the fine old original, legitimate, classical drama, invented more than two thousand years ago, and nightly produced before an admiring Roman audience under the distinguished patronage of Scipio Africanus and C. Lælius, Esquires, who were mightily taken with a clever young playwright of the day, one Publius Afer, a born slave in the service of Mr. Senator Terentius Lucanus. That worthy magistrate, perceiving his *protégé* to be a youth of promise, gave him his freedom and his own name at the same time; and he did wisely, for the name has lived for twenty centuries, and will live as long as mortal lips can speak—as long as ink and paper can be found to print it.

Well, our theatre has nothing much to boast of in its external aspect. It was built by the great Lord Burlington, it is true, in an era of architectural magnificence, but it has undergone much alteration since that day, and from the side where we approach it looks, it must be confessed, somewhat dingy. There is a battered old door at the entrance, and young ladies who arrive there as visitors to the play look round them with a curious air, and wonder what manner of place this may be which looks so much like a hospital, a guard-room, a union-house—anything but that college of St. Peter's about which they have heard their brothers talk so much. Yet St. Peter's College it is; and here it stands, under the shadow of Westminster Abbey, close to that venerable school where statesmen, poets, soldiers—hundreds who have won a name in the world's history—began their race in life. From this same threshold young Warren Hastings stepped out on his brilliant career; so brilliant, indeed, that the few dark clouds which gathered round his fame were lost in the splendour of its sunshine. There was a puny, spirit-broken schoolfellow of his, who, after shaking hands with his boy-friend and wishing him God-speed, I dare say turned away to muse alone in some dark corner of the Cloisters. It was William Cowper, whose delicate frame and sensitive disposition ill fitted him for the trials of a public school. Years afterwards, when half Europe cried shame upon the Governor-General of Bengal, this pure, good, gentle boy had grown to manhood and become a poet—a poet whose rhymes breathed nothing but of innocence and virtue, and who refused to believe that his old comrade Warren Hastings was anything but virtuous and innocent.*

Among his other schoolfellows were Churchill (who made a clandestine marriage while still under the discipline of the rod), Colman, Lloyd, and Cumberland. A century before their day, Master John Dryden was cutting his name on the school benches, with no doubt a well-thumbed Virgil at his side. Had he heard, I wonder, of the bricklayer's 'prentice who thirty years before turned up his nose at his stepfather's honest calling, and ran off to fight with the army in Holland? You may see that graceless truant's name in the Abbey over the way. He was brought up at Westminster under the famous Dr. Busby, and, no doubt, frequently winced under that stern old pedagogue's birch. 'O RARE

* See Macaulay's Essays.

BEN JONSON!' Wouldn't I have been flogged a dozen times to win such an epitaph as that!

I might remind you of later heroes; of a great soldier, the gallant Lord Raglan, who died before Sebastopol; of a great statesman, Lord Russell, who came to beg a holiday for us some fifteen years ago; of a great theologian and divine, the present Archbishop of Canterbury, who, by the way, is one of the audience to-night, and well remembers the stage he trod in 1811. These are among the men whom Westminster has educated. '*In patriam populumque.*' That was the school motto. They have made it their own.

But come, let us ascend this grim stone staircase, which winds up into the great dormitory above. A crowd is pressing up the steps, and we are checked by a temporary wooden rail thrown across the landing. A blushing little gentleman in cap and gown and white kid gloves stands just inside the barrier, and asks me for my ticket. I utter the magic words, 'Old Westminster,'* and the little gentleman smiles and raises the rail with his own little kid-gloved hand, and in I pass without further credential.

How well I remember the room, with its great, gaunt walls scored and painted over with a thousand names. A thousand, did I say? Why the dormitory is one hundred and seventy feet long from end to and, and they are countless. We walk down a long avenue of forty beds ranged along on either side, and (since my time) partitioned off in little wooden closets. This late addition was no doubt made for very sound and excellent reasons, but in the eyes of an old Westminster it does somehow suggest the likeness of a public swimming-bath. Well, we pass on to the end of the room, and underneath a huge scaffolding, where we are arrested by another barrier, and have again recourse to our watchword. After a little scrambling and pushing, we get in front of the proscenium, and look about us. Dense masses of black coats rise in tiers one behind the other, terminating in a nine-inch plank some dozen feet below the ceiling, and all along this narrow foot-board, packed as close as herrings in a barrel, threescore of little gentlemen, whose ages vary from ten to fourteen, take up their position and smile benignantly upon us. These are 'the gods;' that nine-inch plank is Olympus. And who is that superior but youthful deity of seventeen, in a college cap and white choker, who wields a cane with such an air of authority, as he casts a watchful glance up and down the celestial ranks? That is the 'god-keeper,' Saturnian Jove himself, *regnator Olympi!* Have we not all heard of his awful nod? I tell you the 'gods' themselves tremble before him and his pliant sceptre. When that dread weapon is upraised during the performance, their divine majesties must applaud, ay, and continue their approbation until the Thunderer bids them cease. Black coats at the foot of Olympus—those are the visitors; black coats in the body of the hall—those are the 'old Westminsters;' black coats on seats to the right of the stage—those are the old Westminsters of a younger sort; black coats to the left of the stage—those are the old Westminsters of an *older* sort. Black coats, in short, everywhere. What! no crimson opera-cloaks, no rustling silks, no gorgeous head-dresses, nor golden wavy hair to enliven the scene? Yes, a few, a very few, ladies; about twenty-five in all, I think, sitting together, according to a venerable tradition, on the right of the stage. Well, perhaps it is best to limit the number. It is just sufficient to include those who may be near relations of the dramatic 'company;' and I question whether any other fair visitors would care to sit three hours on not the most comfortable bench to listen to a Latin play.

Where is the orchestra? Ah—where indeed? Not to every one is given to understand the mysteries of this theatre. A few stray notes,

* Men educated here are called 'Old Westminsters.' If you tried to form an adjective from the name—equivalent to those of 'Etonian,' or 'Wykhamist,' you would have to employ an unconscionable number of syllables.

as of the tuning of instruments, may reach the ear now and then, but where are the musicians? If you could but peep behind that curtain I think I should be able to show you a detachment of one of our best military bands perched up aloft, above the wings, on the tiniest of galleries. I wonder what those gallant sons of Mars think of the performance; whether, by constant attendance year by year, they come to have the faintest conception of the plot—whether the oldest hand among them has yet awakened to the humour of Terentian puns! I fear their only source of inspiration is derived from the scenery, which, by the way, is always laid in Athens. No wonder the Latin comedy is Greek to them!

Suddenly the gods break out into a round of deafening applause; and hark! what is this old familiar strain which, bursting forth from behind the curtain, makes everyone spring to his feet? 'See the Conquering Hero comes!' *What* conquering hero?—The Duke of Cambridge?—Lord Cardigan?—Tom King? No, neither of those warriors. It is the Head Master of Westminster, who has just entered the dormitory, and who from time immemorial has thus been greeted by his affectionate *alumni*.

Ingreditur, victorque viros supereminet omnes.'

And, let me observe, to conquer old prejudices, to establish good discipline in such a youthful army, to drill raw recruits into steadiness and obedience, to beware of enemies from without, to check insubordination within, and render himself a popular officer at the same time, *does* require good generalship, and deserve a mural crown.

Well, the Head Master enters and takes his seat, surrounded by the under masters and his friends and guests, and a minute or two afterwards the tinkling of a bell is heard, the curtain is raised, and a young man dressed in full academicals, with knee breeches and black silk stockings, steps upon the stage. It is the captain (or head Queen's scholar) of the school. He bows towards the centre of the auditorium, then he takes a few steps to the right and bows again, then he goes to the left and repeats that ceremony. Don't laugh. It is quite *en réyle*. Most customs are traditional at a public school, and this is one of them. All this time the little *claqueurs* above have been hard at work until one would think their hands must be quite sore. At last a signal is given, and silence is established. *In cœlo quies;* the gods are hushed, and the captain begins his Prologue.

Well, I won't translate it. Those who are interested in its details have already read it in the 'Times.' As years roll on the circle of 'old Westminsters' must diminish. Some honoured names, some old familiar faces, are missed from the annual gathering. We know that it is the late Lord Lansdowne who is described as 'Senatûs lumen et decus Scholæ,' and we look at those exquisitely painted scenes with the greater interest because their design was among the last works of Professor Cockerell.

At last the curtain is raised again; this time upon the play itself, the fine old classical comedy of the 'Adelphi.' How shall I describe the plot, recount the various incidents of the piece, and help you to imagine the humorous 'situations' which constitute the chief excellence of the Terentian Drama? Two thousand years have passed away since Afer wrote. Two thousand years! What are your associations with that remote and eminently classical age? Are they derived from Dr. Lempriere, or Smith's 'Dictionary of Antiquities?' Psha! the great comedy of life was then what it is now—full of intrigue, of plot and passion, of love and hate, and injured innocence and roguery. Old heads wagged in counsel, and young hearts throbbed with ardour over the pallium and beneath the tunic just as ours do to-day in modern dress. Davus and Geta played their tricks with somewhat more impudence than London servants, but Pamphilus and Antipho sighing over their mistresses, Captain Thraso joking with Miss Thais, poor Nausistrata bewailing her wrongs—are

not these parts acted over and over again in our own times? Who laughs louder at Gnatho's comfortable doctrine than young Tuftleigh Hunter, as, fresh from Oxford, that young gentleman looks on at the Eunuchus? and yet, dear Tuftleigh, the Terentian parasite has his imitators. Gnathonics crop up, even at the university. Change but the scene and the time, and who shall say where we may not apply the moral? 'Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur.' (I think I see Mr. Hunter's expression of disgust as he reads this hacknied quotation.) But let the boys begin the play.

The plot of the 'Adelphi,' I need scarcely say, is of a different order to Adelphi plots commonly so known. There is nothing melodramatic about it, nothing provocative of that humour in which Messrs. Wright and Paul Bedford were wont to indulge. It is rather of the old-fashioned school of English comedy; and if somewhat dubious in its moral tendency, judged by our own standard, was positively good teaching for the age in which it was written.

Demea and Micio are two old Grecian brothers of different pursuits, philosophy, and temperament. Demea is a country gentleman and widower, with old-fashioned notions of discipline, and a somewhat choleric disposition, who has two sons, Æschinus and Ctesipho. Micio, on the contrary, who lives at Athens, is an easy-going bachelor, indulgent to youth, but with enough worldly wisdom to win the respect of Æschinus, his nephew (a sad scapegrace of the Charles Surface type) whom he has adopted. The escapades of this young gentleman are a source of anxiety to his father, who is continually taking Micio to task for over lenience to his son. He contrasts that young reprobate with the sober, thrifty, and prudent Ctesipho, whom he looks upon as a model young farmer, and whom he has brought up on his own plan.

Micio—who reasons like Colonel Pendennis in a toga—defends himself by saying that young men will be young men, preach as you will, and reminds his brother that he might have been no better himself forty years ago if his purse had not been too slender then for a fast life. He argues, moreover, that by avoiding severity he has secured the confidence of his nephew, which, by the way, as it presently appears, is more than Demea can say of his other son.

Indeed, if Æschinus may be compared to Charles Surface, the resemblance between Ctesipho and Mr. Joseph Surface is not less striking. While appearing in his father's eyes a miracle of propriety, he has secretly meditated an intrigue with a music-girl whom he persuades his brother to carry off for him. This flagrant act becomes the town talk of Athens, and poor Æschinus has not only to bear all the blame of his father and uncle, but incur the high displeasure of Miss Pamphila, a young lady whom —whom he ought to have married long ago. While all this is going on there is a good deal of comic business introduced by one Syrus, a faithful servant of the family, who has but one weakness, which being one of a bacchanalian character, only serves to sustain his character as a wit, and certainly makes him no less a favourite in the eyes of his audience. In fact, Syrus plays a very important part in the piece. He cudgels Sannio, a gentleman of doubtful character, who tries to interfere with his plans. He helps the young men through their difficulties with the utmost good nature, and not more lies than are absolutely necessary to the plot. He sends old Demea half over the town on a fool's errand in search of his brother, and makes himself generally amusing. However, in the fourth act he is overtaken in his cups, and the rustic father, who comes back furious, pounces upon Master Ctesipho unawares. Then of course ensues a tremendous *dénouement*. The young farmer appears in his true light, and Demea, enraged at finding his favourite son has deceived him, forgets that this is due to his own severity, and lays the whole blame on Micio, who defends himself and the boys with that memorable argument which

Colman has so admirably translated, and which concludes with these words:—

'There are in nature sundry marks, good Demea,
By which you may conjecture easily
That when two persons do the self-same thing,
It oftentimes falls out, that in the one
'Tis criminal, in t'other 'tis not so:
Not that the thing itself is different,
But he who does it. In these youths I see
The marks of virtue; and I trust they 'll prove
Such as we wish them. They have sense I know;
Attention; in its season, liberal shame;
And fondness for each other; all sure signs
Of an ingenuous mind and noble nature;
And though they stray, you may at any time
Reclaim them.—But perhaps you fear they 'll prove
Too inattentive to their interest.
O my dear Demea, in all matters else
Increase of years increases wisdom in us;
This only vice age brings along with it—
We're all more worldly-minded than there's need:
Which passion age, that kills all passions else,
Will ripen in your sons too.'

The play concludes with the reconciliation of Demea to his sons after a long soliloquy, in which he proves himself so much a convert to his brother's teaching that we begin to fear he may, like most converts, let his new doctrine lead him into excess. Æschinus proves himself a constant lover to Pamphila, and is rewarded by that lady's hand in marriage. Syrus not only obtains his own freedom, but that of his wife, and sets up as a private gentleman. Ctesipho takes his sweetheart home to the paternal roof, where let us hope in due time she becomes Mrs. C. But the cream of the joke is that old Micio, at the earnest entreaty of all his friends, is induced to turn Benedict, and whom should he marry but his nephew's mother-in-law, Sostrata, a widowed lady who, though no longer a beauty, possesses attractions of a more lasting kind.

Thus, on the good old comedy plan—so good, we see, that it has lasted two thousand years—everybody is married and lives happy ever afterwards.

The play is succeeded by an Epilogue, written for the occasion by an 'old Westminster,' which always takes the form of a Latin burlesque, and is usually a facetious adaptation of the characters of the piece to some popular topic of the day. On this occasion the late jealousy between the civic functionaries and metropolitan police afforded subject for as much fun as can be expressed in elegiacs; and Demea, as Lord Mayor, delivered a tremendous pun on the name of the Home Secretary* in a new reading of an old quotation.

And now arises a cry of 'Cap! cap!' from the body of the auditorum. A bran new college 'trencher' passes round from hand to hand among the 'old Westminsters,' and the chinking of gold on all sides shows at once their appreciation of the performance and a well-cherished memory of bygone days.†

I must not forget to add that between the acts, in accordance with a time-honoured custom, the ladies have been supplied with a slight refection in the shape of ices and negus, by one of the Queen's scholars selected for that graceful office, and that when the curtain has finally fallen, there is a rush of 'old Westminsters' behind the scenes, where sack-whey, a traditional, delightful, and highly unwholesome beverage, is ladled out for their consumption.

After the play, and when the *corps dramatique* have exchanged their buskins and togas for caps and gowns, a gorgeous supper takes place in college, to which the boys' friends are bidden. Shall I recall the glories of that youthful feast, where 'good digestion waits on appetite,' where, with the prospect of the Christmas holidays before them, the horrors of Euripides, the intricacies of the Binomial Theorem, are forgotten, and cares drowned deeply in the loving cup? The joke and song go round, the bottle circulates as freely. Fill up, gentlemen, I pray you, bumpers all, and let us drink success to the venerable school. We know the old toast. 'Floreat!' Westminster for ever!

C. L. E.

* 'Timeo *Graium* vel dona ferentem.'

† This voluntary subscription goes to defray the expenses entailed by the erection of the theatre. If there is a balance, it is divided among the actors.

READING THE VALENTINE.

AH, Amy, darling! those exquisite blushes
Masking the face in such fairy-like guise,
As the pink cheek so rapidly rosily flushes,
And the light gleams in those radiant eyes,
Tell me more surely than words could convey
This is the morning of Valentine's Day!

Clasping so lightly with daintiest fingers
Lace-broidered pages with letters of gold,
Where the dim violet scent fragrantly lingers,
Reading words ever young yet ever old;
Thus 'tis I see you in fancy, though miles
Numberless lie between me and your smiles.

Far, far away, I can see you so plainly,
Where by the window you musingly stand;
Far, far away, I can long—ah, how vainly!—
Once more to touch that soft tiny white hand,
Which holds the bright missive whose verses but say
The words which are greeting for Valentine's Day.

The custom, it may be, is foolish though olden;
Yet I think in the sternest and bitterest life
There are memories written in letters of golden,
Of the time when there came never whisper of strife,
When no wealth was so valued, or riches so rare,
As a faded dead flower, or a tress of soft hair.

I am far from you; and yet I am nearer—
May I not say so?—than ever before;
Never yet, oh, my darling! I held you the dearer
Than now, as I call up the fancies of yore,
As I picture you reading, though far, far away,
The verses that typify Valentine's Day.

I picture you thus—and the idolised vision
Will live in my heart as its worthiest prize—
For the sun of my life—ah, smile not in derision!—
Is the gleam that shines out from those sweet hazel eyes—
Those dark brilliant mirrors of love and of truth—
Those fountains whence springs the elixir of youth.

I picture you, darling—the golden-brown tresses,
Whose silky broad braids have entangled my heart,
The glorious eyes whose mere looks are caresses,
The red lips whose music can never depart—
All call up remembrances, cheering my way
With records the sweetest of Valentine's Day.

Sweetest and tenderest! words may be spoken
Which cast a veil over the years yet unseen—
Hopes may be shattered and hearts may be broken—
But read you your verses in silence, my Queen!
Paint life in smiles, love—too soon there appears
The rain-cloud, whose waters are bitterest tears.

Away with such prophecies, darling; the river
Of your life flows on over golden-hued sands.
Ah! I pray Fate may never make those sweet lips quiver,
Nor bid those eyes dim to its gloomy commands;
May happiness find you—for ever to stay—
As if Time were only one Valentine's Day!

W. R.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

LOVE'S WEATHER GLASS.

www.libtool.com.cn

THE FIRST DAY OF THE SEASON, AND ITS RESULTS.

'When at the close of the departing year
Is heard that joyful sound, the huntsman's cheer,
And wily Reynard with the morning air
Scents from afar the foe, and leaves his lair.'

I QUITE agree with the distinguished foreign nobleman who declared, that 'Nothing was too good to go foxing in,' and with the immortal Jorrocks of Handley Cross notoriety, I exclaim, 'Unting, my beloved readers, is the image of war with only ten per cent. of its dangers.'

Ever since I was an unbreeched urchin, and my only steed a rough Shetland pony, across whose bare back my infantine legs could scarcely stride, I have looked forward to a day's hunting with the keenest relish. The preliminary sport of cub-hunting, with its early-dawn meets, bad scent, consequent upon fallen leaves and decayed vegetable matter, riotous young hounds, which can scarcely be brought to hunt upon any terms; timid, nervous young foxes, who hardly dare poke their sharp noses out of covert, only serves to give a greater zest as it were to the opening day. One or two woodland runs, just sufficient to breath the well-trained hunter, or take the exuberant spirits (the accompaniments of high feeding and no work) from the young one, after a stripling Reynard, who as yet has no line of country of his own, and hardly dares to venture far from the place of his birth, ending with a killing just to blood the young hounds, only makes the longing for the first day of the season more intense.

Not one of her Majesty's subjects

throughout her vast dominions—so vast indeed are they that, as the song tells us, 'The sun never sets on their might.' Not one, I say, of her Majesty's lieges, looked forward more anxiously than I did to the first day of the hunting season of 18—, for why should I be too explicit about dates, or let all the world know that I am so ancient as to remember anything so long buried in the past? I had just returned to old England with a year's leave from my regiment, then in India. I was possessed of capital health and spirits, was only just six-and-twenty years of age, had five hundred pounds at my banker's, and two as good nags in my stable as ever a man laid his leg across. 'Hunting for ever!' I cried, as I strolled into 'Seamemup and Basteemwell's,' the unrivalled breechesmakers' establishment in the Strand, to order a few pair of those most necessary adjuncts to the sporting man's toilet, previous to leaving town. 'Hunting for ever, and of all the packs in England, commend me to my old acquaintance, those friends of my boyhood, the 'Easyallshire Muggers.' I am not sure but that, strictly speaking, the term mugger ought only to be applied to those packs of hounds which are used for that peculiar pastime which, to again quote the immortal Jorrocks, 'Is only fit for cripples, and them as keeps donkeys,' viz., harriers. Be that as it may, the pack I now speak of were, though called muggers, *bonâ fide* foxhounds, and as such, only used in the 'doing to death' of that wily animal.

The county which had as it were given birth to this distinguished pack, presented to the hunting man very much the same features as do most parts of England. There were the same number of ditches and dingles to be got over somehow, the same gates which would and would not be opened, the same fences, stiles, and heavers, to be cleared, the same woodland parts to be hunted, from which it was next to impossible to get a fox away, and to which every one said they would never come again, but for all that no one ever kept their word, for there were just the very same number of sportsmen to be seen at the very next meet held in the district; thus proving that foxhunting, even under difficulties, is still a most fascinating diversion; and there were the same snug-lying gorse coverts, from which a run was sure to be obtained over a flat, well-enclosed country, which gave both man and horse as much as ever their united efforts could accomplish, to be there or thereabouts at the finish. Nor were the meets of the Easyallshire Muggers, advertised in 'Bell's Life,' dissimilar in any respect to those of other packs of hounds, for there were an equal number of cross roads, turnpike gates, public houses, gibbets, woods, signposts, and milestones, as elsewhere. Well, to enjoy a season's sport with this so distinguished hunt was my intention; and no sooner had I completed the requisite arrangements with regard to my hunting toggery, which a residence of some half-dozen years in India had rendered necessary, than I took up my abode in the little town of Surlyford, at the comfortable hotel rejoicing in the mythological sign of the 'Silent Woman,' a fabulous personage surely, to be classed with 'Swans with Two Necks,' 'Green Men,' and other creatures who never had any existence. The first meet of the Easyallshire Muggers was advertised, so said the county paper, to take place at the fourth mile-stone on the Surlyford road. Thither I repaired fully equipped in all the splendour of a new pink immaculate, cords, brown tinted tops, my blue birds'-eye scarf, neatly folded and fastened with a pin bearing a most appropriate device, viz., a real fox's tooth. In my impatience to be up and doing on this our opening day, I arrived at the trysting-place, from whence I was to woo my favourite pastime, some half hour or more before the master and his pack were due. I had, therefore, ample leisure to receive the greetings of my numerous old friends and acquaintances, as they came up from all parts, and in all directions, on all sorts and all sizes of nags, and at all kinds of paces,

to the place of meeting. First to arrive on that useful steed, yclept 'Shanks's pony,' slouching along, clad in rusty velveteen, baggy brown cord breeches and gaiters, billy cock, as he termed his wide-awake hat, on head, a stout ashen stick cut from a neighbouring coppice in hand, and ten to one a quantity of wires in his pockets, was handsome, dark-eyed, good-for-nothing, scampish, dishonest Gipsy Jim — the some time gamekeeper, when he could get any one to employ him, but oftener the poaching, drinking, thieving vagabond of the neighbourhood. A broad grin of recognition and a touch of the hat on the part of the Gipsy one, and an exclamation on mine of 'Bless me, Jim! not hanged yet?' placed us once again on the old familiar footing of 'I will tell you all I know about foxes' (and who could afford better information than one whose habits and disposition partook more of the vermin than the man?), 'providing you give me a shilling to drink your health.' Gipsy Jim and I had hardly interchanged these civilities, when, trotting along on a stout, handsome, six-year old, in capital condition, though, if anything, a little too fat (not a bad fault, however, at the beginning of the season), came farmer Thresher, of Beanstead, a florid, yellow-haired, red-whiskered, jovial, hard-riding, independent agriculturist, who, on the strength of having been at school in years gone by with some of the neighbouring squires, myself amongst the number, called us all freely by our surnames, forgetting to prefix the accustomed Mister, and thus giving great umbrage to some, and causing them always to pointedly address him as 'Mr. Thresher.' Our mutual salutations had hardly come to an end than we are joined by half a dozen more sturdy yeomen, able and willing to go, let the pace be ever so severe, and all of them contributing their five pounds yearly to the support of the 'Easyallshire Muggers, spite of wheat, sir, at fourteen shillings a bag.'

Young Boaster next turns up, a swaggering blade from a neighbouring hunt, who is always abusing the 'Easyallshire' hounds, and bragging of his own prowess, which consists of riding extraordinary distances to far-off meets, and doing nothing when he gets there, save telling wonderful and fabulous stories of what he had done last time he was out, and what he intended to do then. He is succeeded by Dr. Bolus, 'the sporting Doctor,' as he is called, who must be making a very handsome fortune in his profession, if his knowledge of medicine is anything like his judgment in horse-flesh, his skill in the pigskin, or his acquaintance with the line of a fox. After Bolus, on a three-legged screw, a wonder to every one how it is kept at all on its understandings, comes Aloes, the veterinary surgeon, a pleasant-spoken, florid, little old man, skilful in his business, ever agreeing, with his 'That I would, sir,' and one who I would much prefer to attend me when sick than many a professor of the healing art among men. The majesty of the law is next upheld by Mr. Sheepskin, the attorney, a gentlemanly man, a light weight, and one who rides, when need be, as hard, if not harder than any one. Nor is the church absent (for we have not a few clerical subscribers to the Easyallshire Muggers), but is well represented in the person of the Rev. Mr. Flatman, a good-looking, well-built, foxy-whiskered divine, whose handling of the ribbons on the coach-box, and seat on horseback, would entitle him to a deanery at the very least, could the Broad-church party but come into power. His small country parish, however, does not suffer by the fondness of its rector for the sports of the field; a hard-working and most exemplary curate, he is still a painstaking and estimable parish priest, and much preferred, I doubt not, by all his parishioners to any more busy and interfering divine of either of the other two schools of divinity. I myself am by no means the sole member of the military profession present, for we are here of all ranks, from the just-joined ensign to the gallant colonel of the county militia, a stout, fine-looking veteran, none of your feather-bed soldiers, and

one who, spite of his weight, is an exceedingly difficult man to beat across country. 'Mammon,' as it is the fashion now-a-days to call that useful article, money, is seen approaching in the person of the Surlyford banker, who wisely flinging business to the winds at least twice in the week, gets astride a good-looking, nearly thoroughbred nag, and finds accepting bullfinches, negotiating ditches, and discounting gates, stiles, &c., a much more healthy and more pleasant, if not more profitable, occupation than everlastingly grubbing after filthy lucre.

The master now makes his appearance, tall and upright, knowing thoroughly the duties of his office, and if not quite so bold and determined a rider as in years gone by, still making up for want of nerve in knowledge of the country, and for lack of dash in careful riding and judicious nicking-in. Suffice it to say, that at the finish, his absence is never observed, though how he came to be there is better known to the second rank horsemen than to the fliers. The huntsman and whip are much the same as those worthies are everywhere; but the hounds, how to describe them I know not.

The 'Easyallshire Muggers' set all rules regarding the make, size, and symmetry of fox-hounds at defiance. They show almost better sport, and kill more foxes than any pack in the kingdom; and yet they are as uneven as a ploughed field, and as many shapes and sizes as a charity school. I can only say, 'handsome is what handsome does;' and if my canine friends are not pleasant to the eye of the connoisseur—if they come not up to Bective, Somerville, and other writers on hunting description of a perfect fox-hound, still they act beautifully—which to my mind is far preferable to looking beautiful—and will run and kill foxes with any hounds in England. The huntsman and whip, though not so well mounted (economy is the order of the day with the Easyallshire Muggers), as we would wish to see them, yet manage somehow to get across the country, and to be with their hounds; though for the matter of that, such is the sagacity of the Easyallshire pack, that they can very frequently do quite as well without the assistance of their ruler and guide as with it. The 'Easyallshire' Hunt, as the name implies, is an easy-going sort of concern, in which every man, gentle and simple, has a finger in the pie; every subscriber imagining that he has a perfect right, on the strength of his subscription, to hunt, whip-in, or otherwise direct the movements of the hounds whenever opportunity occurs. But forrard! for-rard on! or I shall be at the fourth mile-stone on the Surlyford Road all day, instead of drawing that inviting piece of gorse covert which lies so pleasant and warm, with its southern aspect on yonder bank. A guinea to a gooseberry, a fox lies there!

Joe, the huntsman, now trots along through the somewhat bare and brown pasture-fields towards the covert; the pack eager and keen for the fray, clustering round the heels of his horse. A few moments only elapse and the sea of gorse is alive with hounds poking here, there, and everywhere, seeking the lair of sly Reynard. Old experience having taught me that Gipsy Jim's knowledge of the fox and his habits (for being half-brother to the varmint in his nature, how can it fail to be otherwise?) would serve me in good stead, I station myself near to him in order to have a good view of 'Mr. Reynolds,' as Jim calls the cunning animal when he breaks covert. Nor am I wrong in my conjecture, for after a few pleasant notes from old Bellman, who hits upon the place where master fox crossed a ride early this morning, and a 'hark to Bellman' from Joe the huntsman, out jumps, almost into Jim's arms, as fine a fox as ever wore a brush. Master Reynard looks somewhat astonished at being brought so suddenly face to face with a two-legged monster, and seems half inclined to turn back again to his hiding-place; but perhaps, judging from Jim's varmint look, that no danger might be apprehended from that quarter, and

being warned by the deep notes of old Bellman, that his late quarters were untenable, he throws back his head as if to sniff the pleasant morning breeze, and giving his brush a gentle wave of defiance, boldly takes to the open, and starts across the field which surrounds the covert, at a good rattling pace. Gipsy Jim grins from ear to ear with delight, showing his white regular teeth; at the same time holding up his hand as a warning to me to keep silence for a few seconds, so as not to spoil sport by getting the fox headed back. The moment, however, Master Reynard is safely through the neighbouring hedge, Jim's tremendous view-halloa makes the whole country ring again. This is the signal for every bumpkin and footman to shout and halloa with might and main, thus making the necessary confusion of the find worse confounded still. 'Hold your noisy tongues,' shout the master,

huntsman, whip, and all the horsemen; but 'Hold your noisy tongues' they cry in vain. Tallyho! tallyho! tallyho! yell the footmen, totally regardless of all expostulation. But crafty Jim, knowing the idiosyncrasy of the Yokels, has made all safe by his silence, until the red-coated rascal is well away. 'Hark! halloa!' 'hark! halloa!' roar the field. 'Tootle, tootle!' goes Joe's horn, re-echoed by an asthmatical effort in the same direction, on the part of the worthy master, who blows as if his horn was full of dirt. The hounds, however, are accustomed to the sound, feeble as it is, and all rush to the spot where master, huntsman, and Gipsy Jim, are all cheering them exactly at the place where foxy broke away. What a burst of music now strikes upon the ear, far superior to the delights of any concert it has ever been my lot to be present at, as every hound acknowledges with joy the rapture

they feel at the strong scent left behind by him they had so unceremoniously disturbed from his comfortable lodgings. But the scent is too good for us to dwell long for description, and away they go at a killing pace, which, if it lasts long enough, will see to the bottom of many a gallant steed there present. And now comes the rush of horsemen amidst the cries of 'Hold hard! don't spoil your sport!' of the master, and the ''old 'ard!' of the huntsman, who has an eye to tips, and therefore restrains his wrath in some measure. But the 'Easyallshireans' are not to be kept back by any such remonstrances and expostulations as these, and those who mean to be with the hounds throughout the run, hustle along to get a forward place; whilst the knowing and cunning ones, with the master at their head, turn short round, and make for a line of gates which lie invitingly open, right in the direction which the fox has taken. I set a good start, and being well mounted, sailed away, and am soon alongside of Joe the huntsman, whose horse, though a screw, and not very high in condition, is obliged to go, being compelled thereto by its rider. A stiff-looking fence which I charge at the same moment as Joe, who takes away at least a perch of fencing, and thus lets many a muff through, lands us into the next field, and affords a fair view of the hounds streaming away a little distance before us. But why should I describe the run? 'Bell's Life,' weekly, gives much more graphic descriptions of such things than I am able to write; let me, therefore, confine my narrative to what befel my individual self.

A rattling burst of twenty minutes rendered the field, as may be well imagined, very select, and it would in all probability have become still more so, had not a fortunate check given horses and men a few moments' breathing time, thus enabling the cunning riders to get up to the hounds. Away we go again, 'and I will be there at the finish,' I exclaimed, as pressing my cap firmly on my head, and shutting my eyes, I ride at a tremendous bullfinch, the thick boughs and sharp thorns of which nearly scratched my eyes out, and decapitate me as I burst through it. But, as in the case of the renowned John Gilpin, it is—

> 'Ah, luckless speech and bootless boast,
> For which I paid full dear.'

Another ten minutes' best pace and the fox is evidently sinking before us; but, alas! it was not to be my lot to see the gallant animal run into and pulled down in the open, after as fine a run as was ever seen. Trim-kept hedges, well-hung, stout, and newly-painted white gates, had shown me that for the last few moments he had entered the domain of some proprietor, whose estate certainly presented the very pink of neatness: little indeed did I dream that there would exist in the very heart of 'Easyallshire' any one so benighted as to object to the inroads made upon him by that renowned pack the 'Muggers.' But I reckoned without my host, or rather, as the sequel will show, with my host; for as in my endeavours to save my now somewhat exhausted horse, I rode at what appeared an easy place in a very high fence, bounded on the off-side with a stiff post and rail, an irate elderly gentleman, gesticulating, shouting, and waving an umbrella in his hand, suddenly rose up as it were from the very bowels of the earth, just as my steed was preparing to make his spring, thus causing the spirited animal to rear up, and, overbalancing himself, to fall heavily to the ground with me under him. When I next recovered consciousness and opened my eyes, I was being borne along on a hurdle, by the author of my misfortunes—a grey-haired, piebald whiskered, stout, little, red-faced old gentleman, and two of his satellites, who I rightly conjectured to be the coachman and gardener; but the pain of my broken leg made me again relapse into unconsciousness, nor did the few wits I by nature possess, return to me again until I was laid upon a bed, and a medical practitioner of the neighbourhood was busy at work setting my fractured limb. To make a long story short, I remained under the roof of

Major Pipeclay—for that was the name of the irascible little gentleman, whose hatred of hunting, hounds, and horses, had caused my suffering—until my wounded limb was well again, the worthy old major doing all in his power to make amends for the catastrophe his absurd violence had brought about.

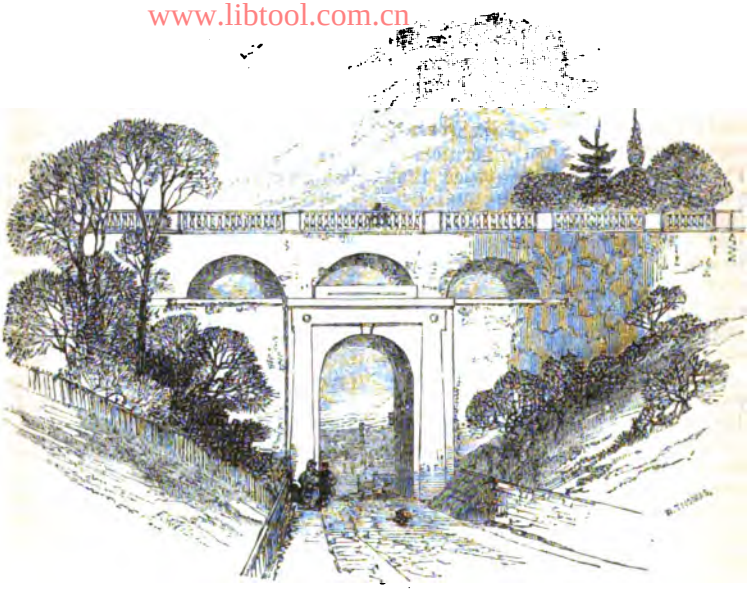
At the expiration of six weeks I was able to move about on crutches; at the termination of twice that period, I was well again, and had moreover, fallen irretrievably in love with the bright eyes and pretty face of Belinda Pipeclay, one of the major's handsome daughters. Thinking, in my ignorance of the fair sex, that the child of so irascible a papa—having been in her juvenile days well tutored under the Solomonian code 'of sparing the rod, and spoiling the child'—must, therefore, of necessity, make a submissive and obedient wife, I proposed—was accepted, obtained the major's consent, and became a Benedict.

Dear reader, I am really ashamed to confess the truth, 'I have been severely henpecked ever since.' Whether Belinda possesses the same antipathy to hounds, horses, and hunting men, as her progenitor, I cannot possibly tell, for returning to India soon after my marriage, I had no opportunity of there testing her feelings in that respect. Now the increasing number of mouths in our nursery compels a decreasing ratio of animals in my stable, and I am reduced to one old, broken-winded cripple, which I call 'the Machiner.' He takes Mrs. Sabretache and myself to the market town on a Saturday, and mamma, papa, and the little Sabretaches to church on the following day.

PICTURESQUE LONDON.

NO. II.—FROM HIGHGATE ARCHWAY ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

www.libtool.com.cn



TO Mr. Kenny Meadows, Mr. George Thomas, Mr. Birket Foster, Mr. Samuel Read, *et hoc genus omne*, greeting! Be good enough, gentlemen, to accept my scorn! Be good enough to understand that I denounce you as the Perkin Warbecks, the Lambert Simnels, the Cock Lane Ghosts, and Johanna Southcotes of art! You are impostors, gentlemen! Not in your work; no! I know that well enough. Never did more cunning pencils work away on box-wood blocks; never did more poetical minds blend with more expert fingers: but all this increases your shame, gentlemen! You draw so admirably that we give in to your imposition, and suffer ourselves to be led captive by it. About Christmas, for instance: why do you still portray that genial, ruddy, ice-bound, holly-crowned giant? why do you still fill our periodicals with pictures of snow-covered landscapes, snow-clad churches, ice-bound lakes, golf-parties, sleighing-parties, frozen-out distressed damsels dying on snow-covered doorsteps, robins picking very black crumbs off very white lawns, carol-singing villagers blowing their nails and beating their breasts for the superinducement of caloric? How long is it since you saw any of these sights at Christmas-time? how long is it since you saw snow at all, or since there was any good skating in London? I remember frosty winters when I was a boy, and I mind me of a certain time when London was 'snowed up'—when all the cabs that were out had two horses, and the omnibuses did not run, and there was a strange silence in all the streets, as in a city of the dead. Sometimes when I talk to people about things being different from what they were some years ago, I am told, 'Ah! the change is in *you*. You feel differently about such matters. You're getting on, you know;' and then I am impressed with the information that time flies, and that we are none of us younger, and that

each year makes a difference, and various other novel and interesting remarks of the same nature. But, humbly subscribing to all this, I still maintain that the present style of representing Christmas is a mockery, a delusion, and a snare, and calculated to bring us into contempt in the eyes of our children, who will regard us as a set of mummers playing at an exploded rite, and will feel for us the same sort of pity that we feel for dear old George Cruikshank, when we see him leaving his own quips and drolleries, in which he has never been excelled, to attempt the portrayal of a modern swell—in the high-collared, long-tailed coat, ribbed silk stockings, and pumps of thirty years ago.

When I rose this Christmas morning I saw no vestige of ice or snow. The grass was brilliantly green, the buds were shooting on many shrubs, the air was balmy, and the entire aspect of nature was April-like and genial. The conventionalities were in full play. Yes; I will allow that people wished each other 'a merry Christmas;' the gardener, as he touched his hat, told me he had sent in a good store of Christmas logs for firing; and there was the usual excitement among the young folk as to pudding and mincemeat. We found the church duly decorated with holly and laurel, bits of yew uncomfortably mingling with the other evergreens, and reminding one of Mr. Tennyson's tree, which—

> ——'Graspest at the stones,
> That name the underlying dead,
> Thy fibres net to dreamless head
> Thy roots are wrapped around the bones;'

and the sockets of the parson's candlesticks flaring with curling green. Regular Christmas sermon from the parson—an old one, I think, as I detect in it very frosty bits about 'hardened glebe' and 'ice-bound rill,' and general recollection of the illustrated journals not at all appropriate to the existing temperature. Pew-opener conventional, too, with a Christmas shiver and a Christmas cough before the receipt of the annual gratuity, and the Christmas grin and wishes of 'a many, many 'appy 'ears' after the pocketing thereof. We give up conventionality when we get outside the porch, and walk slowly home; and after lunch we throw open the French windows of the dining-room, and bask in the genial sun which pours in through them. Far away, over the hushed fields, and across the bar made by the quiet little railway line, lie the outposts of the sleeping giant, London, a long line of terrace, very seaside in its aspect, tall, and gaunt, and stuccoey — very suggestive of lodgings at from two to four guineas a week according to the floor, and obviously looking on to the parade where the old gentlemen walk up and down, and cough, and the young people flirt and smoke in front. No London for us, though, to-day; the dog-cart is at the door, but Brown George's head shall not be turned towards the streets; further a-field, eh, Brown George? and, responsive to my touch on the reins, the brave horse starts off down the lane, and striking through the heart of the groves of the Evangelist, turns into the broad road skirting the Regent's Park.

Two friends are with me in this little trip—two friends like myself affiliated to literature, and earning their bread by the plying of their pens. Consequently, it is not astonishing that the subject of our conversation should be (has been ever since we came together) the great loss which our profession has suffered in the death of one of its chieftains. Two nights since one of those driving with me dined with WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY—listening to his jests, in which there was ever a ringing echo of sadness, and talked with him of his prospects and forthcoming work. And, as we pass the entrance to the Zoological Gardens, I mind me that it was there I last had seen him; and Brown George's reins hang loosely in my hand as I call to mind the tall square figure, the high shoulders, the hands now plunged deeply into the trousers pockets, now clasped together behind his back, the intelligent face, with an expression of sensitiveness amounting almost to querulousness which never left it, the quaint philosophy and satire,

so humanized as to be stripped of all its barb, that proceeded from between his lips. Gone, gone for ever! To us, humble hero-worshippers, privates in the ranks which had just lost one of their commanding officers, acolytes in the ceremonies of which one of the high-priests had been called away, there was a certain incongruity in the acknowledged jollity and happiness of the day. Thackeray was dead — Thackeray the great author—a soul such as seldom inhabits mortal clay had been suddenly recalled, and yet there were people grinning, and talking, and pushing, wheeling perambulators, sucking oranges, coming hazily out of gin-shops, wiping their mouths with the backs of their hands. They cared nothing for the dead man; they had never heard of him probably. And then one of us recollected a story which Thackeray himself had told him: how, when he was canvassing for his election at Oxford, he called upon one of the Heads of Colleges, and sent in his name. The dignitary saw him, and asked his profession. 'An author.' 'What had he written?' Something flabbergasted, he replied, '"Vanity Fair."' 'I never met with it,' said the dean; 'but conclude it is something in the manner of Bunyan!' *Vanitas vanitatum!* and Jones, who has had an article on Boots in the Megatherium,' and Brown, who has published a comic shilling book called, 'Mrs. Tippikin's Tea and Turn Out,' imagine that they are celebrities of the day, and that their every action is closely scanned by an admiring public!

So, take Brown George in hand again, and away through the Regent's Park. The people—what the noble Tory writers querulously call the *plebs*—are out here in force, lolling, idling, romping, as though it were full summer. Fashion don't seem to alter much in the mechanic's Sunday dress; so long as I can recollect it has been long-tailed coat, black satin waistcoat, black trousers, very crumply at the knees, and hard shiny black hat; so it is now, exact in every particular. Why do they don this frightful garb? Is it with the notion that their appearance then approximates to that of a gentleman? because they are utterly wrong. Is it that they think the costume pretty? because they are frightfully mistaken. Why do men want to be mistaken for what they are not? I know that if any one were to say to me, 'Eusebius, my boy, I'll make you up to look like a marquis, an earl, a baronet, or a Lombard Street banker,' I should decline the honour; and why on earth does Chips the carpenter—an honest man and a very good-looking one in his working clothes—try to disguise himself in an utterly unmistakable hideous sham? The sward is dotted with red and blue children, appallingly bright; and the seats are sprinkled with the military, now squat and sheepish, now tall, whiskered, and impassioned, and with young persons in service, who are supposed to be at church, and whose conversation seems to be limited to the repetition of the sentence, 'Get along with yer.' Vagrant boys, too, we see about, of course, fiends who mock at us as we pass, and who yell after us, 'Three gents out for a hairin',' as Brown George turns through Gloucester Gate and enters Camden Town.

Do you know Camden Town? A sweet spot: the home, *par excellence*, of the commercial clerk of from 30*s.* a week to two-fifty a year—an estimable, responsible, hard-working man. I have a word or two—not about him, but about the houses. Houses all built to meet the requirements of the clerkly world; they even look as if they had been manufactured of dingy blotting-paper, and are so fragile that they could be taken out with an eraser. Thoroughly respectable though: none of your low lodgings, or anything of that sort! House! nice parlour, wire blind in window; very shiny, sticky, gummy furniture, chairs with American cloth seats, which stick to your trousers; vase with everlasting flowers, and two china dogs on mantelpiece; very bad, cheap print of three chorister boys (oh, the difference between the sweet youths and the real dirty-nosed choirboy of a country church!) on the wall; little mat by the door. Nice

drawing-room, all in white maple wood and cane bottoms, with white muslin curtains and a crumb-cloth over the carpet, quite warm and comfortable: a black-beetly kitchen, where Maria Jane cooks everything with coal garnish and soot sauce: and bedrooms which are well described as 'airy.' I vow that I hate Camden and regard him with loathing. All his terraces — Bayham and Jeffrey, and Brecknock —his 'road' and his 'villas,' his 'square' which is horribly pretentious and uncomfortable! He looks so horribly prim and pharisaical, he looks so unlike real hospitality—so unlike oysters for supper, or a cigar and a glass of grog; he looks so like a plate of mixed biscuits, and a glass of sherry at 27*s.* the dozen—so like two formal little dinners in the year, when Jones the greengrocer empties the oyster-sauce down your neck, and a mild evening party with very weak negus, no flirting, and the drawing-room door under the hostess's bed. I often wonder how jolly Charles Dibdin, the songwriter, who is buried in the graveyard here, can rest in such precincts, and wonder that he does not start up and scare the respectable humbugs living round him with a 'Yo-ho!' chorus!

Nor do I care much for Kentish now, though I mind me of the time when he was very dear to me. Then —*consule Manlio*—he was inhabited by one whom Mr. Swiveller would, indeed, have described a 'jolly old grandfather;' the kindest-hearted, most generous, most boy-spoiling of veterans. Ah! the half-crowns from his fob, the whiffs at his pipe, the half-holidays begged by him from school, the wine-glasses of toddy subtracted from his own potential jorum; the gardening done under his directions, the gun-lock oiling, and fishing-tackle assortment, which alone were hours of rapture! I can see his face at this instant, as I look up from my paper, when, as a boy of twelve, I had been expressing an admiration for gin-punch, and a maiden aunt of the other branch of the family asked, in virtuous indignation, 'Where did you ever taste such a low beverage, sir?' I can see the old gentleman's twinkling eye, and his forefinger laid suggestively on his lip! Low beverage, indeed! When I remember what it was, I wish I had a glass of it, and the stomach to bear it unharmed, at this present writing. But the old gentleman is long since departed, and Kentish Town has quite changed from what it was in his day. Then it was a pretty little village, with trees here and there before its ale-houses, with red-faced old country houses standing in their gardens; a little colony to which, when cabs penetrated, the horse was 'put up,' and the cabman sat in his shirt-sleeves on the bench before the tavern door, smoking his pipe, and wondering at the rural quiet around him. Now a big church stands on the spot where stood the squat brick chapel which sufficed for the old urbans of Kentish; scores and scores of cockney villas have been scattered pell-mell over the pleasant old fields; gin-palaces and pawnbrokers' shops have crowded the precincts, and a Holborn publican has built a Retreat, *i. e.*, a tea-garden tavern, for sing-song, dancing, and fireworks, which, however, I am delighted to say, the magistrates have refused to license.

And now, at the foot of Highgate Hill, we leave Brown George to the groom, and then quitting my companions for a time, I go on a little pilgrimage, undertaken by me half a dozen times a year, and always on Christmas Day, to the City of the Dead—the Cemetery. It is well for us, brother, thus occasionally to visit the spots where the lost loved ones are laid; it is the one break in our commerce with the world—the one oasis of real feeling in the great desert of life. Hither one invariably comes alone, here one puts off the close-fitting mask which we wear under every other circumstance, and here we commune silently with the dead, to whom only a fleeting thought is spared in the busy worldly round. Ah, dear one lying low! though the eyelid is no longer moist, and though the lips can mention thy name now without quivering, thou art not forgotten! But few of the promises of amendment made in

the first great grief at the loss of thee, have been kept; bit by bit the good resolutions have been abandoned, and yet! — and yet! On these Christmas Days, especially, has memory peculiar powers of revocation, and the dead live again in recollection more vividly than at other seasons. I see that the Cemetery has had many visitants this day: many of the tombs bear *immortelles*, or branches of evergreen, or little bouquets of flowers; and on one, the grave-stone of a child, I see a very beautiful little holly cross. There are fewer gapers than usual: most of those persons I meet are either dressed in mourning or have an earnest decent expression, showing that their visit there was not without an object. How I hate your cemetery visitors on a Sunday afternoon; your gaping, lolling, mooning boys and girls; your drivelling, open-mouthed, middle-aged drearies, who 'jist walk up to the Simmintry afore tea!' and who may be heard bawling to each other, 'Look 'ere, J'mima; ere's a byewtiful one!' or 'Ain't this a hugly toom, Jane?' and who are always mysteriously inquisitive about the 'Cattykooms.' Very lovely the Cemetery looks as I leave it, with its thousands of gravestones like a flock of sheep on the side of the green hill—leave it with the strange thought that one day I shall visit it—to leave it no more.

My companions await me at the far gate, and together we trudge through Highgate—a dull, dreary, little hamlet, too big for a village, too small for a town—a place which the march of intellect has left behind, and which has not strength of mind enough to take up the running. Grass grows between the paving-flags, and commerce is at a standstill. There is a sufficiency of taverns, but they are small and of the beerhouse order, and, like all other houses, are now tightly closed. I, who have known Highgate any time this quarter of a century, having been 'birched and bred' there, don't see any difference in the place, which appeared to me to be in its normal state of solemn stupidity; but my companions are highly disgusted with Highgate, and want to know 'If there's nothing to do, or nothing to see?' Do? well, they can be sworn on the horns, if they like, all the rubbish about not drinking small beer when you can get strong; or not kissing the maid when you can get the mistress—always unless you like the small beer and the maid best; but that would involve standing unlimited beer to numerous pot-wallopers, and would be a dull proceeding after all. See? well, I don't know—yes! by Jove!—THE ARCHWAY! Up this lane to the left, past these half-buried houses standing in their trim gardens, shaded by big trees, and looking almost ancestral, though doubtless let on a term of seven, fourteen, &c., to London tradespeople, and now we are at the Archway itself.

A big stone viaduct, with broad balustrades and coping-stones, stretching across the great North Road. Looking north we see the broad white turnpike road stretching away towards Barnet and St. Albans, a road traversed thirty years ago by upwards of eighty four-horse coaches—coaches which employed ostlers, and stablemen, and helpers, which set down thirsty and hungry travellers at hundreds of wayside inns between London and York, and which have long since been broken up in coachmakers' yards, and had their wheels rent from their bodies and patched on to other vehicles, while the bodies have formed hiding-places for the village children, and have had imaginary horses attached to them by the cocks of many village schools. Ay, the glory of the North Road is gone for ever. Droves of parched cattle and smoking sheep, a few carriers' waggons, and the lumbering carts of the brick-field bordering the road are all that it sees now, save when some of the stock-brokering gents and Mincing Lane princes, resident at Muswell Hill, come dashing down it in their dog-carts and mail-phaetons, as a near cut to town. Now turn we the other way, and look at the dim, great giant London, sleeping in the distance. Now close below us lies Holloway, with Dick Whittington's stone, where the runaway 'prentice

heard the bells which bade him turn again and become Lord Mayor of London: further on, Islington, now almost a part of London, but in Cowley's time a little village as Abraham C. viciously remarks of the metropolis:—

'Let but the wicked men from out thee go,
And all the fools that crowd thee so,
Even thou who dost thy millions boast,
A village less than Islington will grow,
A solitude almost.'

We shall have a walk yet in Islington, I hope, and a talk about Colley Cibber, and Collins the poet, and Cruden the Concordance-man, and Goldsmith and Lamb, all of whom have been Islingtonians. There is the outline of the Model Prison, and the hundreds of thousands of middle-class homes, from the chimneys of which the Christmas essence is pouring, and the walls of which will, for hours, echo with Christmas love and merriment.

Q.

www.libtool.com.cn

AT THACKERAY'S GRAVE.

WITH many more—some his personal friends, some his literary associates, and others who knew him only through his works—I was an unbidden mourner at Thackeray's funeral. The day and hour appointed for the burial were announced in all the papers; and this seemed to me to be a general invitation to all who loved him and held him in respect. I was glad to think that there would be no impertinence in my going to pay a last tribute of respect to a great man, who, unknown to all the world but myself, had been to me in bygone days a kind friend—those trying days before I had made my mark on the 'World of London.' It seems but yesterday that I stood hesitating at Thackeray's door with a long-kept letter of introduction in my hand. I had possessed that letter for years, but had never presented it. And even now that I was at the door my courage failed me. What pretence had *I* for intruding myself upon his notice? I was but a poor scribbler, and no doubt there were scores of them pestering him. The audacity of my conduct appeared all the greater when I remembered that I had come with a manuscript in my pocket, and that it was my intention to ask him to read it and give his opinion upon it. If the door-bell had not rung readily when I gently pulled the handle, I am sure I should have turned and run away, as Rogers did, frightened by his own knock at the door of Doctor Johnson, or at least wheeled round like De Quincey when on his first pilgrimage to the home of Wordsworth. But now the bell was rung, and there was no retreating. A man-servant speedily answered the summons, and took away my last chance by owning that Mr. Thackeray was at home. The servant took my letter and went upstairs, leaving me to wait in the hall. Two objects that I saw there remain to this hour indelibly impressed upon my mind's eye. I can see them before me now, and if I were an artist I could draw them accurately. They were a hat and a pair of cloth gloves—Thackeray's hat and gloves. It was just such a hat, and they were just such gloves as I should have expected Thackeray to wear; not dandified things, but the hat and gloves of a man who bestowed little thought upon such matters, and who probably would not find out that they were old and worn until some one told him it was time to get new ones. I remember that the hat, which seemed a very large one, had a deep band of black cloth upon it, and the gloves were also black. I dare say the smart young porter who had just gone upstairs with my letter thought that hat and those gloves common, shabby things enough: but to me they were more than mere hat and gloves, for I had never seen their owner, and I was picturing the man from what he wore.

The servant came down presently and asked me to step upstairs. I followed him nervously, and was introduced into a large, comfortably furnished study. Thackeray was seated at one of the windows with his back towards me, absorbed in work. He did not notice my entrance for a minute or so, and seemed to be finishing a sentence—a sentence perhaps of the next number of the 'Virginians,' to which I looked forward with so much interest. At last he turned round in his chair, and with a pleasant smile said—

'Good morning, Mr. ——; but I must tell you candidly that I can't make out the signature attached to this letter.'

I mentioned the name, and he recognized it at once, and held out his hand to me, but still apparently going on with his work.

'I am very busy this morning, making up for lost time; but come to the fire, and I'll talk to you. Take a seat.'

I went up beside him, and saw him at his work. The table was covered, not with books and papers as I had imagined, but with pencils and compasses, and bits of chalk

and India ink, and little square blocks of box-wood. He was drawing, not writing, and he was engaged at this moment upon an initial letter, which I recognized next month in print. I noticed now that there were no signs of the author about the room—no blotting-pads, inkstands, or pens—only the appliances of the draughtsman. Going on with his work, he asked me many questions, and chatted about books and drawings — more about drawings than books; and I was agreeably surprised and considerably set at my ease by his mentioning a little book of my own writing—a trifling thing which it did not seem probable he should have seen or heard of. He asked me if I had done the drawings for it. I said 'No,' and mentioned the name of the artist. After some more pleasant chat of the same kind, still going on with his drawing, he suddenly put down his pencil, and turning round in his chair, said—

'Well; and how can I be of any service to you?'

I was now quite at my ease with him, and freely explained what particular views I had, and produced the manuscript. He took it from me, glanced at the title, read a few lines apparently with attention, and then said hurriedly—

'I like your subject, and I like your first sentence. I will read the paper, and if I can forward your views I will.'

I thanked him, and bade him good morning, and he rose and offered me his hand, as if I had been an old friend. Within a month from that day the object at which I aimed was accomplished through his recommendation and kind offices; and the good news was conveyed to me in a hearty, generous letter written with his own hand. Through that kindly lift I speedily found myself several steps higher on the hill of Parnassus. But I had then no more claim to that helping hand than any unknown aspirant who may be at this moment walking up to London to find a market for a book or a play.

With the remembrance of this generous act, and the pleasant circumstances attending it deeply impressed upon my heart, I felt that I had some claim to mourn for Thackeray as for a friend. So on that December morning when he was borne to his last home, I wended my way towards Kensal Green.

I took the train at a suburban station to reach Harlesden, and was much struck to find nearly every person on the platform—and there were many of both sexes—dressed in mourning. I could not, of course, conceive that they were all going upon the same mournful errand as myself. But on the arrival of the train at Harlesden this proved to be the case. Nearly all the passengers got out and struck across the fields towards the cemetery. It was known even in those quiet rural lanes that a great man was going to his rest that day; and a labourer whom we met going to his work, told us that the funeral had arrived at the gates, and that they were taking the body up to the chapel.

'You must make haste,' he said, 'if you want to see him buried.'

There was no difficulty in finding the grave. A dense black crowd disposed round about it waiting for the procession to return from the chapel, unmistakably marked the spot. Otherwise we could not have expected to find it in that obscure corner where thickly-laid slabs and head-stones recorded common names. By-and-by there was a movement about the portico of the chapel, and the hearse was seen slowly to emerge from under it. It was a common hearse—one of those plain, dull, black-painted boxes upon wheels that we see every day in the streets —without feathers or ornament of any kind, and drawn by only two horses. Perhaps this was as Thackeray would have wished it. Still, it struck those whose minds were dwelling upon his world-wide fame as strange. Some of us had stood a few months gone in Westminster Abbey, when the body of the veteran Clyde was carried past amid the boom of cannon, the solemn pealing of the organ, and the swelling voices of the choristers. Was the apostle of pleasant fancies and civilizing

thoughts less noble than the martial conqueror and hero? I do not know that we could have wished for anything better than that plain sombre *cortége;* yet it was strange. The hearse came down slowly followed by two or three carriages, and the mourners, bidden and unbidden, straggled after it by different paths in saddened and dejected groups. Conspicuous among those who came side by side with the hearse marched Thackeray's literary compeer, Dickens, erect and grave, and in his aspect defiant—the defiance of the deep thought that had fathomed all, and was ready to meet the end, come when it might; Cruikshank, bearing his age bravely but calmly, and seared to Death's inexorable routine; Millais, like a young Evangel, with placid all-believing eyes; the gentle Louis Blanc; the members of the 'Punch' staff with Mark Lemon at their head, renewing his literary youth while the last scene of all is closing upon his veteran associate—Leech and Tenniel, whose magic skill Thackeray admired and envied more than the highest art in all the wide field of letters—many more of the young and rising, with name and fame yet to come; and with all these a great crowd of strangers who had never known him save in spirit, and who saw him now for the first time and the last—'coffined and cold.'

When the coffin was brought forth, borne on the shoulders of eight strong men who staggered under its weight, the strangers knew that he had been a giant in body as well as in mind. Little more than a week before many here had seen that massive form in the London streets, towering above the common crowd, and challenging the admiring eyes of all who knew the fine grey head. And the whisper would pass from one to another, 'There goes Thackeray.' And now again that whisper passes among us, but in other phrase; for Thackeray is going from our sight for ever. To the last solemn words of the burial service the great coffin is lowered into the vault, and ashes are cast upon ashes, dust upon dust. The ceremony is cruelly short and summary, as if the grave were impatient and hungry for its prey. There remains nothing for us now but to take a last look into the vault. One by one the mourners come forward, elbowing their way through the crowd. Among the first to approach are two fair young ladies in the deepest mourning. They stand side by side, pale and motionless as statues, and look down with a grief in their sad calm eyes which is past tears. No one asks who they are, for all instinctively know that they are those whom he loved best. Then come other relatives and friends, and among them Alboni, the great singer, grown so old, and so sad and sorrowful now. And one by one we pass along the side of the grave, reverently uncovering our heads, and taking a last look through eyes dim with tears. I could have been angry with that prosaic policeman who stood at the grave's head and marshalled us, as if we had been crushing to a show; but I thought of him who lay there, and how at my funeral or yours he would have marked that policeman for his own, and made him immortal. 'Now, don't be in a hurry,' said this intelligent officer; 'follow each other to the right, and you will all see comfortably.' How Thackeray would have laughed if he could have known that policeman who would make a show of him! The policeman, therefore, did not vex me, as he might have vexed others who did not think of this.

And so Thackeray was buried on a bright December day; and as I passed by the side of his grave and looked down, the sunbeams were playing upon the coffin-plate, making a halo of glory round his name. And by-and-by on returning to the spot when the crowd had dispersed, I found the vault covered with a great grey slab, and methought I saw upon it the epitaph which he himself wrote—

'Heu! nunc sub fossa sunt tanti militis ossa.'

'Now he is buried and gone,
Lying beneath the grey stone:'
Where shall you find such a one?'

X.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

From a Photograph by Mr. Herbert Watkins.

www.libtool.com.cn

THE MERCHANT PRINCES OF ENGLAND.

www.libtool.com.cn

CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTORY.

EARLY ENGLISH COMMERCE.

BRITISH commerce began more than two thousand years ago. The Phœnician and Carthaginian traders, visiting the Scilly Islands and the coast of Cornwall in quest of tin, laid the foundations of that system of merchandise which has done so much to make of our little island of Britain a mighty nation, and to bring under its dominion many of the fairest provinces in every quarter of the world. Coming to our shores as early, we are told by antiquaries, as the fifth or sixth century before Christ, and at first coming only for the tin that was found more plentifully, and better prepared, by the ancient Britons than by any other people, these traders soon included lead and hides in their purchases, and brought in exchange various articles of earthenware, brass manufacture, and salt. When the Tyrian race died out, others carried on the trade, the Cornish marts being replaced by others in the Isle of Wight and on the coast of Kent, whither the commodities were conveyed from the inland districts of England, to be taken in Gallic ships for sale in various parts of the Continent. With the growth of manufactories and marts, increased the number and variety of articles to be sold. Corn, gold, silver, iron, and precious stones, as well as tin and lead, were the chief commodities exported before and after the conquest of Julius Cæsar. It was the fame of the British pearls, according to one tradition, that first prompted Cæsar to cross the Gallic Straits; and the report of his soldiery speedily opened up a thriving trade with the Kentish towns for oysters to augment the luxuries of Roman feasting, for bears to fill the Roman circus, and for dogs to be used by Roman sportsmen. The establishment of Latin colonies in Britain, of course, gave a great encouragement to trade. Among the towns that during the first few Christian centuries became most famous, there were, besides London, Canterbury and Rochester, Richborough and Dover, Exeter and Chester, York, Aberdeen, and Dumbarton.

British trade declined after the Anglo-Saxon settlement, but, under English management, these same towns, with many others, prospered more than ever. When Christianity was introduced, and pious men betook themselves to monasteries, they became the special patrons of commerce and agriculture, being labourers and mechanicians themselves, as well as instructors of their lay brethren in the various arts of civilized life. 'We command,' runs one of Edgar's laws, 'that every priest, to increase knowledge, diligently learn some handicraft;' while smiths and carpenters, fishermen and millers, weavers and architects, are frequently mentioned in old chronicles as belonging to various convents. The smith was the oldest and most honoured of all workmen. 'Whence,' he is made to ask, in a curious collection of Anglo-Saxon dialogues, 'whence hath the ploughman his ploughshare and goad, save by my art? whence hath the fisherman his rod, or the shoemaker his awl, or the sempstress her needle, but from me?' In the same work, the merchant asserts his dignity and the nature of his calling. 'I am useful,' he says, 'to the king and his nobles, to rich men and to common folk. I enter my ship with my merchandise, and sail across the seas, and sell my wares, and buy dear things that are not produced in this land, and bring them with great danger for your good; and sometimes I am shipwrecked, and lose all my wares, and hardly myself escape.' 'What is it you bring us?' one asks. 'I bring you,' he replies, 'skins, silks, costly gems and gold

various garments, pigments, wine, oil, ivory and brass, copper and tin, silver, glass, and such like.' 'Will you sell your things here,' inquires the other speaker, 'as you bought them there?' To which the merchant answers, 'Nay, in truth; else where would be the good of all my labour? I will sell them here dearer than I bought them there, that so I may get some profit, to feed me and my wife and children.'

In those early days, and for many centuries after, the merchant was the captain of his own little ship, and thus had the entire range of his business under his own supervision. He was deservedly held in honour by his countrymen. By a law of Athelstan, published near the middle of the tenth century, it was appointed that every merchant, even though he were by birth a serf, who had made three journeys across the sea with his own ship and goods, was to have the rank of a thane. The ships were mere boats, rude constructions of wood, propelled by eight or ten oars, with the assistance of a single square sail suspended from a single mast, and seldom large enough to hold more than half a dozen men, with two or three tons of cargo. Yet in these poor vessels, having no other compass than the sun and stars, and no proper rudder to direct their motions, our fearless forefathers wandered wherever they would. The silks and pigments, referred to in the dialogue just cited, could hardly have come from a nearer part than Italy or Marseilles. We know that trading voyages were often made to Rome, and that in the eighth century one Anglo-Saxon merchant, at any rate, was settled, and had influential position in Marseilles.

Some branches of Anglo-Saxon commerce, it must be admitted, were not altogether respectable. In a memoir of another Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester at the time of the Norman Conquest, it is said: 'There is a seaport town called Bristol, opposite to Ireland, to which its inhabitants make frequent voyages of trade. Wulfstan cured the people of this town of a most odious custom, which they derived from their ancestors, of buying men and women in all parts of England, and exporting them to Ireland for the sake of gain. You might have seen, with sorrow, long ranks of youths and maidens, of the greatest beauty, tied together with ropes, and daily exposed to sale; nor were these men ashamed—oh, horrid wickedness!—to give up their nearest relations, even their own children, to slavery.' It is to be hoped that dealings of this sort were not very common; but it is clear that during these centuries the Irish, or rather, perhaps, the Danes, who were masters of a large part of Ireland, carried on a considerable trade with England. In very early times their merchants brought cloths to Cambridge, and exhibited them in the streets for sale; and Chester was filled during the summer months by Irishmen, bringing marten-skins and other articles to sell, and buying in exchange the various commodities most needed by their own people.

Yet English commerce was still in its infancy. By one of the laws of Lothair, of Kent, living in the seventh century, no one was allowed to buy anything worth more than twenty pennies — something like five pounds, according to the present value of money—except within the walls of a town, and in the presence of the chief magistrate, or two or more witnesses. Another of Lothair's laws appoints that 'If any one of the people of Kent buy anything in the city of London, he must have two or three honest men, or the king's port-reeve, present at the bargain;' and in a third it is written: 'Let none exchange one thing for another, except in the presence of the sheriff, the mass priest, the lord of the manor, or some other person of undoubted veracity. If they do otherwise, they shall pay a fine of thirty shillings, besides forfeiting the goods so exchanged to the lord of the manor.' From such enactments we infer, in the first place, that rogues were so numerous, and false dealings so prevalent, even in these early days, that it was not safe for trade to be carried on in any but the most public manner; and, in the second, that, from the beginning,

states and municipalities obtained part of their revenues from imposts upon articles of commerce. In Lewes, at the time of the Domesday Survey, a tax of a farthing was levied by the sheriff on the sale of every ox; and when a slave changed hands, the payment due to the town exchequer was fourpence. In most parts of the kingdom, moreover, perhaps in all, a percentage on the price of every article sold for more than twenty pennies was divided between the king and the lord of the manor, half being levied from the buyer and half from the seller. The fairs or markets spread over the kingdom also paid toll to the crown. We read of one in Bedfordshire that yielded seven pounds a year, and of another at Taunton which produced about fifty shillings.

'Fairs did the work of shops in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman times, and in doing so they gradually lost the religious character with which they were at first started. 'In the beginning of holy church,' it is written in one of the old legends, 'it was so that people came at night-time to the church with candles burning; they would wake and come with light toward the church in their devotions; but after, they fell to lechery and songs, dances, harping, piping, and also to gluttony and sin, and so turned the holiness to cursedness. Wherefore, holy fathers ordained the people to leave that waking'—a term still retained in the Irish *wakes*—'and to fast at even.' The evening fasts, however, were as unprofitable, from a religious point of view, as those formerly held at night-time. The people who assembled, generally in the churchyards, and often in the churches themselves, of the saints whose merits they came to celebrate, soon turned their meetings into opportunities for amusement, and laid the foundation of those periodical fairs which, despite all the opposition of the clergy and other lovers of good order, have held their ground almost to the present day. But all the money was not spent in feasting and sightseeing. Wherever numbers of people were gathered together, it was natural that tradesmen should bring their wares for sale; and to the villagers spending most of their time quite out of the reach of the scanty commerce of those ages, it was a great advantage to meet with merchants provided with large collections of useful and ornamental articles of home and foreign production, and willing to barter them for sheepskins and agricultural produce, or any of the rough and tough manufactures of the local workmen. In this way fairs became markets; and markets, that never had been fairs, came to be held at various intervals, yearly, monthly, or weekly, in every part of the land.

English commerce was in a healthier condition just before than just after the Norman Conquest. Under Edward the Confessor, merchants were highly esteemed; they travelled much in France and Germany, and brought back foreign goods of every description; while the merchants of other countries not only came to trade in England, but had already begun to find the advantage of making it their home. But trade was scorned by the Normans, and, although their habits, more extravagant and ambitious than those of the Anglo-Saxons, in due time led to its further extension, their violent coming at first very greatly hindered its progress. 'The English merchants,' says William of Poictiers, William the Conqueror's own chaplain, and too stanch a hater of Anglo-Saxons to say more in their favour than he could help, 'to the opulence of their country, rich in its own fertility, added still greater riches and more valuable treasures. The articles imported by them, notable both for their quantity and their quality, were either to have been hoarded up for the gratification of their avarice, or to have been dissipated in the indulgence of their luxurious inclinations. But William seized them and bestowed part on his victorious army, and part on the churches and monasteries, while to the Pope and the Church of Rome he sent an incredible mass of money in gold and silver, and many ornaments that would have been admired even

in Constantinople.' It was not, however, until a curb had been put upon royal extortion and injustice, that the English merchants were able to pursue their ways with ease and profit. For the half-century following the Conquest we know little of the history of commerce, and it is probable that little progress was made in it. In the charters granted by the two Williams and Henry I., no reference is made to merchandise; and the public documents of these kings show only that they levied heavy tolls both on shipping and on inland trade.

One beneficial measure, however, is to be set to the credit of Henry I. In 1110 he founded a settlement of Flemings in the neighbourhood of Ross in Pembrokeshire. The hardy colonists were invited chiefly with the view of checking the lawlessness of the marauding Welsh, and this they did with excellent result. But they did far more for England. Giraldus Cambrensis speaks of them as 'a people notably skilled both in the business of making cloth and in merchandise, ever ready with any labour or danger to seek for gain by sea or land.' For centuries English sheepskins had been bought up by traders from the Continent to be taken abroad and converted into woollen garments. With the Flemish settlers, however, came to England the Flemish art of woollen manufacture, and henceforth this trade, a most important element in British commerce, was naturalized among us.

Colonists of another and very different class were also encouraged in England at about the same time. These were the Jews, a fair sprinkling of whom had been mixed with the Anglo-Saxons from a period prior to Edward the Confessor's reign, and of whom great numbers began to cross the Channel immediately after the coming of the Normans. By William Rufus they were especially favoured, and Henry I. conferred on them a charter of privileges. They were enabled to claim, in courts of law, the repayment of any money lent by them, as easily as Christians, and, while Christians were forbidden to charge any interest for their loans, there were no restrictions to the avarice of the Jewish capitalists. It was to the interest of the sovereigns that the Jews should be rich men, as then more gold could be forced from them, for the quelling of enemies abroad or of insurrections at home, whenever there was need of it. England itself also profited by this arrangement. The gathering up of wealth, to be spent in large schemes of traffic, is a great advantage to society; and in the main the Jews did this work honestly and well. In no worse spirit than actuated their Christian contemporaries, they taught sound lessons of economy and prudence to the world, and therefore are entitled to the hearty praise of posterity.

During the first half of the twelfth century, Scotland—undisturbed by Norman invasion, but, on the contrary, greatly benefited by the disasters which sent many peaceable and enterprising southerners to try their fortunes in the north—was commercially in advance of England. Under the wise guidance of the best of its kings, David the First, who reigned from 1124 to 1153, it passed at once from what was very like barbarism to as much civilization as could be claimed for any nation in that time. Foreign merchants were invited by David to visit his ports, and every encouragement was given to his own subjects to cross the seas on errands of trade. One of his laws exempted the property of all persons trading with foreign countries from seizure on any claim whatever during their absence, unless it could be shown that they had left their homes with the purpose of evading justice. He gave special encouragement to makers of woollen cloths; and we are told by one contemporary writer that at the end of his reign, and in that of his successor, the towns and burghs of Scotland were chiefly filled with Englishmen, many of them skilled in the art lately brought over by the Flemish colonists.

A race of Stephens would soon have depopulated England. Henry II., however, did his utmost to remedy the evils caused by the civil

wars which led to his being made king, and his reign was one of commercial prosperity never before equalled. London, containing at this period between thirty and forty thousand inhabitants, the most populous town in the kingdom, and now, for the first time, the fixed abode of the king and his court, was of course the emporium of foreign and domestic trade. No city in the world, according to William Fitz-Stephen, the biographer of Becket, sent so far and to so many quarters its wealth and merchandise; and none was so largely the resort of foreign dealers. Gold, spice, and frankincense were brought to it from Arabia; precious stones from Egypt; purple cloths from India; palm oil from Bagdad; furs and ermines from Norway and Russia; weapons from Scythia; and wines from France. 'Let there,' wrote Henry II. to the Emperor Frederick of Germany in 1157, 'be between ourselves and our subjects an indivisible unity of friendship and peace, and safe trade of merchandise;' and the Germans were not slow in using the advantages offered them. 'London,' says William of Malmesbury, 'is filled with goods brought by the merchants of all countries, but especially with those of Germany; and, when there is scarcity of corn in other parts of England, it is a granary where the article may be bought more cheaply than anywhere else.' Its citizens, called barons, to distinguish them from the dwellers in other towns, were separated from all others by the elegance of their dress and bearing, and the grandeur of their festivities.

After London the most thriving city was Bristol, famous, as we have seen, in Anglo-Saxon times, and the chief port for vessels trading with Ireland and Norway. From Henry II. its burgesses received a charter exempting them from tolls and some other impositions throughout England, Wales, and Normandy. Chester was another great receiving-place for the commodities of Ireland, while much was also imported from Gascony, Spain, and Germany; 'so that,' writes one, 'being comforted of God in all things, we drink wine very plentifully; for those countries have abundance of vineyards.' England had vineyards also in those days; and Gloucester and Winchester were noted for their trade in excellent wines of native production. Exeter engrossed much of the trade of the south. It is described as a port full of wealthy citizens and the resort of no less wealthy foreigners, who came for the minerals dug up in the surrounding districts, and gave in exchange abundance of every foreign luxury that could be desired. On the eastern coast, Dunwich, now more than half washed away by the violence of the Suffolk seas, was a flourishing port, 'stored with every kind of riches,' while Yarmouth was rapidly growing into importance as a fishing station. Lynn, the dwelling-place of many wealthy Jewish families, had much trade with the cities of Germany and northern France; and Lincoln—made accessible to foreign vessels by means of a great canal, connecting the Trent and the Witham, which had been constructed by Henry I.'s orders in 1121—was now becoming one of the most extensive seats of commerce in England. York had been so much devastated by war at the time of the Conquest, and by many dreadful fires in later years, that its trade had been seriously impaired. It was still, however, visited by many vessels from Germany and Iceland, while Grimsby was a favourite resort of merchants from Norway, Scotland, the Orkneys, and the Western Isles, and Whitby and Hartlepool were prosperous towns. Berwick, the frequent cause of contention, during the middle ages, between the northern and southern kingdoms, was at this time the chief port of Scotland, one of its citizens, a man of Danish origin, named Cnut, being so wealthy that when a vessel belonging to him, with his wife on board, was seized by a piratical earl of Orkney, he was able to 'spend a hundred marks in hiring fourteen stout ships, suitably equipped, with which to go out and punish the offender. Other growing towns of Scotland were Perth,

Leith, Stirling, Lanark, and Dumbarton. Edinburgh was still an insignificant place, and Glasgow was little more than a village, although incorporated by William the Lion in 1175. In Ireland, the ancient city of Dublin had been so utterly ruined during the English conquest of the country, that Henry II., by a charter dated 1172, assigned it to the citizens of Bristol on condition of their colonizing it anew; and straightway, we are told, it began so to prosper that it threatened to rival London as a centre of wealth and commerce.

The things brought into England by foreign merchants in the twelfth and following centuries were for the most part articles of luxury—silks and furs, jewels and costly weapons, wines and spices, to gratify the extravagant tastes of gay courtiers and wealthy citizens. The commodities exported were nearly all articles of necessity—corn and flesh, wools raw and wrought, and copper, iron, tin, and lead. In 1194, Richard I. had to prohibit any further exportation of corn during that year, 'that England might not suffer from the want of its abundance;' and the outgoing of all useful merchandise was far in excess of the returns in kind of other useful merchandise. The impolicy of this arrangement is apparent. Large quantities of silver and gold came into the country, but they came to enrich the few and encourage in them a wasteful expenditure of money, while the poor were yet further impoverished by a system of trade which kept the home-made necessaries of life at an unreasonably high price and brought no others from abroad to supply the deficiency. It must be admitted, however, that this evil was partially rectified by the ever-increasing demand for labour that resulted perforce from the growing demand for English produce. At this period, it is probable, there was remunerative employment for nearly all the population. Of the extent of agricultural and mining labour we can form no estimate; but we know the wool trade to have been very extensive. There was a very large importation of woad, used for colouring the woollen fabric, manufactured both for home and for foreign use; and there was also a very large exportation of sheepskins to be worked by Flemish manufacturers into a finer cloth than the English at that time had the knack of making. All the nations of the world, we are told by Matthew of Westminster, were kept warm by the wool of England, made into cloth by the men of Flanders.

It was not long before English politicians perceived the mischief arising from the want of balance between imports and exports, and they set themselves to try and remedy the evil in many unwise ways. The history of British commerce under the Plantagenets is for the most part a history of impolitic legislation, fiercely ordered, but, from the nature of things, and as a consequence of the steady growth of right principles among the people, almost everywhere disobeyed. The Flemings being better clothmakers, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, than the English, it was sought again and again, not to improve the English manufacture, but to prevent the introduction of articles from Flanders. Simon de Montfort, for instance, representing the national party of his day, was steadfast in his opposition to foreign commerce, and in accordance with his opinions, a law was passed in 1261, forbidding the exportation of wool and the use of any apparel made out of the country, or made in the country with the help of imported materials. Woad was not admitted, and, in consequence, the people had for some years to content themselves with rough, undyed cloths. Such a law, most pernicious in that it restrained the production of wool for exportation and hampered the industry of the country, could not long hold its ground. It was almost immediately remitted in favour of dealers with France and Normandy; and although, through personal and national jealousy, it was nominally enforced against the Flemings, we read that in 1270, at one seizure, the Countess of Flanders, by way of reprisal, forfeited as

much as forty thousand marks' worth of English goods waiting to be sold in her dominions. That act led to fresh legislation. 'Whereas,' runs a proclamation of Henry III. issued in 1271, 'at the requirement of the merchants as well of our realm, as of France, Normandy, and other kingdoms, who gave unto us pledges and other surety by corporal oath, that they would not take any wools unto the parts of Flanders or of Hainault, or would sell the same unto the Flemings: and whereas we have of late for certain understood that the wools, by our leave thus taken out of our realm, are sold to the said Flemings; we have determined that all wools of our realm, exposed to sale, shall remain within our realm, and shall not on any account be taken unto any parts beyond sea whatsoever.' To that unwise proclamation was added a wise proviso, 'That all workers of woollen cloths, male and female, as well of Flanders as of other lands, might safely come into our realm, there to make cloths, and should be quit of toll and tallage, and of payment of other customs for their work until the end of five years.' There were a fair number of Flemish immigrants to claim this generous privilege; but the prohibition of all exports to the Continent was as futile as the one issued ten years before and the many others issued in after years.

Other hindrances, however, were offered to the free development of commerce. From early times it had been the custom of the City of London to allow all foreign merchants bringing their goods for sale, to put up at certain inns; and, when the extent of their dealings encouraged them so to do, there was no objection made to their building houses for themselves; but they were only to sell their commodities by the hundredweight, and that in the presence of the king's weigher, by whom a heavy tax was to be claimed. These rules having been infringed, twenty merchants were arrested in 1269 and committed to the Tower until a fine of a thousand pounds had been paid, and the weights and scales that they set up for themselves had been broken up and burnt. In 1275, more severe rules were laid down. 'A strange merchant,' it was appointed, 'may lodge where he pleases, but he shall not sell by retail; as, for instance, fustic-woods,—he shall not sell less than twelve of them; and if he have pepper, cummin, ginger, alum, brazil-wood, or frankincense, he shall not sell less than twenty-five pounds thereof at a time. If he bring girdles, he shall not sell fewer than a thousand and twelve at a time; if cloths of silk, wool, or linen, he shall sell them whole; if he bring wax, he shall sell not less than a quarter. Foreign merchants, also, shall not be allowed to buy dyed cloths while wet, or to make dye, or to do any work that belongs to the citizens. They shall not make a market in the city, nor shall they stay in the city more than forty days.' That last regulation must have pressed very heavily on the foreigners, obliging them often, in dull seasons, to go home again with their vessels full of unsold wares. It was withdrawn in 1303, a memorable year in commercial history, when Edward I. granted a general charter to the merchants of Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Navarre, Lombardy, Tuscany, Provence, Catalonia, Aquitaine, Toulouse, Flanders, Brabant, and all other countries, permitting them to come safely to any part of his dominions, to sell their goods, and to claim the protection of the laws of the land.

But soon a fresh obstacle was thrown in their way. An edict, issued in 1307, forbade their taking either coined money or bullion out of the kingdom. This was another of the rules that could not possibly be strictly kept. There are numerous records of its having been broken through; but there are also numerous records of the vexatious and costly measures resorted to with a view to its enforcement.

In 1328 was passed another ill-advised law, ordering that no woollen cloths should be admitted into the country unless they were of a certain size, the measure of all striped cloth being fixed at twenty-eight

yards' length and six quarters' breadth, while all coloured cloths were to be just twenty-six yards long and six and a half quarters broad. By this enactment, immense expense was incurred in the employment of royal measurers, and the only practical result was the withholding of many of the best commodities from the English market. Yet it was not repealed until 1353, when 'the great men and commons having to our lord the king how divers merchants, as well foreigners and denizens, have withdrawn them, and yet do withdraw them, to come with cloths into England, to the great damage of the king and all his people, because the king's measurer surmiseth to merchant strangers that their cloths be not of assize.'

We have given instances enough of the arbitrary and frivolous legislation by which, during these centuries, the foreign merchants seeking trade with England were prevented from doing or getting all the good that ought to have come of their dealings. There was no better treatment for the merchants and tradesmen at home. They also were the sport of unwise laws and arbitrary mandates. We read, for instance, of a fair appointed to be held at Westminster in the spring of 1245, when all the tradesmen of London were commanded to shut up their shops, and all other fairs were forbidden throughout England during fifteen days, in order that the whole commerce of the country might be confined in one place, and that thus a large amount of toll-money might be collected. During the whole fortnight, however, the weather was bad, so that vast quantities of clothing and provisions were left to rot in the tents, through which the rain penetrated at once, while the dealers themselves had to stay all day, waiting for customers who never came, with their feet in the mud and the wind and rain beating against their faces. In 1249, the same sort of tyranny was again exercised. 'The citizens of London, at the request of his lordship the king, not compelled, yet as though compelled, took their wares to the fair of Westminster, and the citizens of many cities of England, by precept of his lordship the king, also repaired thither with their wares; all of whom made a stay at that fair of full fifteen days, all the shops and warehouses of London being in the meantime closed.' On this occasion, also, the season was bad, and no buyers came for the damaged goods; 'but the king did not mind the imprecations of the people.'

King and Parliament, however, were willing sometimes to listen to popular clamour when dictated by unreasonable prejudice. In times of variable supply, it was most desirable that monied men should buy up different articles of food and clothing when they were most plentiful and likely to be wasted, and store them up for seasons of scarcity. But this custom of warehousing, called forestalling, gave offence to the thoughtless multitude, who held it better to use at once all that came in their way, without any heed of a morrow of scarcity, and who considered the greediness with which some forestallers made wealth out of the necessities of the people a reason for hating the whole class; and their governors endorsed their opinions. 'Be it especially commanded,' it is written in one of Henry III.'s laws, 'that no forestaller be suffered to dwell in any town, he being an oppressor of poor people, and of all the community, an enemy of the whole shire and country, seeing that for his private gains he doth prevent others in buying grain, fish, herring, or any other thing coming to be sold by land or water, oppressing the poor and deceiving the rich.'

But notwithstanding all these hindrances, commerce grew apace. By the Great Charter wrested from King John it was declared that all native merchants should have protection in going out of England and in coming back to it, as well as while residing in the kingdom or travelling about in it, without any impositions so grievous as to cause the destruction of his trade. The

privileges were often infringed in spirit, if not in letter, yet all through the reigns of Henry III. and Edward II., oppressive by reason of their weakness, and of Edward I. and Edward III., oppressive by reason of their strength, English merchandise made steady progress. Two important steps were gained by the assignment of different branches of commerce to different classes of tradesmen, each of whom made it a point of honour, as much as possible to extend and improve his own calling, and by the establishment of settled places of trade, in lieu, to a great extent, of the original plan by which every merchant was a sort of pedlar.

Both changes began long before the thirteenth century, but they were not properly effected till some time after its close. London was a chief resort of merchants for many centuries before they made it a permanent residence for purposes of trade, and even then their dealings were carried on in public markets long before we hear of shops and warehouses. The London of the Plantagenets, all included, of course, within the city walls, and then with plenty of vacant space in it, was full of markets. There were the Chepe, or Westchepe, now Cheapside, where bread, cheese, poultry, fruit, hides, onions, garlic, and like articles were sold by dealers at little wooden stalls, movable and flexible, and not more than two and a half feet wide, ranged along the roadside, and the Cornhill, where grains and articles manufactured of wood and iron were bartered at similar stalls; the Pavement at Gracechurch, and the Pavement before the convent of the Minorite Friars at Newgate, for miscellaneous dealings, whither merchants were allowed to come and take up their temporary stations; the market of St. Nicholas Flesh Shambles, the precursor of our modern Newgate, and head-quarters of butchers, and the Stocks Market, on the site of the present Mansion House, appropriated to the fishmongers on fish days, and to the butchers on flesh days, both of which were furnished with permanent stalls. Near to the Stocks Market was the yet more important market of Woolchurch-Haw, adjoining the churchyard of St. Mary Woolchurch, the great meeting-place of the wool and cloth merchants; while in any part of the City, with the exception of Cornhill, carts might stand loaded with firewood, timber, and charcoal. As London grew, and there was need of places for retail purchase nearer to the more out-of-the-way houses than these central markets were, it became the fashion for tradesmen to throw open the lower front rooms of their dwelling-houses and stock them with articles for sale. In this way shops came into fashion; and in like manner, to make space for the storage of goods, many upper rooms came to be enlarged by pent-houses, or projections, reaching nearly into the middle of the streets, but with their floors nine feet above the ground, 'so as to allow of people riding beneath.' Much larger than these were the selds or shields, great sheds erected by the more important wholesale dealers, for their own use, or by several merchants in company, for the sale of separate commodities. One in Friday Street, for instance, was used exclusively in Edward III.'s reign for traffic in hides, while another at Winchester, under the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese, seems to have been the chief place in the whole town for the stowage and sale of all sorts of goods.

As the numbers of markets, shops, and selds increased, the varieties of trades and callings of course became likewise more numerous. There were in the fourteenth century almost as many different trades as there are in the nineteenth. We read of barbers, bowyers, spurriers, goldsmiths, silversmiths, swordsmiths, shoeing smiths, brewers, vintners, bakers, millers, cooks, pie-makers, salt dealers, grocers, fishmongers, butchers, poulterers, furriers, dyers, shoemakers, hatters, tailors, and old-clothesmen. But the separation between wholesale and retail dealers, merchants and tradesmen, was much less clearly marked than now it is; and those

who bought goods in large quantities, either from foreign merchants for sale at home, or from the English producers for exportation, for the most part dealt promiscuously in articles of all sorts. The divisions of commerce, however, were gradually becoming more distinct; and even now there was, at any rate, the one broad separation of trades in articles of food from trades in articles of clothing and manufacturing art. With food the great merchants of England had least to do. Some of them made it part of their business to buy up corn and send it for sale in foreign markets; but this was the only article of food exported to any great extent; and the imports, with the exception of the salt trade, almost monopolized by the people of the Cinque Ports, were mainly managed by merchants from France, Flanders, Spain, Italy, and Germany, who came with shiploads of commodities, and sold them in London and the other great ports. But by far the greater quantity of the food consumed in England was of course produced in the country, and here there was comparatively little wholesale trade. Over and over again it was sought by Acts of Parliament to regulate and improve these branches of commerce, and to put them into the hands of larger and more respectable merchants; and not without some reason. Rogues and swindlers were as plentiful then as now, and it was much more difficult to see and hinder fraud in small than in large dealers. 'It is found'—to cite an ordinance of Edward I., as one out of the hundred illustrations that might be given—'that certain buyers and brokers of corn, buy corn in the City of peasants who bring it for sale, and, on the bargain being made, the buyer gives a penny or a halfpenny by way of earnest, telling the peasants to take the corn to his house, there to be paid for it. And when they come there and think to have their money at once, the buyer says that his wife has gone out and taken with her the key, so that he cannot get at his cashbox; but that if they will come again presently they shall be paid. And when they come back the buyer is not to be found, or, if he is found, he makes some other excuse to keep the poor men out of their money. Sometimes, while they are waiting, he causes the corn to be wetted [with the view of making malt], and when they come and ask for the price agreed upon, they are told to wait till such a day as the buyer shall choose to name, or else to take off a part of the price. If they refuse to do that, they are told to take back their corn—a thing that they cannot do, because it is wetted, and not as they sold it. By such bad delays, the poor men lose half their money in expenses before they are settled with; and therefore it is provided that the person towards whom such knavishness is used, shall make complaint to the mayor, and, if he can prove the wrong done to him, he is to receive double the value of the corn, besides full damages.'

Frauds were also practised in other businesses. We read, among much else, of old clothes dubbed and varnished up to be sold as new; of shoes made of dressed sheepskin, and charged for at the price of tanned ox-leather; of sacks of coal sold under weight; and of rings made of common metal, which, being gilt or silvered over, were palmed off as solid gold or silver. And of course there was knavery in large no less than in small transactions. Even Chaucer's 'Merchant with the forked beard,' one of the company assembled at the Tabard Inn, at Southwark, to go on the memorable pilgrimage to Canterbury, good fellow though he was, was not altogether to be trusted.

> 'In motley suit, and high on horse he sat,
> And on his head a Flandrish beaver hat,
> His boots were clasped fair and daintily;
> His reasons spake he with full gravity.'

But there was policy in this gay and grave appearance.

> 'This worthy man full with his wit beset,
> So that no wight could think he was in debt;
> So steadfastly did he his governance,
> With his bargains and with his chevisance;'—

that is, with his schemes for borrowing money. And there were many merchants who not only bor-

rowed money for speculating purposes, but secured to themselves more than was their due, by defrauding both the customers and the Exchequer.

www.libtool.com.cn

It was doubtless with the view of protecting themselves against the impositions of their fellows, as well as to maintain their interests in dealings with foreigners, and to withstand the aggressions of the Crown, that honest merchants and tradesmen clubbed together in guilds and societies. The oldest guilds were very old indeed. In Anglo-Saxon times there were at least two in Exeter alone, the partners in which pledged themselves to pay a certain sum a year for the maintenance of their associations and for the assistance of any of their members who might fall into distress. We know not whether these had anything to do with commerce, or were simply friendly leagues for mutual help and the encouragement of good feeling; but Domesday Book records the existence of a *gihalla*, or guildhall, at Dover, established for the benefit of merchants, and there were doubtless many such. The Cinque Ports must originally have formed a like association of towns for the protection of each other's interests at sea, although their incorporation by royal charter soon altered the character of the league, and the need of keeping up a naval force for the service of the Crown subordinated trade to war. The Hanse Towns made a somewhat similar league for foreign trade, and from an early date the Hanse merchants had the special privilege of warehousing their corn in London, were allowed to build granaries for the purpose, and were governed by an alderman of their own, presiding at the Steelyard, often called the Guildhall of the Teutonic merchants. With them appear to have been united a society of Cologne merchants, who are said to have founded the Guildhall proper—a building set up some fifty yards further back than the site of the present Guildhall — somewhere near the year 1200. They were soon turned out of it, however, as it had become the recognized meeting-place of the sheriffs and citizens of London certainly not later than 1244. Long before this time, some of the great English companies had been formed. The guild of weavers was incorporated by Henry II. in 1185, and most of the others received their charters not later than the close of the following century.

Much more important than any of these was the Society of Merchants of the Staple, or wholesale dealers in the three staple commodities of England—wool, woolfels or sheepskins, and leather,—to which lead, tin, and other articles were afterwards added. The society was founded some time before 1313. In that year Edward II. issued a charter to its mayor and council, empowering them to choose a city of Brabant, Flanders, or Artois, to be called the staple, whither all wools and leathers exported from England were to be taken for sale to such foreign dealers as chose to come for them. The idea of establishing a central market for the exchange of commodities had much to commend it, and had the Society of Merchants, wisely constituted, been allowed to retain its power, much good might have resulted. But the staple was made a royal plaything and a means of royal extortion, and, therefore, a source of mischief. In 1326, Antwerp, the port first chosen, was abandoned, and several towns within the kingdom were made staples instead, the chief being Cardiff, the property of Hugh Despencer, and therefore a most desirable place to be enriched by the coming together of merchants from all lands. In 1328, soon after the accession of Edward III., all staples were, in a fit of liberality, abolished; but in 1332 several new ones were appointed. In 1334 all were abolished again, and in 1341 the staple was once more established on the Continent, Bruges being the first city selected, to be followed, in 1348, the year of its coming into the hands of the English, by Calais, when thirty-six London merchants were sent over to profit by the monopoly. In 1353 fourteen English and Irish towns were made staples, and in 1363 the staple was

restored to Calais. In 1369 several English towns were again favoured, and in 1376 Calais again took their place. The staple fluctuated between the French town and those in England until 1398, when it was fixed at Calais, not to be removed till 1538, and then, with modifications that indicated the dying out of the old restrictive institution, it was transferred to Bruges, and forgotten.

Other restrictions to the full development of trade sprang from the lawlessness and spite of private individuals. In 1294, one Walter Hobbe, a great and greedy merchant of Bristol, seized the ship of a merchant from Holland, and detained its cargo. After much litigation, he was forced to restore the ship and its goods, and to pay the heavy sum of sixty-five pounds for the damage done by him; so that, in this case, the evil was righted, 'it being a thing of great danger at those times,' says the old chronicler, 'and such as might occasion a war, to suffer alien merchants, particularly those of Holland and Brabant, to depart without having justice granted to them.'

But in most cases justice was very far from being done. In 1321, we find Edward II. complaining of the great dissension and discord that existed between the people of the Cinque Ports and the men and mariners of the western towns of Poole, Weymouth, Melcombe, Lyme, Southampton, and other adjacent towns, and of the homicide, depredation, ship-burning, and many other evil acts resulting therefrom. He caused to be publicly proclaimed in each of the offending towns that all such violent acts were done without his sanction, and against his will; but that mild protest, of course, had not much effect. The Cinque Ports, encouraged to keep up an efficient naval force for the service of the State, when required, used their power at other times in oppressing and robbing the more exclusively merchant shipping of other ports; and these other ports, jealous of the special privileges accorded in return for the naval service, were glad enough to retaliate to the utmost of their ability. Between the Cinque Ports and Yarmouth, near enough to feel specially aggrieved, and strong enough to take frequent reprisals, a petty warfare was waged through some centuries, and numberless are the Acts of Parliament and royal mandates seeking, but seeking in vain, to remedy the evil. Then there were constant feuds between the merchants of England and those of other countries, Scotland and France especially. In 1335—to give one or two out of many instances—a vessel of Southampton, stocked with wool and other merchandise, was captured at the mouth of the Thames by a little fleet of Scotch and Norman privateers; and in 1336, Jersey and Guernsey were attacked and plundered by several Scotch pirates, who also seized a number of English ships lying off the Isle of Wight. In 1357, three Scotch galleys did immense damage to the shipping of the eastern coast, until they were seized by the men of Yarmouth.

More memorable than all was the strife between John Mercer, a bold merchant of Perth, and John Philpot, of London, in 1378. Mercer's father had for some time given assistance to the French by harassing the merchant ships of England; and in 1377, being driven by foul weather on to the Yorkshire coast, he was caught and imprisoned in Scarborough Castle. Thereupon the son carried on the strife. Collecting a little fleet of Scottish, French, and Spanish ships, he captured several English merchantmen off Scarborough, slaying their commanders, putting their crews in chains, and appropriating or destroying their cargoes. This mischief must be stopped, and at once, thought John Philpot, the Mayor of London, and one of its wealthiest merchants and noblest citizens. Therefore, at his own cost, he promptly collected a number of vessels, put in them a thousand armed men, and sailed for the north. Within a few weeks he had re-taken the captured vessels, had effectually beaten their impudent captors, and, in his turn, had seized fifteen Spanish ships, laden with wine, that came in his way. Returning to London,

he was called before the king's council, and reproved for his illegal conduct in taking an armament to sea without first obtaining the royal consent! His answer was characteristic. 'I did not expose myself, my money, and my men to the dangers of the sea,' he said, with cutting irony, to the Earl of Stafford, loudest in his reproaches, 'that I might deprive you and your colleagues of your knightly fame, or that I might win any for myself; but in pity for the misery of the people and the country, which, from being a noble realm with dominion over other nations, has, through your supineness, become exposed to the ravages of the vilest race; and, since you would not lift a hand in its defence, I exposed myself and my property for the safety and deliverance of our country.'

With such merchant-patriots as this to defend the realm from foreign attacks, and to strengthen a love of liberty and independence at home, as well as to enrich it with wealth and all the fair possessions that wealth and industry bring to a nation, England could not help becoming great. John Philpot was but one out of thousands who deserve our veneration alike for the nobility of their own characters, and for the good work done by them on behalf of their country. The lives of many can be but vaguely traced in the dim records of history, and are shown to us only in a few disconnected events. But of others we know enough to follow their careers and understand their influence upon both commercial and political history, and of these the most noteworthy shall be taken as heroes in the following portions of this series of papers on the 'Merchant Princes of England.'

H. R. F. B.

THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

By the Author of 'The Morals of Mayfair.'

www.libtool.com.cn

CHAPTER IV.

THE FLEMING BLOOD.

I FEEL that some explanation is due for introducing a family of persons who could subsist upon less than two hundred pounds a year to the reader's notice.

I have, in my time, read many stories in which the painful subject of poverty was treated; but have mostly found its more hideous details recorded in such terms as these:—'The pittance of five hundred a year, allowed him by his uncle, barely sufficed to maintain him in the common decencies of life;' or, 'The young couple began their happy, but frugal *ménage* upon the interest of the bride's twelve thousand pounds, and poor Algernon's pay as a Lieutenant-Colonel.' Such curious ideas respecting extreme want, do, no doubt, arise from the circumstance of authorship itself being such a lucrative craft: indeed, I remember in one old, fashionable novel, an authoress remarking that she intended to buy a Cashmere shawl with the three hundred pounds she should get for her next slight magazine story; and what can you expect but figurative starvation from a lady who realizes a thousand or so per annum, by knocking off flimsy magazine sketches, and subsequently devotes the fruits of her genius to Cashmere shawls? But I think even the wealthiest writers should recollect, that what seems death to them, may be life to other men; and, in the face of the very highest authorities, I will maintain that there *are* persons living, to whom five hundred a year seems a large fortune, four hundred a year a handsome one, three hundred a year a delicious competency; and who subsist like gentlemen and gentlewomen upon less than two hundred. The indelicacy of writing that last figure really staggers me; for, in the most realistic novel, who ever saw decent lay-poverty done at less than three hundred pounds a year? But, as the admission has fallen from Miss Joan's own lips, so it shall rest. Yes, I abide by the fact. The Englehearts lived upon the objectionable sum already stated, and lived upon it, according to the ideas of simple country folk, like gentry.

And they *were* gentry, both by birth and education: the only two qualifications that I know of for belonging to that rank. They kept one servant, raised from the Sunday School, who received four pounds per annum in wages; they dressed, winter and summer, in much the same style as they had done when they first came to Countisbury, fifteen years ago; and as there was no human creature to keep up appearances before, appearances, naturally, were never attempted to be kept up. But here the line which separated the inhabitants of the farm at Countisbury from the small-genteel of towns faded; or rather, I should say, came out in broad and pleasant relief upon the Englehearts' side, and in their favour. They knew none of those piteous self-humiliations—those petty shifts—those torturing fears which are the meat and drink of such men and women as try to seem that which they are not to their fellows. They never tried to invest their quiet house with the grim, galvanic life of spurious gaiety; they never sought the acquaintance of persons who did not seek to know them; they never gave a dinner-party! Miss Joan had a kitchen-garden, and made it pay: Miss Joan kept poultry, and made them pay, also — on what superhuman system, she alone knows. Their house-rent cost them about twenty pounds a year; their dress — no, the thought of those

Cashmere shawls, of those lucrative fictions, gets the better of me, here. I cannot descend to any more of those fearful details of starvation. I apologize, with humility, for the extent into which I have already been betrayed, and pass on.

Old Mrs. Engleheart was the sister of Esther Fleming's paternal grandfather, Colonel Garratt Fleming. If all the family sayings about this Colonel Fleming were true, his personal charms, to which a miniature possessed by Esther bore ample witness, were more conspicuous than his principles; or, at least, than his worldly wisdom—but the terms are identical. He certainly contrived to get through a very considerable estate during his own lifetime, and, on his death, left his son, newly married, and in orders, without a shilling. I dare say the son troubled himself little as to whether his poverty had been brought about through the goodness or badness of the paternal disposition; but, though the psychological nicety did not disturb him, the poverty itself was more than he could struggle against. A living of one hundred and fifty pounds a year, a sickly wife, ill-health of one's own, and no chance of preferment, are not incentives to life for a man reared in the belief that his path will be laid among the pleasant places of the world. Mr. Fleming simply succumbed to them: 'didn't take the trouble to live,' his cousin Joan said of him; and six months after he had followed his wife to the damp churchyard from the damper parsonage, was laid to rest there himself.

There was just enough, after the sale of his books and furniture, to pay his debts, and buy his little daughter Esther, aged four years, a black frock. And then arose the question, who was to take care of the child? Her mother, in accordance with a peculiarity of nearly all very poor persons, had had numerous relatives when she was engaged to Garratt Fleming's reputed heir, but had left no one belonging to her on her death; or no one who could be found, or no one who wanted to adopt an orphan child. On her father's side were only two — Mrs. Engleheart and Mrs. Tudor: both elderly, and widowed sisters of the handsome, open-handed (or under-principled) Garratt Fleming.

Some time in the last century these two sisters had been notorious west-country beauties; and many were the stories conserved by old Mrs. Tudor of the dead generation who had sighed and suffered at their feet. Mrs. Engleheart, as one whose charms had done least in the world, was more reticent as to their bygone victories; but the few survivors whose memories could stretch back fifty years, averred that, in her youth, her beauty had not only outshone that of her sister, but also of every other woman of her time in Bath. However this may have been, she had married for love and without money; choosing a husband, too, very much of the same stamp as her own brother Garratt. Her sister had married not at all from love, but with money; and their lives having flowed on and settled, like most lives, very much according to the bias they themselves first gave to them, it came to pass that, when their nephew, Henry Fleming, died, Mrs. Tudor was living in great comfort, and much respected in Bath; Mrs. Engleheart, in great retirement, and not at all thought of by anybody in North Devonshire.

It was out of the question that a Fleming should be brought up by other charity than that of her own people. But then, which of her own people was to be charitable? 'I would as lief have a monkey in my house as a child,' wrote Mrs. Tudor to her sister, at the time of the bereavement; 'and Bath don't agree with children. However, Garratt's grandchild must be maintained by the family, and I'll tell you what I'll do. I will give thirty pounds a year towards keeping her, if you will undertake all the rest. Children do better in the country than in towns, and Joan can work out some of her educational crotchets for her little cousin's benefit.'

And so it was settled. Esther Fleming, at the age of four, came to

the charge of her great-aunt and Miss Joan at Countisbury, Mrs. Tudor agreeing to pay them the sum of thirty pounds a year until the girl should attain the age of twenty-one, or marry.

And Joan did educate her charge according to her own theories, and educated her well. 'Here is a girl who will have to work for herself one day, or starve,' she remarked once to her mother, when the old lady had been wishing accomplishments for Esther, and sighing about the Fleming blood. 'For Heaven's sake let us put away all such nonsensical notions, mother, and teach her to be useful.' So Esther's attainments all became of the most solid and tangible description. She understood everything to do with housekeeping; she could work thoroughly with her needle; she was excellent at figures. Above all, she was trained in the most strict compliance with physiological principles, at which Miss Joan was great, and she grew up healthy, strong, self-reliant. 'It might be all very well,' said Joan Engleheart, 'for rich people to bring children up with excited brains and stunted bodies. Esther won't want a hundred and fifty diseased nerves, but three hundred and seventy-five stout muscles, when she has to earn her own living. Let everyone cultivate what their station in life will hereafter require of them.'

But I think, in spite of Joan's physiology, and great common sense, the child's life would have been a horribly dull one had it not been for another, and most alien, element in the household, and this was David Engleheart. In all Esther's punishments, David was her tower of refuge; in all her childish plays he was her companion. She went out for long summer days with him while he fished; she read with him in winter. Although five-and-twenty years, at least, stood between them in age, David was her companion (except during the last six months at school, and her short visits, at rare intervals, to Mrs. Tudor in Bath)—the only companion that her child's life had ever known.

David was a nephew of Mrs. Engleheart's husband, and being early intended by a fond mother for the Church, on account of what she called his beautiful disposition, together with small family interest in the way of preferment, he received the benefit of a classical education. Alas for the frailty of human hopes! The beautiful disposition remained; but just as the boy was leaving school, the expected living was basely given to the patron's own tutor's son! From seven to seventeen, David had been making long verses and short verses, and scanning Greek choruses, and gaining sound views of the middle voice, and preterperfect tense. He had been driven to despair by gerunds; had been whipt for false quantities; had turned Milton and Dryden into iambics; had perfected himself in the intrigues of the whole of the heathen gods and goddesses;—and now all this admirable training for parochial duties was to be thrown away! His mother thought a judgment would alight on their relative, the patron. His uncle took poor David into a very close counting-house upon Ludgate Hill.

Here he remained, without any particular change or promotion, for fifteen years—nine hours of sitting at a desk daily, for fifteen years—with every Sunday to himself, and Christmas Day and Good Friday for special festivals. At the end of this time, the death of his mother placed him in the possession of about seventy pounds a year, when David so far flew in the face of Providence, according to his uncle, as to throw up his clerkship immediately, and announce his intention of living, for the future, upon his own private means.

Whether this was flying in the face of Providence or not, I am incompetent to say, as I am quite ignorant of the nature of this kind of aëronautic performance. After being stupefied for ten years at school, and miserable for fifteen years in a counting-house—five-and-twenty years of aggregate misery and stupefaction—it was not perhaps altogether remarkable in David to catch at the first chance of deliver-

ance from bondage. He loathed work, and London, and his cousin's business, and his cousin, himself. He had visions of a happy, useless life, with a fishing-rod and a book, among green trees and daisies. Was his first duty to his own worn-out jaded brain—the brain from whence he once dreamed such noble thoughts should charm the world; or to the guardianship of his cousin's money-bags? A letter from his aunt, Mrs. Engleheart, asking him to visit them in Devonshire, turned the balance in favour of poor David's own prepossessions; and one bright summer morning he stepped forth a free man upon Ludgate Hill, confused, yet tumultuously happy, under the mingled sense of fortune and of freedom, and only very moderately impressed with the image of his own base ingratitude, as laid before him by his cousin at parting.

This was about a year before Esther Fleming was taken to her aunt Engleheart's care; and David had never left Countisbury since.

'I came for three weeks, and I have stopped fifteen years,' was his own answer when Esther happened to question him once about the antecedents of his life. 'Joan makes my money go farther than I could ever do myself, and my little room is very warm in winter. I really don't see why I should ever go away. Seventy-five pounds a year would not make me as comfortable anywhere else in the world as it does in Countisbury.'

And he had good reason for thinking so. Whatever concessions to human frailty Joan Engleheart ever made were for her cousin David's especial and exclusive benefit. The little room he called his study was the warmest and best tended in the house; the flowers he loved most came into early bloom beneath its windows; books and prints (bought at rare intervals out of Joan's scanty savings) were on its walls. All his favourite belongings; his papers—David wrote a little—his fishing manufactory, his drawings, were duly dusted by Joan's own hand every morning, and were never disarranged. Above all, she kept his dress neat—and duly to appreciate this you should have seen David Engleheart's figure—and she prevented him from losing his money. He had good reasons for saying that he would never be as well off anywhere else in the world as he was at Countisbury.

That some strong counteracting feeling must be at work within Miss Joan's breast, when she thus violated the laws of her being by studying the weaknesses of another human creature, was a truth that the first fourteen years and a half of his residence under the same roof with her failed to impress upon David Engleheart. When he thought of his cousin at all, it was as of a species of domestic machine, unpleasant when at work, but thrifty and comfort-producing in effect. One of the *Dii penates*, of no particular age or sex, who often disturbed his peace, but to whom, in consideration of clothes-mending and other economic properties, due forbearance ought to be shown, with regard to acidities of tongue and temper. 'Poor Joan!' That an awful Nemesis, Joan Engleheart in love, should one day be avenged upon him for his fifteen years of acquiescent supineness, was a revelation that, with other startling truths, had only burst upon David during the last few months of Esther's absence from home.

What a Nemesis it was! The poor fellow thought he could have borne the ordinary strokes of fortune like other men. But Joan in love! He was not an ungrateful, and he was not a bloodthirsty man; but if, just at this particular time, he had been told that Miss Joan had come to some awful and sudden end I think it would not have taken David Engleheart very long to rally from the shock.

CHAPTER V.

A FORLORN HOPE.

The morning after Esther's return shone out bright and cloudless, and by nine o'clock she and David were already starting for one of their accustomed day's fishing among the valleys.

'I hope the fish will like all those gay colours,' was Joan's parting benison at the garden gate. 'You look extremely ridiculous, Esther, and I really cannot apologize for saying it.'

www.libtool.com.cn

'I can assure you it is quite usual for people to wear their skirts looped up, David,' said the girl, when they were beyond hearing of Joan. 'Please tell me if you think I look quite ridiculous, cousin?'

Miss Fleming was dressed in a shepherd's plaid skirt and jacket; the former looped up, according to the fashion abjured by Miss Engleheart, so as to show a violet-coloured petticoat and remarkably neat, high-heeled boots. In her little black hat she had stuck a single damask rose. These were the gaudy colours. 'Do I look quite ridiculous, cousin David? Shall I frighten the whole of the fish away?'

'That must depend upon the taste of fishes,' answered David, rather stupidly. 'I don't think you look very bad myself, Esther,' after a minute's consideration. 'You never used to dress in this fashionable manner when you came out fishing with me in old days. What have you changed for? You used to look very nice in your cotton gowns.'

'And pinafores. Yes, dear cousin, but I am not a little girl now; besides, I must wear out all the things aunt Thalia sent me at school.'

'Hang aunt Thalia!' remarked David, with animation. 'No, I don't wish her hung, because she is kind to you; but hang all her plans for making you into a fine young lady, and upsetting my old happy life. It would never have happened but for your being away,—never.'

'What would never have happened?'

'Why, my seeing through her intentions,' and David struck his rod, with feeble energy, on the ground. 'I might have gone on quietly for another fifteen years as I have done the last. While I suspected nothing I was safe, but now—Oh, Lord, what a winter it has been altogether, Esther! To begin with, for about six or seven weeks, I was, to all intents and purposes, dead.'

'Dead, cousin David?'

'As dead as a man, with any miserable breath left in him at all, and with Joan in the house, could be. I believe I had influenza first, or rather I don't believe it, but Joan said so, and made me swallow all the horriblest compounds in the world by way of cure. The real disease was—I had not you, Esther! After a child has been in a house for fifteen years,' David proceeded, hastily, 'its absence creates a singular deadening, depressing sort of blank. I didn't want to do anything, or be anything. I didn't want to read, or to eat, or to sleep. I think I should have rather liked to die, peacefully, but that, you know, Joan wouldn't let me do. She gave me gruel, and made mustard plasters for me, and tormented me prodigiously, but she wouldn't let me die. More's the pity!'

'You silly old David!'

'Oh, Esther, that is good to hear. There will be no one to laugh at me like that, no one to say, "You silly old David," when—when you are married and gone!'

'You superlatively silly old David!' cried the girl, with her merry, heart-whole laugh. 'What chance have Joan and I of marrying, I should like to know? Tell me how you came out of this seven weeks' influenza, or stupor, and please don't let your imagination run away with you in such an unprincipled manner. Joan nursed you with unremitting tenderness for seven weeks, and then?'

'Then the few first warm days of spring came, and I remembered that in two months and fourteen days you would come back too! Joan is not cheerful, as a rule, in spring. You know a way she has of putting one down for being in spirits about the weather. She knows what these unnatural heats lead to. She knows better than the birds that are twittering in the hedges. The blossom will be cut off; the churchyard full. Well, child, even Joan could not depress me when I had once laid hold of that definite idea—you were coming back! the lengthening of the days and coming out of the leaves had a new interest for me——'

'And you took to your books and your pipe again, and recovered. Oh, cousin David, what a blessing Joan is to you, though you don't know it! She counteracts you.'

'She does indeed, Esther.'

'And that is just what you want. If I had been here, when you were in this ossifying state, I couldn't have helped pitying you, and that would just have encouraged you in giving in. There is no one like Joan for rousing people out of themselves.'

'And for thinking for them, and acting for them, and coercing them,' cried David, hotly. 'Esther,' after a minute or two, 'shall I tell you what I firmly believe will be my fate?'

'What? final ossification?'

'Much worse—don't laugh if you please, child—I couldn't bear it.'

'I am not laughing in the least, cousin, I am extremely serious. What is to be your ultimate fate?'

'I believe—' David stopped as still as it was in his organization to be, and looked utterly desolate and stony—'I believe that Joan will marry me.'

'Cousin David!'

'I have thought so more than once, and latterly I have dreamed it was so.'

'Salad for supper, David?'

'No, child. It was a nightmare, truly, but not caused by indigestion. If Joan takes anything resolutely in hand she does it, either at the end of months or years. It took her many years to make me scrape my shoes every time I came into the house, but she succeeded, and so she will again.'

'But are you sure she has set her mind on it, and—oh, cousin David, do you class marrying Joan and scraping your shoes together? Please don't be angry with me if I laugh—I can't help it!' And the despair of David's face, and his perfect belief in Joan's unlimited capabilities for evil, so took Esther's fancy, just at this juncture, that she began, in truth, to laugh like a child.

'Laugh away, Esther, laugh as you like!' said David; 'I could do the same myself. Everything horrible in real life is ridiculous to witness. If I read of any man having a woman like my cousin Joan in love with him, I might be impressed with becoming feelings of pity; but the reality, with myself as victim, does seem indeed a truly ludicrous mockery.' And here poor David burst into a long and most unearthly laugh over the image of his own impending calamity.

But there was a painful ring in his laugh that jarred upon Esther's heart, and she grew serious instantly. 'Come away to the Riven Oak, dear David,' she said, laying her hand kindly upon his arm. 'The valley will look very different now the thorns are in blossom to what it did on that dull autumn day when you and I were last here together. Come away, and forget all your own silly thoughts in this delicious summer day. You have just got hipped and out of sorts and afraid of Joan because I was away—nothing more. You will have no time to take up such ridiculous fancies now that I have come back.'

The Riven Oak was a solitary, storm-shattered tree, standing some paces away from the rocky path that led from Countisbury to the river-side, and commanding a glorious bird's-eye view of the valley of the Lynn, clothed now in all the vigorous strength and freshness of the 'Manhood of the year.' Under shelter of this oak was poor David's favourite summer out-door study; and as he stood there by Esther's side now, listening to all the delicious, familiar, wild sounds of the woods, and feeling the genial warmth of the June sun upon his face, a feeling of peaceful happiness—an oblivion of Joan—stole over him such as he had not known for months past.

'Do you smell the clover from the valleys, Esther?' speaking in that low tone which most men's voices involuntarily take once during their lives—a tone which could make even his voice musical, and throwing his arm lightly round her shoulder. 'Nowhere but here have I ever found that rich, faint, lowland smell mingling with the wild scent of the moors and yet not overcoming

it. I would as lief be blind, Esther, as tasteless in the smells of nature. They recal special seasons as no other appeal to our senses can. I might see wooded valleys and hear distant streams twenty years to come without thinking of this particular day; I could never stand amidst the fragrance of new-trodden ferns and heather, with clover and hawthorn scent coming to me from a distance, without having your apparition by my side in a moment—living and real as you are now.'

'That is half fancy, David. Shut your eyes and feel how a good three-fourths of your picture vanishes at once.'

'I feel every detail, on the contrary, ten times more vividly, child. I am sensible how "all the land in flowery squares smells of the coming summer;" I am sensible of fox-gloves close at hand, although half hidden by furze, in which the great wild bees are droning; I am sensible of a million lives afloat upon the air. I am sensible more than ever of your presence!'

'Oh, what an anticlimax!' interrupted Esther; 'to begin with quoting Tennyson, and then descend to humble-bees and Esther Fleming! Still, I do think one takes in a great deal more than could be painted in a picture on a day like this, and I suppose that is why descriptions—word-paintings, as Miss Bates calls them—invariably seem to leave out half the life and freshness of what they describe. What spirit would the woods have for us, David, without the monotonous roar of the dear old stream below? It is that one sound that makes our Devonshire woods so different to all others I have been in.'

'I thought you would come back too fine a lady to care for the dull delights of Countisbury, Esther. When I saw a grown-up young woman, talking with such fine self-possession to that person upon the coach, I assure you I could scarce believe it was our simple Esther. What did you tell me his name was, by-the-way?'

'Mr. Vellicot.'

'Nonsense. You mentioned another person—'

'I can recollect no one but him, and John Hartman, the coachman.'

'A person with a fishing-rod and a straw hat.'

'Oh yes, to be sure; I had almost forgotten him—the stranger who was going on to Lynmouth. Mr. Oliver Carew.'

'I think you are blushing, Esther.'

'I think the sun is in your eyes, cousin. Had we not better go on our way again? You know you say the sport is never good for anything after one o'clock.'

And leaving David to follow with what haste he could, Esther ran lightly down the narrow, rocky defile towards the valley. If her companion had been any one in the world but David, she would have felt excessively angry with herself for her folly in colouring about this Mr. Carew; but with good blind David for sole witness it did not signify much how foolish she was. Why, you had only to tell poor David that the sun shone in his eyes and he would straightway believe himself mistaken! Besides, even if he persisted still in crediting his own senses, it would not matter very much after all. Poor old David!

When they reached the valley they had still two miles to walk before reaching the part of the stream where David meant to fish; and during all this portion of their walk he continued more silent than usual. 'You never talk when the fish are within hearing, David,' said Esther, at last. 'Is it from habit only, or do you really think the trout at Ore Oak would take warning if the distant sound of your treacherous voice was borne to them along the waters?'

'I am silent because I have nothing to say, Esther.'

'Oh, David, and I have been away six months!'

'And have not returned now,' he answered, quickly. 'I have not got *you*, Esther, my little cousin, with me. I have got a young person with a vermilion skirt, a hat in shape like a cheese-plate, and a festooned gown—but not Esther!'

'David, that is very base. After pretending to think that I looked nice you suddenly burst out upon

me, like Joan, about my festooned gown and my coloured skirt—which is not vermilion, David, but very sober violet. I will put on one of my old frocks and Joan's garden-hat the next time I come out with you, and then you will feel as if I belonged to you again.'

'Shall I? Shall I ever feel that, Esther?' he interrupted her, hastily.

'Why, whom else should I belong to, David? What have I in the world to care for but Countisbury, and the people who live there?'

Her caressing voice thrilled through every fibre of his frame. 'Look at me quite straight while you say that, Esther.'

She looked at him with perfect unabashed truth, without the faintest uprising of colour into her face.

'Quite sincerely, child, you have no wish or desire beyond Countisbury, and the people who live there.'

'Quite sincerely. I am attached to you all from my very heart—to you most, David, and I never wish to go away from you again.'

'You are a good child, Esther,' after looking very hard into her steady, loving eyes. 'You are quite true. I perfectly understand you now.'

And he kissed her. He felt, at that moment, that he could never be querulous, or jealous, or exacting with her again: that the hope to which alone jealousy, or mistrust, could belong was utterly extinguished: slain by her own loving eyes: clean gone from him for evermore!

'But you look so pale, cousin David.'

'The sun is shining in your eyes, Esther. Let us get on our way. It must be nearly eleven o'clock already.'

CHAPTER VI.

RESCUED.

So died the solitary dream of David Engleheart's life; died by a gentle loving stroke, far easier for him to bear than would have been that cruel sudden violence which, had the dream lasted longer, must inevitably have awaited it.

Unfortunately, we none of us feel very keenly, at the time, what intense blessings our disappointments really are or ought to be to us. We quiver and writhe just as if the horrible operation were not for our ultimate good. We cry 'any pain but this,' at the very moment when this pain is the one thing needful to save us. Had David Engleheart known that Oliver Carew was to meet Esther again to-day, was to renew his acquaintance with her, to admire her more than ever, to walk part of the way home with her, to speak words that might lay the foundation of a serious and lasting attachment—had David known all this, do you think he would have mourned that his poor foolish love had gotten its death-blow, at least from Esther's own tender hand, and not from the coarse, unfeeling blow of a rival? Of course he would not; and Philosophy, doubtless, would have consoled him enormously, as she always does, under his trouble. But he knew nothing save that he had been a fool, and that Esther would never, never love him (though Joan might) while he lived: and when, a short while afterwards, the girl walked away from him while he fished he felt that all the yellow sunshine had turned black and cold, and that for any good his life did to himself, or anybody else in the world, he might just as well throw himself into the river and have done with it at once.

Esther, on the contrary, never felt in happier spirits in her whole life than she did at this moment of poor David's black despair. It is not often that a woman, however young and ignorant, shatters a man's hopes without being aware of it. Some slight jar, some quivering nerve or broken word, gives token of the ruin wrought, even in those extremely rare instances in which the blow has been unpremeditated. But Esther was guiltless alike of intention and of knowledge. That David, at his immense age—past forty at least—and with his striking peculiarities and old-world ways of living, should be in love, was, I must acknowledge, just the very last contingency likely to occur to the mind of any girl of eighteen. Esther was

accustomed to his exactions and questionings of her affections; had set them at rest as her really warm affection for the poor fellow prompted her to do. What more was there to be thought upon the subject? David was happy with his beloved rod, she with her own thoughts and delicious exhilaration of newly-recovered freedom. How exquisitely tender was this warm light, glancing down upon her dress through the dense foliage of the woods! how like a friend's voice was the soft brawl of the stream as its clear brown waters fell with thousands of gleaming silver threads across the weir! How distinctly the small transparent pools, away from the line of seething foam, gave back the many-coloured forms of fan-like ash and delicate-leaved water-plants upon the bank! Would it mirror back her face as clearly, Miss Fleming wondered? She leant athwart a low, moss-covered root to see; and beholding the reflex of her own figure, with the rose which vanity had led her to place in her hat surmounting it, instantly began to wonder—led by what train of ideas I know not—whether Mr. Carew were fishing this morning, and whether, if by any accident they met, it would be right for her to recognize him, or not?

She had, by nature, not any one of the qualities that go towards the making of a coquette. She was frank, modest, true: all that a coquette is not. But yet, when a sudden turn of the path brought to her view the figure of Mr. Carew advancing just at this very moment when she was thinking of him, she became conscious of extraordinary interest in the growth of some ferns among the rocks; then of the great beauty of the river itself; finally—as by instinct, not sight, she knew the stranger was drawing nearer—of the reflection of her own flushing face in the water; also of a general desire not, perhaps, exactly to be dead, but far away in one of the coolest, darkest nooks of her own quiet garden at Countisbury. And very charming did her consciousness and her desire to appear unconscious make her fresh face look in the young man's sight.

'We have had no rain, you see, in spite of all our heavy friends' prognostics,' Meteorological, of course; Mr. Carew was true to his race and to his age; but still there was a friendly tone, there was something in that one word 'our,' which, in itself, constituted, while it renewed, an acquaintance.

'And you don't find Devonshire quite such a dreadful place as you thought you would?' If Miss Fleming had felt horribly shy as he approached her, all that she showed of the feeling was a very brilliant colour now. She possessed, to a high degree, those two unspeakable charms in a young woman—self-possession and great steadiness of manner. 'You begin to think there are other things here besides cold and rain?'

'I see there are,' said Mr. Carew, meeting her eyes with a look which would have been a compliment had she chosen to receive it.

'Trout, perhaps? Have you had good sport?'

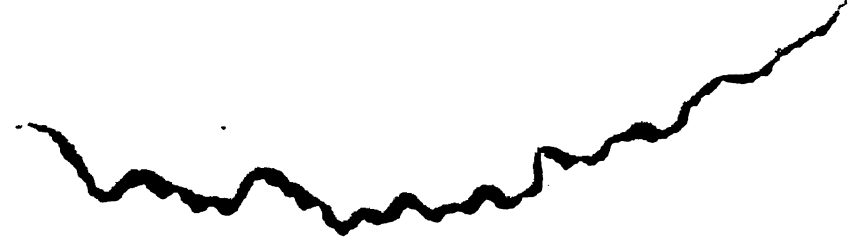
'That depends on what folks call sport,' he answered, in Mr. Vellicot's voice. 'No: fishing is a delusion. I have been here since nine this morning and have not had three definite rises yet.'

'And my cousin, who is fishing about half a mile off, landed two splendid trout in the half-hour that I was watching him. Really, I think there must be something in—in—'

'Knowing how to fish? Well, it is possible; but still, under the best circumstances, the enjoyment is questionable. With first-rate sport it may be all very well, for a short time, but it requires immense patience, a sort of natural genius rather, to bring you through the initiatory processes. I shall never be a good fisherman.'

'La génie c'est la patience,' remarked Esther. 'Any one can do anything he likes, in time.'

'Ah! so we are told at school,' answered Carew, 'but it is only a delusion. "Any one can do anything he likes!" What a world it would be'—looking into her eyes again—'if wishes could bear fruit, after that fashion! How horribly



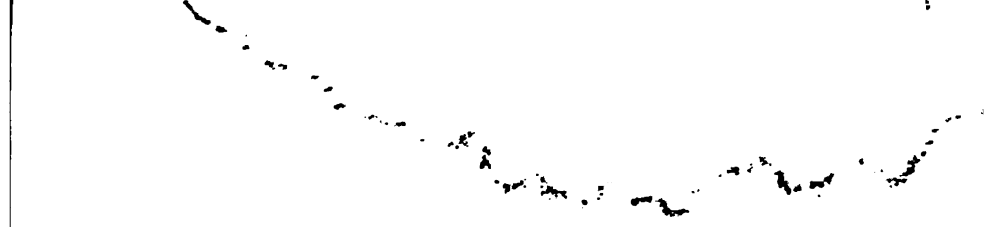
www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

THE FORLORN HOPE AND THE DAMASK ROSE.

See "The Ordeal for Wives."

www.libtool.com.cn



www.libtool.com.cn

children's minds are perverted by their copy-book moralities!'

'Yes, but you omit the two important words, in time. You omit the patience. We can all wish, but—' Miss Fleming stopped, rather abruptly, and recollected by how many hours her acquaintance with Mr. Carew could be reckoned.

'But few have the endurance to attain?' he finished for her. 'Well, if I was to wish at this moment it would be to be the possessor of this valley, and to spend my life in a perpetual summer morning beneath its shades.'

'How fortunate it is for us our desires are not brought to pass!' cried Esther. 'You were tired of fishing in two hours, and now wish to spend all your life beside a trout-stream.'

'But not fishing.'

'Oh!'

Miss Fleming grew interested in ferns again; Mr. Carew first looked into the water, and then began to take his rod to pieces. He was dreadfully afraid of his new acquaintance going away, but not experienced enough, himself, to know exactly how to set her at ease. Would a commonplace about the scenery be the right kind of thing to begin next? or, like other rustics, would the young person be supremely indifferent to the things she lived amongst? He remembered her saying something about effects, and heather in August, and hazarded it. 'This is a very beautiful place, really, for England. It reminds me of Switzerland.'

Esther looked up full in his face. 'What! you have been to Switzerland, then?'

'Dozens of times.'

'Really?'

'Well, not quite—let me see, four, five, yes, I have been there five times. I have done it thoroughly, now.'

'How strange!' remarked Miss Fleming, musing.

'What! to have been in Switzerland?'

'No, I mean—I mean—that Jane must have been wrong in what she thought.' And then she coloured again—an honest, ruddy colour, crimsoning cheeks and brow and neck; and Oliver thought her lovely. She was not shy, and yet so marvellously prone to blush (he was accustomed, remember, to young ladies of the world): she was dignified and yet so thoroughly frank, so charmingly simple. He came a step nearer; her eyes sank beneath his.

'And who is Jane?' He felt his own self-possession returning fast, as hers ebbed away.

'Jane is my friend Millicent's sister. You saw Milly with me at Swindon?'

'I did not know you remarked me there at all.'

'I remember you quite well. You were good enough to help me through the crowd, and when we went back to the carriage we told Jane, who remarked—I do not like to say any more, Mr. Carew.'

Esther intended this mention of his name to put their acquaintance upon the most formal and frigid footing; but, having said it, she knew in a moment that it had taken precisely the opposite effect, and felt rather frightened at the result. 'I think my cousin will be waiting for me, sir,' and she half turned to go away.

'But you have dropped your flower in the river. See, shall I get it for you?'

The damask rose, the gaudy object of Joan's animadversion, had fallen from her hat into the water, and was eddying fast away toward the little fall just beneath the rocks. 'It does not signify in the least, we have 'plenty more in our garden,' cried Esther. 'Please take no trouble about it.'

But Oliver persevered in his attempts at rescuing the flower, and after some difficulty succeeded. 'I will not return it to you,' he remarked. 'It would spoil your hat now.'

'Then throw it back into the river, please.'

'It is a lovely colour. I remarked it when I first saw you.'

'It is quite a common rose, sir, not worth looking at,' and Esther felt an odd quickening of her breath while he examined the flower so reverently; an emotion caused by

shame, no doubt, over her own foolish vanity in having worn it.

'I am thinking of making a collection of dried plants,' went on Mr. Carew; 'they are interesting memoranda of one's travels. If you will allow me, I will keep this for my first specimen;' and he stuck the rose in his button-hole.

Esther's breath came faster. This man was a stranger, was half-presumptuous, yet she could not put him down, and, which was worse, she could not feel displeased. He looked so handsome standing there in audacious possession of her flower; there was such thorough, boyish good-humour in his audacity; how could she feel displeased? That it was thoroughly unprincipled, however, to prolong the acquaintance a single minute more was beyond all question; and so she made another allusion to her cousin, and, turning round at once, began to walk away.

Mr. Carew walked beside her. 'I suppose your cousin would not condescend to impart any of his fishing knowledge to me,' he remarked, quite quietly, and as though he had not for a moment imagined that Miss Fleming had intended to take leave of him. 'It would be too much to expect that one of the great high-priests would condescend to initiate a neophyte into the mysteries of the stream.'

'I am sure David would show you his flies, sir' (she could not feel angry, being glad herself that he had not taken her at her word): 'very likely you have not got the right sort. We find the fish rise better to green-drakes and stone-flies than any other at this season of the year.'

'What! you understand some of the mysteries, then?'

'David and I tie our flies ourselves, generally. He had a present of some from London once, and they were really beautiful to look at; but the fish didn't seem to see it, and never rose to them as they do to the ones we copy from nature. Shall I look at yours? Perhaps, like those of David's, they are too fine for the country fish to understand.'

Nothing, I am persuaded, ripens intimacy between two young persons, respectively aged eighteen and twenty-two, more than the juxtaposition necessarily caused by one of them looking over any kind of book that happens to be held in the other's hand. It took Miss Fleming several minutes to inspect the different varieties of flies, to give grave opinions on their merits, to admire, to detract, to advise. When she had finished some occult influence made her feel as though she had known Mr. Carew half her life at least, and that it would be sheer affectation for her to pretend any longer that her cousin David wanted her to return.

So when Carew asked her if they were not near the junction of the Lynn waters, and whether this would be the best time in the morning to see it to advantage, she answered, quite composedly, that they were within a quarter of an hour's walk from Waters-meet, and it would be very little out of her way to go there before she returned to her cousin, and, if Mr. Carew pleased, she would be glad to show him the path. 'It is not the first time I have led strangers through the woods' (her conscience pleaded against its own misgivings). 'Only last summer I showed that dear old clergyman all the way along the Valley of Rocks, and even Joan did not blame me. There can be no harm!' And as Miss Fleming's mind never took into account that the dear old clergyman was fifty-five and gouty-footed and paternal, Mr. Oliver Carew handsome and twenty-two, and wearing a damask rose (of hers) in his button-hole, we may presume that extreme simplicity really prevented her from discerning these somewhat material differences in the condition of the two strangers.

'This is Waters-meet, Mr. Carew. Please don't say you are disappointed, even if you feel so.'

Mr. Carew was not disposed to be disappointed with anything that Esther's handsome face asked him to admire. He already thought Lynmouth the least slow place, for the country, that he had ever been in. The valley was fresher than

Switzerland, the streams were more brown and transparent than any in the highlands, everything was gold-coloured (so he averred, and very probably thought, in the first brand-new emotion of this rustic flirtation); and in a few more moments Esther had quite forgotten that their acquaintance dated from yesterday, and was sitting on her favourite rock, close to the water, with Mr. Carew leaning over her, as he animadverted, with great warmth and eloquence, upon the varied beauties of the scene.

Was it not necessary for him to bend down, if he would make his voice heard at all above the rush of water? And had she not rested in precisely the same manner when accompanying that dear old parson through the Valley of the Rocks last summer?

CHAPTER VII.

CONCERNING FLY-FISHING.

Falling in love, after a day's acquaintance, with a face like Esther Fleming's, is not a thing of extreme difficulty to a very young lad under any circumstances. To Oliver Carew it came with remarkable facility upon this summer morning and among the dangerous loneliness of these silent woods.

Esther had chosen her resting-place at the spot where the meeting of the two moorland streams is first visible among the woods; a spot which, shut in amidst abrupt and verdured hills on all sides save that of the waters, forms one of the most charming Ruysdael-like woodland pictures in the world. The single flash of the two streams just at the moment when, parted still by a ravine of foam, they break, a liquid glass of delicate grey and silver-green, across the bed of black projecting rock; the glimpses on the left of the Lynn valley, hung with masses of densely-shadowed foliage to the summit, and with only its topmost crags exposed to the yellow light of the noonday sun; the precipitous granite cliff upon the right, its ravine and fissures filled with glossy wreaths of ivy, whose weather-blanched roots are knotted in fantastic distortions amidst the rifts of iron-grey stone; the masses of fallen rock which lie, moss-covered and overturned with the luxuriant leafage of a thousand trailing plants; —reader, if you have stood on a June morning in that fairest valley in England, do you not remember all these details of the picture? Seen in the cool green light of noon—that shaded and most exquisite green, deepened here and there by the rich brown of hoary pine-stems, or broken, at rare intervals, by quivering shafts of ruddy gold—was it not a dangerously lovely background to a lovely face of scarce eighteen? Do you wonder that, then and there, Mr. Carew thought how pleasant it would be to begin rehearsing the first act in that pleasantest drama of all our lives, that he forgot the horrible dangers which await young lads of fortune when they admire anything between an heiress and a milkmaid, and only remembered the noble lines of Esther's glowing face, the gentle, honest eyes that looked so frankly up to his.

Well, he had been better trained than to do such foolish things: he had been duly taught how to regulate both his fancies and affections. But lads of fortune will, occasionally, have eyes of their own wherewith to see, and, which is a vast deal more perilous, boyish, honest impulses of their own to follow. Oliver had tried hard, under the family direction, to fall in love with an unexceptionably plain heiress for some months past, and had not succeeded. Without knowing one word of Esther's family or estate, save that she lived at a farm and wore a shepherd's-plaid gown, he was ready, as far as inclination went, to ask her to accept him, and all he possessed or was heir to, at that moment. Oh, desperate perversion! Oh, headlong blindness of the natural man!

'And so Jane thought me a farmer's son. She must be extraordinarily sharp-sighted.' They had got, as you must perceive, whole cycles away from scenery and com-

monplace. 'What data did she go upon, do you suppose?'

'Milly's description of you, perhaps. Milly laughs at my heroes—I mean at the heroes I like to read of—I mean,' Esther stammered furiously, 'at persons of large size and sunburnt complexions.'

'Thank you: I quite understand the description Jane received. A large-sized, sunburnt person. It exactly enabled her to form a true estimate of my calling.'

'True?' said Esther, hastily, and with a quick glance at his face. 'Oh! I beg your pardon. I thought Jane had been mistaken.'

The visible disappointment in her voice pleased Mr. Carew not a little. In a moment—in one of those moments, which, trivial as they seem, do so much to turn aside all the after-currents of a man's life, he resolved to play upon it. Whatever happened—and already he scarcely dared to ask himself what he desired should happen—it would be amusing to himself to act for a time under a false character; amusing, some day, perhaps, to see the girl's surprise when she should know the truth, and discover with what new Lord of Burleigh she had had the presumption to fall in love. 'I really cannot see anything in the profession of farming to be ashamed of,' he remarked; 'but, of course, everyone has his own ideas upon the subject of social disgrace.'

'I see no disgrace in any employment whatever. I think a farmer's must be a very happy life,' cried Esther, hastily. 'If I were a man, I would rather follow anything else in the world than a profession that should keep me chained to a close London counting-house—but then——'

'Oh! you are trying to make what amends you can to me—trying to apply what salve you can to my pride—you are very good. I thank you.'

His solemn tone made Esther believe that she had really said something exceedingly wounding to the young man's feelings, and very kind and earnest did her great dark eyes look up into his face. 'Surely you don't think that I meant anything to hurt you, sir? Why, I have lived, myself, in a farm-house since I was four years old, and the few friends and acquaintance that we have are quite plain country people like ourselves. I only mean that you look very unlike a farmer's son, and I think so still, but I know a farmer may be as much a gentleman as a prince, and ——Oh! Mr. Carew, I would not have said anything to hurt your feelings for the world.'

Long afterwards did Oliver Carew remember Esther Fleming as she then looked. The expression of her eyes, lighting up with earnest kindness, the trembling smile of her rich scarlet lips, even the ray of sunlight that lingered, golden, with such vividly-bright distinctness in her dark hair, he remembered them all. What he did in the present emergency was to take her hand and hold it for a moment in his, then assure her that, so far from feeling offended, he had never been more flattered in his life. 'And I am not a farmer, myself,' he added, 'although most of my family have followed that occupation for generations past. I am a soldier. Rather a different craft.'

Now Esther had a distinct idea that all men in the army were irresistible but unprincipled; one or two legends of Miss Millicent Dashwood's supplying the first clause in this belief, Joan's stories of her own grandfather, Garratt Fleming, the other. But still, even with the knowledge of Mr. Carew's dangerous attributes, she did not take to immediate flight. It was so tempting here in the cool delicious shade; this stranger, whom she would certainly never see again in her whole life, was so unlike anyone she had ever talked to before; such an unwonted, flattering sensation of gratified vanity throbbed at her own heart;—and then, David could not want her! And so they talked on and on until at length a sudden gleam of western sunshine fell broad upon the boulders at her feet, and then Esther, with a guilty start, remembered that it was already afternoon. She had been passing hours, not minutes as they

seemed while passing, with this Mr. Carew.

'Good-bye to you,' quite abruptly; 'my cousin will be waiting for me. I beg your pardon for keeping you so long from your fishing.'

'And I am not to see you any more?'

'You said that you should only stop another day or two.'

'I have altered my mind. Am I not to see you any more? You never walk abroad these summer evenings through the woods?'

'I walk upon the moors sometimes,' she answered, demurely.

'The moors. That is an awfully wide latitude.'

'The moors round our house at Countisbury. They are very wild and still. We like them better than the valleys after the dew has fallen, David and I.'

'Perhaps your cousin would have no welcome for me there?'

'David has a welcome for all strangers who come to Countisbury, and Joan and I would be glad to show you our garden,' she added, simply. 'You will have no difficulty in finding our house—it's the only one for miles, among the moors. Good-bye.'

She let him keep her hand in his a moment, and then left him.

David was waiting patiently for Esther just above the falls among the rocks; he had been waiting there and watching her and Carew for more than an hour. 'You have met with your new acquaintance then, Esther? I would not disturb you.'

'Oh, David, how I wish you had come up! He really is a very quiet, agreeable person, and *so* fond of fishing! I am sure you would have liked him.'

'Do you think so, child?'

'I met him, and he said he had had no sport, and asked me as to what flies you used, and I just looked at his and told him which you found were best—the green-drake and stone-fly, you know, and——'

'You must have exhausted the subject thoroughly, Esther. You have been gone near upon four hours.'

'Oh, David, impossible! How can you say so?'

'You left me at eleven; it is now near three. Where is your damask rose, child?'

'It fell in the water, cousin. Wasn't I right about the flies? The green-drakes and stone-flies now, and the little black gnat when the days get hotter?'

'He—he's going to stay here, then?'

'A few days more, I think, David,' looking straight into his face. 'You are surely not angered by my speaking a while with this young man? I should have done the same if you had been there.'

'No, not angered,' said poor David, gently. 'I am never angered with you, my dear.'

He stopped suddenly, and gathered a wild rose from a briar-bush that grew beside their path. 'Will you wear this, Esther, instead of the one you have lost?'

'Mr. Carew has it, cousin; it is not really lost.'

'And mine is not wanted to replace it. You are true to your new faith already, child!'

David Engleheart threw the flower in the water and watched it for a minute or two before it floated away and was lost in the vortex of the stream. 'Gone—gone for ever,' he said then, and as he spoke, he looked very white and odd about the lips. 'Little one, let us go home. The sun is sinking fast.'

CHAPTER VIII.

ESTHER'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD.

Miss Joan showed no displeasure whatever on hearing of Esther's renewal of acquaintance with Mr. Oliver Carew; indeed, she rather constituted herself the young man's upholder or champion against poor David, upon their return home. 'It was surely very natural he should speak again after travelling for two hours in Esther's company only the evening before. Would you have the girl never speak to any one but dull old owls like you and me, cousin David? You look as gloomy as though she had com-

mitted some dreadful offence in chattering for an hour to this young man. Pray, were you and I never young ourselves, cousin?' At all of which amiable little concessions to human frailty, Esther, in silence, greatly wondered.

David, with the new lights he possessed as to Joan's intentions on himself, read, or thought he read, the motives of her leniency pretty clearly. The disposal of Esther by marriage would be another bar removed between Miss Engleheart and himself. What a horrible aggravation of his jealous pangs, of the anguish of his dying passion was in the thought! All that evening he paced up and down the terrace-walk, a book in his hand—of the contents of which his eyes read never a word; while Miss Joan pursued her accustomed sunset avocations in the garden, with great cheerfulness and alacrity, and Esther's low laugh and happy girlish voice mocked him, ever and anon, with their ring of perfect contentment—their utter unconsciousness of his miserable state.

'Do leave off reading, David—what can old Ben Jonson say worth knowing about on such a delicious night as this? Come and look at these roses we have budded, David. They have all struck but one.'

'David, listen to the bees among the sycamores.'

'David, how long the cuckoo sings this year.'

'You had better leave David to his book,' cried Miss Joan, as all these little kindly attempts of Esther's successively fell to the ground; 'leave David alone, and come and help me water the strawberries. Patty with her great hoofs trampled down half my plants last year, and David waters his own legs more than he does the ground when he takes a can in his hand, so this summer I mean to do it all myself—unless you like to help.'

This was quite a gracious invitation for Miss Engleheart to give, and with all a child's zest for work, Esther went in vigorously for watering. No pretty playing at watering, as practised by young ladies in the gardens of suburban villas, but solid, hard labour of alternate pumping, carrying, and saturating the strawberries and herself. Then, when old Mrs. Engleheart had to be read to, and Joan had left her alone in the garden, she stole away to her favourite seat beneath the thorn-tree on the terrace-walk — which poor David had now vacated—the only point in the garden that commanded a distant view of Lynmouth, and of the sea. Deep down through a vista of green valleys curled up the blue smoke from the little town; the Channel rose beyond it calm and violet-coloured like the cloudless sky; over the far horizon the mountains of the Welsh coast shone, delicate-hued and vapour-like through the dim, aërial orange of the dying twilight. A strange thrill of happiness stirred in Esther's heart. Was her life to be warm and roselit like that sea? her future golden like those distant hills? Was she, indeed, to live for ever in this old silent life of Countisbury—or—or——? Whatever the alternative was that suggested itself it engaged her thoughts steadily for at least an hour, and at the end of that time she was still so occupied with her own day-dreams as to start quite guiltily when Joan Engleheart's voice again broke in upon her meditations.

'You are out in the damp then, still? David said you had gone back to the house.'

'I have been here ever since you went in with Aunt Engleheart, Joan. I think David is in a dream to-day.'

'David is thinking of nothing but his books, as usual,' said Joan, tartly. 'People of our age don't dream, except when they are in their beds and asleep. Pray what have *you* been thinking about all this time, Esther? It is something new for you to keep quiet so long.'

'I am rather tired, Joan. We had such a long walk to-day, and——'

'You are not in the least tired, Esther,' interrupted Miss Engleheart, with emphasis; 'and I am sorry that you think it necessary to prevaricate.'

'Joan!'

'You have learnt it—and I have

no doubt many other virtues—at school. From the time you were four years old you never told me an untruth before: don't begin now. I should find you out in one half minute; and besides,' Joan added, not unkindly, 'deceit is unnecessary for you, Esther. You are strong—strong in body, brave in spirit: dissimulation is for the weak, and, for anything I know to the contrary, may be their best resource. Whoever is strong enough to tell the truth will invariably find it to his own interest to do so.'

'Well, then, I am not tired,' said Esther. 'Walking to the Watersmeet has made me no more tired today than it ever did before, but I thought I would like to be alone a little, and to think. That is the truth, Joan.'

No very startling confession, truly, but as the girl made it her hands turned nervously cold; and, instinctively, she moved her face away, even in that dim light, from the searching scrutiny of her companion's eyes.

'To think!' echoed Joan: 'to dream, to build castles among the clouds at sunset. I know, Esther,' with her hard laugh. 'I was once eighteen, like you.'

'Yes, Joan.'

'Not as young in heart as you are, for I was plain, even then, and a plain woman is never exactly young at any age—but still eighteen. I dreamed, I hoped; ugly though I was, I knew I could be happy if anybody had loved me.' Joan brought out these words with an irascible, resolute kind of gulp. 'And no one did love me: and we fell upon poverty, and dark days, and by the time I was twenty I had given up sunset dreaming, and I knew what life mine was to be.'

'And have followed it nobly, Joan!' cried Esther, hugely touched by anything like confidence from Joan's granite lips. 'You have been a faithful daughter, and a good manager of your mother's straitened means.'

'I possess common sense, Esther; don't talk about nobleness and such fiddlesticks. All heroics are wasted on me. I possessed common sense and endured. I knew more contentment was to be got from work than from idleness, so I worked; and by this time my life, such as it is, has become habitual to me and not distasteful. What I was going to say is, that at eighteen, I should no more have believed I should ever grow into what I am than you, with your good looks and recollection of Mr. Carew's fair words, could imagine yourself Joan Engleheart now.'

'Oh, Joan!'

'Esther, all these dreams are natural. I remember mine, and there was no harm in them. I don't believe there is any harm in yours. David was wrong in looking so glum and disconcerted about your talking to the young man—of course, poor fellow, he knows nothing of these things, how should he?' Esther thought of David's confidences of the morning. 'He looks upon you as a child, and would do so twenty years hence, if you lived in the same house with him still.'

'Twenty years!' repeated the girl. 'We shall be all old, old people long before that time.'

'You will be thirty-eight, Esther. Not a bad sort of age for a woman with her own home, and with her children growing up about her; but a hard time of life for a single woman struggling alone among strangers—a governess with a brain just warping after twenty years of work, a companion just ebbing out of the ghastly, professional cheerfulness she has earned her bread with till now. Yes; middle age has few charms for such as they.'

'God keep me from being either a governess or a companion!' cried out Esther. 'I have my own two hands, and the knowledge you have given me, Joan. I will work cheerfully if there is need, but I will be independent. I will never work to suit the caprice of others.'

'"I will—I will." That is how all young people talk: *they* will do what they think best, and then, when real life comes upon them, they find that they must do what lies to their hand, not what they themselves had chosen. I like

your resolute spirit, Esther — the more because both your parents were poor, weak, shilly-shally creatures, who died because they wouldn't live and do their duty, and therefore it has come to you from training, not inheritance: but I would have you, even now, look your coming life straight in the face, and not merely talk of your readiness to work. My mother believes that Aunt Tudor will leave her money to you. I do not.'

'Nor do I,' cried Esther. 'She has given me a great deal of money already, thirty pounds a year since I was a little child, and now this last fifty pounds to send me to school. I have no right to look for any more from her, and I shall not want it. When I am old enough I will work. The word has quite a zest for me, Joan.'

'And what will you work at?'

'Oh—well, whatever I find I am fittest for,' said Esther, cheerily. 'I am not going to be depressed by anything to-night, Joan. I feel that merely to live, merely to suffer even, will be enjoyment. The world is so wide, and there are such an immense number of years to go through before I shall be old.'

'What is this Mr. Carew like, child?'

'Mr. Carew is—is tall, and not ill-looking, cousin. What could make you think of him?'

'A farmer's son, I think I heard you tell David.'

'Yes; but you would never think so from his face or speech, and then he is in the army, himself. How clear the beacon shows to-night, Joan! I don't think I ever saw it so bright before.'

'Esther, you would be happier married to a farmer's son than working for your own bread. There is no lonely working woman on this earth who does not daily and hourly weary over her own life. I speak from knowledge, and I am not much given to sentimental weaknesses, as you know.'

'And what has Mr. Carew got to do with that remark, or with my future life?' said Esther, quickly. 'You don't think my peace of mind is endangered by every stranger who speaks to me for an hour, I hope, Joan?'

'I think you possess decent common sense, Esther,' answered Joan, who, while she wished to arouse in Esther's mind a certain train of ideas, was far too keenly awake to overstep her own mark by a single hair's breadth. 'From your description, the young man appears to be just a careless, conceited fool, seeking his own amusement, and not in the least likely to fall in love with you or me, or anyone else but himself.'

'Oh, Joan! he is not in the least conceited.'

'All men are conceited, Esther, and most men are heartless, and many men are fools; but I have no fear whatever of your peace of mind: if I had, I should forbid you to speak to Mr. Carew any more. Dan Vellicot is much more likely to come as a suitor to Countisbury than any handsome young gentleman who wears a sword in her Majesty's service, and travels down here to while away his leave of absence in fly-fishing.'

And Miss Joan having finished these exhilarating remarks, rose, looked about her, sniffed vehemently, gave a single low meaning whistle, and then skirted away swift and noiseless as fate towards the orchard-hedge. Even while she spoke, her eye had been intently fixed upon certain outlines not unlike those of Patty Simmons's mother, with a basket on her arm, hovering stealthily about the garden-wicket, and instinct (true as that of an Indian trail-hunter) told her at once the point from whose ambush she might best detect and pounce upon whatever fresh deed of darkness her unhappy handmaid's depraved natural affections had been leading her to commit.

'Was all that good advice meant merely to show me what kind of life lies before me, or to warn me against the danger of liking Mr. Oliver Carew?' Esther wondered, as later in the evening she walked slowly along the path towards the house. 'Poor Joan! she need not be afraid. I am not likely to forget that mine will be a life of work and

hardship, and as to this stranger—— I had nearly forgotten him until Joan mentioned his name.'

'How white and near the stars look,' Miss Fleming further soliloquized; 'that is a sign of fine weather to-morrow. I shall go out upon the moors towards sunset, and wear my new lilac frock, and a white rose in my waist-belt — no, that would look as if I wanted to be asked for it again. My lilac frock, and straw bonnet, and my muslin scarf will look best. Joan will say I have been dressing myself out, but I don't mind that—I ought to dress more neatly now I am grown up; and if I go out by the orchard-gate none of them will notice me .... Oliver Carew—it is not an ugly name. I shall never write about him to Milly and Jane. I couldn't bear to read such nonsense as they would be sure to write, and besides, in a few more days he will be gone, and there will be an end of it all .... How nice the old house looks, lying there white and silent in the moonlight: I wouldn't like to leave it, and yet I don't think I should like to live at Countisbury for ever, and grow to be like Joan and David. I should like, before I die, to see some of those foreign places Mr. Carew talks so well about. I wonder whether anyone will ever care enough for me to take me to them. I wonder whether Mr. Carew really likes me, or only pretends he does. It was very pleasant to talk to him as we sat together on the rock. I felt as I never feel when David holds my hand at that moment when he said good-bye. I should like all my life to be as it was this morning, only with a new muslin dress, and a new hat and gloves to put on every day, and with Mr. Carew, or—or somebody else—to meet me whenever I walked. It will be very dull indeed when Mr. Carew is gone. I wonder I never knew before how dull it is to walk about the woods with only David to talk to.'

And oh, reader! (of the severer and more uncompromising sex), remember Esther Fleming's age—only just eighteen! Remember she had never enjoyed the privileges of a ball-room; had never been to an archery-meeting or a pic-nic; had never read any French romance, except 'Telemachus,' in her life.

THE ICE-KING'S GIFT TO ALEXANDRA.

www.ibtool.com.cn

EARTH-PRINCESS, sledge-borne o'er these frozen waves
Thy sires ruled long ago,
Take thou in beauty from my ice-roofed caves
This snowdrop of the snow!

'No kindless gift I bring thee:—take it, thou!
It is the Ice-King's crest;
Fair as thy lord's. So let the pale flower bow
Its head upon thy breast!

'The great broad sun that does my soul dismay
Shall bless this child of snow:
When I am borne to seas—away—away,
This *shall not fade, but grow!*

'For my *old locks, no need a crown so fair;*
But thine *are of the May!*
When on my foam-steed I go otherwhere,
With thee this bud shall stay.

'For in it breathes the beauty of the morn
When hearts and worlds are young;
The purest blossom, fairest and first-born,
On all her chaplet strung.

'Take it!—I give it thee!—Nay, do not greet
My passing with one tear;
When I am gone, still more shall bless thee, Sweet!
My gift of the New Year.'

ELEANORA L. HERVEY.

January 8, 1864.

LADIES' WORK.

www.libnoui.com.tw

OW are we to define the words that head this paper? They don't bear any allusion to odious 'Women's Rights.' They don't refer to degrees, or wish to suggest professorships. They refer to an innocent safety-valve which keeps a good many folks quiet.

Lord Dundreary can't understand it, and a good many men call it rubbish; but that is chiefly while suffering under severe inflictions of shopping, or else while vainly seeking to steer through the horrid labyrinth of beautiful works of art piled up in some lady's room.

But, after all, I don't know what women would do without needles. There is something that is so quiet in that stillest of all still employments; and though all men (and some women) do hate with a deadly hatred the rooms that are possessed by an evil fairy called 'Tawdry,' and by a mischievous sprite called 'Trip-people-up-with-footstools,' I really know scarcely any one who does not acknowledge in some form the charm of that quiet mechanical work with which women exorcise worry, and which, with its graceful implements, imparts such a charm to a room. To some, without a work-basket a room never looks thoroughly homely. There is hardly an English home that can quite put away the shadow of some form that sat by the fireside with her basket of heaped-up mending, or her long ivory knitting-pins, or with something white and soft that seemed a right motherly work. In some houses there is, alas! but that pitiful human memory—where the work has been only of months, and then has been hidden away, and where the young form of the worker has never appeared again.

But we must not call up sad shadows to play round our feminine subject. We must find it out at its homeliest conducing to homeliest pleasures.

The work we must do for ourselves is always so pleasant when done. The happiest position—there can be no doubt about it—is when we are not poor, but yet do not roll in wealth. I remember being struck so much in a story some time ago by the pitiful description of the loss of keen pleasures that wealth brought—the indifference felt to the book that once would have been so treasured when purchased with thought and carefulness—the manifold enjoyments that were now blotted out of life. I suspect if we chose to think we could all bring many instances and plenty of philosophy to aid the content of religion.

A few people, too, there are who hold riches only as trustees. In their own simple home ways and in their wide benevolence they seem to approach on one hand the happy homes round the throne, with simple tastes dear to our hearts, and again they seem to scatter comfort around them everywhere. The mere silent *action* of people who are contented—people who are not aspiring to any earthly object—people who are contented to be and appear what they are—the mere quiet life of such people is in itself an influence; and thus is in itself the rarest and costliest *work*.

But all this is quite a digression. I was only thinking of how much

we do find work to go along with homeliness, and of how much they, both of them, go along with contented minds!

Work does soothe many a worry and quiets down many a storm. Don't people sometimes begin to 'work, and think over what to say?' And does not the 'saying' afterwards vanish into thin air?

Work is in some way interesting—mere advance I suppose is pleasant—as every brick laid well, and every foot well dug, so every stitch well set has some sense of pleasure in it. And these uneventful moments do often the work of much toil for us, smoothing out mental creases, and laying low petty sand-heaps which might have gone whirling about, blinding all the eyes that they got into.

So much for the soothing charm: for this there is plenty to do—plain sewing, white-seaming, and hemming—all that beautiful neat work that *womanly* woman delight in—stitching and hem-stitching—inlaying, and felling, and running, and all the rest of it. Then there is the inexplicable darning and marking taste. Knitting we speak of lovingly, for we mostly are used to some needles whose click we are never tired of, and whose echo some day will be precious. Netting there is, and 'wool-work'—that wool-work which lives by its basket—that gorgeous, exquisite pile of tints that light up a room, and in whose bewildering brightness we really can't help revelling. When we are working in tame colours, are any of my readers guilty, of sometimes mixing in gay skeins needlessly? The loss of the glowing colours is intolerable to our basket!

While talking about the work-basket I must beg to suggest a shape. There is such a charming flower-basket that seems to be made for work things. It is a large, wide-spreading one, made by Hammond, in Baker Street; and whether for flowers or work, it is really well worth having.

The fashion of basket-covers is nearly extinct too. Now this is really lamentable, for they are so charming to make! And honestly and truly they are immensely useful. The fashion is so very old that I shall reckon it quite new now, and, possessing myself of the copyright, proceed to give my views on it.

First—shall I venture?—Have you a horror of patchwork that no words can overcome? If so, you must miss this paragraph, for it will not give you satisfaction. A most really bewitching basket-cover is made in old silk patchwork! I don't mean exactly the fashion of cottage counterpanes, but where a kaleidoscope pattern is made up of the glittering scraps, with edges gay and various, and corners spreading brightly, on some well-chosen ground of dark-green or black or blue. The work is so pleasant too. The female mind is gifted with praiseworthy economy! Using up all one's scraps is all the same delightful, whether we first make the scraps, or whether they turn up ready-made!

This is a good colour practice. If people would make work artistic they would make some advances in taste. It is not merely to seize on a shade they want—though even that is something when it betokens aptitude and readiness to discern hues—but it is also to see the colours that make up chords: the chords that will chime in together into harmony. The value of little dots—the fallacy of dull mixtures—the modes of heightening one colour by adding or withdrawing another that seems irrelevant—the extraordinary value of details that are often passed over—all these things come to view when we begin first to scatter colours.

And how we do want colour in our indoor life! Not pale, faint pinks and mauves, which might seem to be more suitable to some hot Indian climate, where still they are not much used, but dashes and flakes of crimson, and wide splashes of sea-green; primrose from the spring banks, and blue hyacinth's hue from the fields; the rose of our apple-orchards; the green and the gold of our corn.

We seem now and then very gaudy, but how terribly rare is good colouring! Women do mostly fur-

nishing; and they *will* buy things singly because the thing is beautiful, and *not* because it is suitable. Now working in bright colours is the best chance of learning their ways. We pick up almost unconsciously vague ideas that we reproduce. It becomes at last painful to us to be placed for long in a room where colouring is not harmonized. We get to know more of the power of one colour over another. We come to see by instinct how to *kill* a too gay expanse by a dot or two of yet brighter and more decided colour.

Wool-work is thus made sometimes a really artistic task. We blend and contrast our colours and try a thousand theories, every one of which has its own use, too, in dress, and house, and dinner ways.

But it is very hard to work slavishly just as the pattern is set for us—it is almost, for the eyes, like endorsing an opinion which we cannot hold. It gets one into bad habits; for even supposing the pattern to be right itself, we ought to see it is so, and not do it while still abusing it.

The work in itself is quiet. I think all our handiworks are so. But still so many of them give us such scope for invention.

And it is to some people so pleasant to trust to their own resources. They like to be independent and to carry refinement with them. In the Australian bush—amidst the Queensland cotton-farms—far up on our Indian stations—on board some ship at sea—travelling through the Desert with the Honourable Impulsia Gushington—in all the odd places they get into, people like now-a-days very much to be comfortable; and it is quite remarkable how much refined taste there is in the reading of that one word as used by the upper ten thousand. The most distinctive features of refinement even are fast becoming *active*—not consisting in mere possessions. Any one may possess wealth, but not every one can use it without any undue display of it.

And so I shall not apologize for suggesting such commonplace fashions. I only want to point out how some few things may be turned to thorough account for adornment—things that will show taste as well as bring it out, and things that will retain, too, a valuable stamp of character, as a real production, to which mind has gone with the fingers.

First in popular estimation just now are the arts of glass and china painting; the first called Diaphanie, the other most unfortunate in its name of Decalcomanie. Really these are works that give some room for taste and invention. The windows that are done thus have the effect of good old paintings; the china and wood work also and the silk covers and fans are quite charming.

And I have been wondering if these objects for passing adornment would not have their own special advantages if old classical shapes were used, being capable of reappearing in so many new developments. The Decalcomanie of course all the readers of 'London Society' know quite well by name already;—they have found various drawing-rooms seemingly made into china factories, and manifold varnished fingers have receded from 'shaking hands.' It is in three forms only that I want to say a word for it. People are so apt to have such favourite little boudoirs. Now why cannot their panels be decorated thus? I think they would be found to take very little 'doing.' A wreath of some longish leaves, intertwined for instance; and butterflies and gay insects might be well supported by large bright bouquets of flowers, and birds, and their nests, too, on either hand.

I saw lately also some of the funniest books and drawings that came from Japan, Mr. Veitch having brought over many when he went to Japan for new flowers. The books were so very quaint. There were some canary birds who gazed languishingly at a fly, the said fly buzzing provokingly about six inches above their heads, but evidently not feeling the least disposed to jump down the birds' throats. There were some very gay birds, too, and some little cocky wren-like

things. The fun was in the expression that the Japanese artists gave, which was far more taking in the really beautiful bird-drawings than in the marked faces and slightly grotesque street scenes.

What pretty fables illustrated we might do thus on our boudoir walls—what pretty *applique* works in coloured drawings even—in the photographs, too, that serve so well in illuminating. The plan of a glazed panel—a piece of glass cut to the size and securely fixed into its place before the edge round it is gilded, would preserve any delicate work as well as we could desire; but, indeed, as a general rule the mere varnish is thought sufficient. People might begin well with one panel picture fashion, then they might go on to another, and then do the whole room alternately. This plan would divide the work into many convenient stages; and as the painting can be transferred to silk or paper or china or wood or glass at pleasure, I do not think the arrangement is likely to prove too difficult.

I don't think I need here describe much the way in which the work is done—the painting the prepared drawing over carefully with the cement—the reversing it on to the spot intended to have the painting—the gentle, even rubbing—and then the careful damping with a wet sponge or paint-brush of the paper that the things are painted on, which then becomes detached and is at once removed. Some people have, indeed, the art of making a well-gummed surface and then of painting on it. This is an old fashion again of long ago, and it strikes me that now-a-days we might use it for our works well. It is far more pleasant to do one's designs oneself. The 'size' in Decalcomanie is made of marsh-mallow and sugar, which dissolves most rapidly. For the dinner-table, vases done thus are attractive. We must not make too many plates and dishes thus, because of the washing dangers; but for vases that may be washed, in a style more for show than use, we may indeed arrange some exceedingly pretty effects. The arrangement indeed here is everything. I have seen such a pretty stand with a little French group à la Watteau, with pink tiny roses, *parsemées*, and mixed with forget-me-nots. The little chintz-like pattern, made up of gay small dots, flies, flowers, or what not, has such a good effect in filling an empty space without the least touch of heaviness. Beware, however, of using a group of large centre flowers, and then adorning your ground with a number of similar flowers, their size reduced a hundredfold!

Flattish tazze for dinner-tables may be very well thus ornamented, and also the stems of glass vases and baskets and trays for cards. Of course in cleaning these things the unpainted inside can be cleaned with water of any heat, as usual; but the painted surface is better without much rubbing, and though the varnish *is* waterproof, the water must be cold.

The work of Decalcomanie, as well as Diaphanie, was, I believe, introduced in England by Messrs. Barnard, Oxford Street. The other day I saw some of their new designs; and really the Japan work—the table and the borderings of 'fine old Japan,' were amusing. The scenes appeared to me to have been some of them taken from the books of the Japanese; and these scenes of Japan or China are sure to become popular. Chinese lanterns, by-the-by, could thus be splendidly decorated; and a friend of mine not long ago produced a striking effect by mingling these gay lanterns amidst the gorgeous plants which filled a small conservatory. Diaphanie, be it remembered, is quite different from the above art. The paper in this is rubbed off after the cement has had two days to harden, and then a good coat of varnish renders the coloured side waterproof.

One of the prettiest sets of Decalcomanie patterns consists of a number of insects—beetles, flies, and butterflies—painted upon leaf-gold. In all these Decalco patterns the painting is really *reversed*. We shall not then see again the face that appears on the sheet. The heavier colours are next us; we

see a thing wrong side out; and thus the finished work is—rather a rare event—far prettier than our pattern. The principle is ingenious. The cement with which we cover the lower—*i. e.*, the surface next us of the paint—attaches that paint securely to the surface on which we press it. After a moment or two we touch with a damp sponge or paint-brush the surface of the paper that is now lying next us. The damp dissolves at once the thin layer of mallow size; the paper being then lifted off we have but to varnish the picture that remains. It is well not to put over much varnish, which is quite a beginner's tendency.

A new sort of Decalcomanie is done almost in an instant. This is ready varnished, and is not reversed in painting. The paper is cut out and thrown into cold water: after remaining there about five or ten minutes the painted film is found ready to separate from the paper; and this film being taken up is laid flat upon the surface which is to be decorated, to which it adheres directly. I must own the ease of this mode makes it very pleasant and rapid for doing panels or anything for which we want to have few materials and quick effect. But it is not so lasting nearly as the other: it does not look so polished and smooth at the edges; and hardly gives enough to do to call it work at all.

The next sort of work I would turn to is that which has seized upon baskets—the fashion of gilding these, and also that of staining them.

The gilding is done so easily that it is hardly worth describing—the liquid being brushed on, and left to stand twelve hours, according to the best mode, and the leaf-gold then laid on and caused to lie smoothly on it. This produces a very solid and effective handle or edging, and round the base of a flower-pot basket, or of a stand for cut flowers, it has most certainly a capital appearance.

The worst part of the white baskets *is* the white-lead used in them. It must be allowed, I suppose, that they generally are done thus. There is an old receipt, however, of a South American mode of whitening which will be found most harmless, and which, I can answer for it, is reasonably lasting. It sometimes requires renewing, but really that is most seldom. The whole secret is to boil rice till it really dissolves—is thin, at least, like paste—and then, mixing chalk or whiting thoroughly into the mixture, to paint the things over with it, leaving them for a short time before they are touched to dry.

For drawing-rooms and boudoirs, and for baskets for carrying flowers, there is, too, that sealing-wax varnish that I have so often mentioned, a stick of red and a stick of black being dissolved in spirit of wine, mixed, and then well brushed on. The great thing is to avoid leaving any uncoloured crevices; but this is not likely to happen if we use a small paint-brush enough: a smallish camel's-hair pencil is the best and the quickest at last.

The rich brown colour of this varnish looks charming for our flowers; and there is so often some favourite old flat basket which we cannot bear to discard, though it has, alas! grown dingy. A coating of this varnish puts new life into it; and if a gilt handle is added, and a touch of gold here and there amongst the curves of the edge, and perhaps at the foot besides, the old basket comes out quite elegant, and goes off at once to a table. The tin linings for all these can always be got most easily; any size and shape can be made if they are not ready; but people who perhaps write up from the country to order them ought always to say the colours which they wish to have them painted,—the basket-makers generally are so strongly disposed towards green.

Another work I want to mention is that of feather arrangement. It does seem to me such a pity that we should not have in England the beautiful feather flowers the nuns of Madeira make, and the beautiful fans and dresses that we hear of, and see brought sometimes from the stations in the Pacific.

Of course, some will say 'they' may well make the most lovely feather things. Only give us their feathers, and we will do the same gladly. But surely we have white feathers, and many flowers are white; and in Madeira, at any rate, the feathers are mostly painted.

But besides the flowers there are so many more things we might make. The painted fans will perhaps be at present the most popular, done according to the new work; but, otherwise, what charming fans we might make of feathers!

It is not every one who has swans, but those who can get swans' feathers really should set store by them as a most useful material. If people would arrange feathers, too, to form artistic groups, there would be a chief objection removed from the things made of them. The feathers, for instance, that are so lovely on peacocks' necks, and some of the beautiful plumage of even more homely birds, how very pretty they would be grouped into soft masses! and what very charming plumes might be well obtained nearer than Regent Street!

The feathers of course need drying exceedingly well and slowly before they are used at all.

Still keeping to room decoration we may recall the leather-work, in which soft leather was shaped into forms of leaves and fruit, and mounted on wood or wire, and carefully varnished with brown. These make such pretty picture-frames as any boudoir might welcome; and it must be so very pleasant to be able to give a drawing of which the whole thing is home-made. When sisters have this taste, too, it often sets brothers carving; and few things are more a resource, since wood exists in most places and penknives are perennial.

Plant-stands may be made thus, very prettily, too — the light iron shapes being quite concealed by the foliage; and brackets, which are not always most easy to buy in good taste, can often be made most elegant by a little adapting of form to the place they are meant to fill, and to the use they are made for. The use of extremely black varnish gives all the effect of black oak. And when one hears quite with longing of the carved oak brackets and boxes and stands and what not in Paris, is it not very consoling to meet with the information that they are mostly *made* black?

Black oak, however, *is* perfect to use amongst brilliant flowers.

Then, for rustic things, we don't suppose, of course, that ladies can really carpenter; but I have seen three sticks wired together merely —somewhat in camp-stool fashion— and they are cut smooth to stand well, and then they hold a flower-pot, or perhaps a tiny basket, or perhaps a tuft of moss, in which flowers are growing. The sticks are varnished, or even gilt sometimes, and the best wood to use for them is that which is cut from vines.

Many things may be made thus merely with copper wire or with galvanized zinc, which bends extremely readily; and on beautiful little rafts thus formed not only many orchids that live in rooms would grow well, but also cut flowers would last well laid on a bed of moss in which a clay ball was hidden to keep the flower-stalks fresh. Many delightful flowers would also grow thus charmingly upon a mere bed of moss.

I end, as I began, with the old 'white work,' which will be always popular because it has never yet been passed by.

There are the pretty embroideries of thick braid worked on net that gives almost the look of point-lace when sleeves and collars are done in it, and for which we may make lovely patterns by taking the shapes and outlines of small leaves and pretty berries.

There is the braiding, too, which comes in between large rows of open work, and with its Vandykes and scrolls gives the effect of much time and labour.

And, lastly, there is the 'old point'—that most bewitching work —a work which one feels at once is the top of the working scale.

The wide braid here looped together over its blue traced pattern has to be just connected by mere

strong threads at first. These threads are then 'worked over' with strong close button-hole stitch, and the interstices are filled in with fancy stitches like collars. The great thing of all in this work is *shape*, or, rather, pattern.

But if people kindly consider that all our best point comes from exclusively *convent* sources, they will begin to think, perhaps, that designs which one nun has made another woman may draw; and when they look at drawings and photographs of old iron works, and see the reviewers remarking that they almost resemble old point, perhaps it will occur to them to produce them *in* point.

I believe that half the secret of the magnificent old lace has been that in the convents it had to be taken so often from splendid metal-work. There is something very difficult in making a grand design for a mere piece of lace.

Exceedingly good effects can be produced, too, in mere chain-stitch worked upon fine net in a rather thick sort of cotton. The stitches of course can be worked closely in leaf-masses, or forming any flower or initials or devices; and all the pretty initials that every one has on envelopes might serve another turn in making embroidery patterns.

In this, as well as in point-lace, we chiefly must seek good patterns; and for those who find much difficulty in drawing these correctly, I must suggest the aid of the foreign writing-paper, divided into small squares, which helps much for proportions always. And of course it is hardly worth while to put in a reminder also as to the black tracing-paper, which copies on to a sheet of anything laid beneath it the lines that we trace on the pattern, which lies on the reversed black paper. In the course of foreign tours, and in most unlooked-for ways, suggestive ideas will constantly strike any one who has an eye for them.

The chief thing, it seems to me, is to be on the look-out for adaptations rather than things. *Things*, of course, strike one soon enough, being there themselves in evidence; but adaptations require looking for, and take rather thought than eyesight. So now I have touched on a few of the pleasantest things of this season, and—if the Editor lets me—some day I will hope to say more of them and of their successors.

AN OLD-FASHIONED VALENTINE.

www.libtool.com.cn

O MAYDEN, kyndlye looke on mee
For thys one daye atte leaste,
Whenne lyttelle byrds alle happye bee,
Maye *I* not eke bee bleste?
One kyndlye glance, dear ladye myne,
Grant mee—for sweete Sainte Valentyne.

Bryghte is the daye wyth thoughte of Spryng,
And Wynter, old and gray,
Whenne lyttelle byrds begyn to syng,
Begyns to wende hys waye.
Spryng-tyme bryngs hope, sweete ladye myne,
Give *mee* some—for Sainte Valentyne.

The prettye flowers wylle soone appear
In everye fielde and grove,
Prymrose and violet wylle be here
To speake to us of love.
Then at thys tyme, O ladye myne,
Love *mee*—for sweete Sainte Valentyne!

www.libtool.com.cn

n by G. H. Thomas.

went on into the breakfast-room with the two children clinging to her. She looked at the letter lying
e plate, and felt all at once, with a great pang of sorrow, and shame, and

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

by G. H. Thomas.

...e went on into the breakfast-room with the two children clinging to her. She looked at the letter lying ...e her plate, and felt all at once, with a great pang of sorrow, and shame, and anger—I know from what

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

JUST AS IT HAPPENED:

A Tale of Two Valentines.

www.libtool.com.cn

THE FIRST.

IT was not a genial February in the country; perhaps not very genial in town either, but then to town-bred people the country in dull weather is absolutely intolerable.

So at least it appeared to the young lady who sat, this eve of Saint Valentine, on a couch of crimson velvet, by the fireside, and counted the days until her country visit should be over. 'Better a London fog than this eternal mist and drizzle,' was her verdict, as she walked to the window and looked out. 'In the country one should have sunshine and green fields, waving trees, summer flowers, and singing birds, whereas to look out here——'

The solitary brown leaf she had been watching on its bare branch swirled round in a sudden blast of wind and rain-drops, and fell to the ground.

'Die there!' said the girl, shivering; 'the fittest thing to do such days as this. I wonder where everybody is.'

She turned as the door opened, and a rosy urchin of some five winters bounded towards her and clutched the delicate folds of her evening dress in his sturdy fists.

'A horse, a horse!' sang out the urchin. 'Aunt Milly's a horse!—my horse—gee!'

But the moment was unpropitious. Aunt Milly only extricated her dress and put the rebel fingers aside.

'Carl, where's mamma?'

'Don't know. Making Bertie say his prayers.'

A slight curl stole to the young lady's lips as she went back to the fire and sat down again on the couch of crimson velvet. Making Bertie say his prayers! In other words, putting him to bed. So that was what her sister-in-law did in the country by way of relieving its monotony—made herself into a nursery-maid.

She gave an instinctive glance round the room in which she sat, and in which every article was a standing witness to wealth and taste, a standing protest against the dull weariness which oppressed her. What business had the mistress of such a house as this to make a nursery-maid of herself? Was it expected that all wives and mothers in the country should do so; and why? Her eyes, travelling gradually from curtain to picture, from picture to table and couch, fell upon Master Carl rolling himself from side to side on the rug at her feet. He stopped rolling when he saw her look at him. He got up, put his chubby little fist once again on her light dress, and stared up at her, grinning.

'Nurse says if we say our prayers we shall go to heaven, but I don't want to go.'

'Don't you?'

'No; not till I've worn this new frock a bit. Doesn't it look nice? And I've got a watch, only it won't tick; and a trumpet; and I shall have a valentine to-morrow; shall you?'

'No. Hush, Carl,' said Millicent, peremptorily, 'what was that?'

She had heard the drive gate swing backwards and forwards with a click each time the fastening failed to catch in passing, and now she saw a gentleman's hat above the shrubs, and had a shrewd suspicion that she knew who the owner of it was.

For one moment she bent her head down towards the fire and a softened expression came over her face. A little while ago she would have hailed the coming of this visitor—any visitor—as a blessed break in the monotony of the day, but now——

'Well,' she said, sighing, 'it will be a change at least.'

When she raised her head all trace of the momentary softening had

passed away, and there was nothing but her usual look of cold indifference. She rose to greet the visitor when he came in; she put out her hand to him in a regal sort of way, and seated herself with an air that graciously permitted him to sit also in her presence.

'A dull day, Mr. Stuart; as all days seem to be here, at this season.'

Mr. Stuart responded. If he had noticed her air he did not seem to feel it. Carl was already at his knee, and his broad white hand stroked Carl's yellow curls and kept the boy quiet. On one of the fingers of that hand a diamond glittered, and Millicent noticed that the hand, considering that it belonged to a country gentleman and a sportsman, was very white. She thought too, as she had thought before, that if no one could possibly call Mr. Stuart a handsome man, neither could any one honestly call him ugly. He was not old, nor, seeing that he was past thirty, very young. He had a square white forehead, black hair and whiskers, a pair of eyes whose keen, steady light softened wonderfully when he spoke, and a smile which Millicent acknowledged to herself made him look almost handsome.

'Your visit is drawing to a close?' said Mr. Stuart, interrogatively.

'Yes, I go to town next week.'

'We shall be sorry to lose you.'

Mr. Stuart had looked at her while he spoke, but afterwards he turned away and stroked Carl's hair absently. Perhaps he thought the faint tinge that had risen over her face was only the reflection of the firelight, or perhaps it was so faint as to be insignificant; anyhow, he looked like a man who had made his first throw and discovered a blank.

'Sir George and Lady Rochelle do not accompany you, I think?'

'My brother takes me to town, of course, but he will not remain. I believe Lady Rochelle is in the nursery. I will let her know you are here.'

She looked towards a crimson tassel which hung near the gentleman's hand, and Mr. Stuart got up, but not to ring the bell. He only required, it seemed, a change of posture, for he stood with one hand on the mantelpiece, and said curtly, 'Pray don't. I would not disturb her on any account. I came to bid you good-bye.'

Something which Millicent would have scorned to think was disappointment crept over her at the words. There he stood, a stern, strong man, an obscure country squire, over thirty, with not even a handsome face to recommend him; courteous, indeed, but not with the insidious, flattering courtesy to which she was accustomed; a rugged figure enough in all conscience for a foreground, and yet she could not help a little absurd feeling of regret at the thought of saying good-bye to him. It was very odd, it was utterly unaccountable and preposterous. A man who would not even recognize the name of the composer whose new opera was shortly to startle the world into one great diapason of praise; who would probably confuse Meyerbeer with Verdi, and Alboni with Grisi; who sang only simple ballads in a very fair tenor, and knew nothing at all about his own 'register.' Neither would any of the great names of Tyburnia have produced an impression upon him. To all that went on in the world—her world—he was, she considered, culpably indifferent; what then was there about him which roused her interest in spite of herself? She could not tell. She wondered why, if he had only come to say good-bye, he did not say it and go; why he chose to stand up there instead of sitting down; why there was something about him to-night stranger than usual, something which communicated to her an odd sensation of excitement and apprehension. She began to lose her cool composure and indifference, to tremble a little, to feel a little nervous and uneasy.

'You dislike the country, then,' said Mr. Stuart, in a tone of speculative deliberation. 'You really think that with all its glories of summer sun and winter hearth, it has nothing to offer which you would accept; that an existence in it would be simply insupportable under any circumstances?'

Millicent hesitated. Other glories, dazzling with luxurious appliances, splendid in the whirl that left no time for thought or dulness rose up and hid those simpler ones, but somehow she did not like to tell him so.

'You speak so seriously, Mr. Stuart.'

'I feel serious. I am more serious than ever I was in my life.'

'My brother is happy here,' said Millicent, 'and his wife too. I suppose if people have homes and home interests and pursuits like theirs, they may be happy in the country.'

'Millicent!'

The sudden glow which lighted up his eyes and face as he turned towards her startled Miss Rochelle into a gesture which however would not have stopped him but for another interruption from the noisy lips of Master Carl.

'I shall have a valentine to-morrow,' shouted the boy. 'And Aunt Milly won't. She said so. She's got nobody to send her valentines, and I have.'

Mr. Stuart caught him by the arm and swung him round.

'Your aunt thinks valentines are only for children, eh Carl? And Valentine's Day is vulgar, out of date? Ask her?'

'I told him nothing of the sort,' said Millicent. 'But of course it is out of date.'

'Nevertheless we will honour it as we do other institutions, for its antiquity. I have an immense respect for it; and the village people think that any enterprise begun on Valentine's Day is certain to be lucky. And now, Miss Rochelle, I will wish you good evening.'

'Good-bye,' responded Millicent.

Mr. Stuart heard the emphasis on the words, and smiled. He went away with that half smile still on his lips, and Millicent got up and watched his dark figure as far as she could see it, which was not far. For night was closing in, the bare branches had formed themselves into a solemn black mat against the lead-coloured sky behind, and the rain dripped from them.

What did he mean? Why had he said that one word, and then broken off so suddenly? And what was he going to do? Above all, what did it signify to her about him and his doings?

She listened to the wind moaning feebly amongst the trees, and the sullen beat of the rain-drops on the stone terrace; and asked herself how it would be possible to drag on such an existence as this, month after month, year after year, as her sister-in-law did.

'No,' said Millicent; 'I couldn't do it; nothing should induce me to do it.'

She was glad when the servants brought in lights and drew the curtains, and Sir George, her brother, came and took her down to dinner, his wife following with Master Carl, who had absolutely refused to go to bed before the dessert appeared.

Even dinner was a little change—a little something to do and to talk about. She knew perfectly well that this perpetual dreariness was wrong; that she ought to have been able to occupy herself, as other people did, instead of hankering after the round of gaieties into which she was about to plunge; but knowing a thing to be wrong is very different from knowing how to remedy it, or even wishing to do so.

And Millicent went to bed that night to dream horrible dreams of being shut up in dismal country houses with stone terraces in front, and bare melancholy branches, from which rain dropped incessantly.

In the morning when she drew aside the curtain all was fair. The sun shone, the birds were singing; the great lumbering fog had lifted itself away; and up above her there was the blue sky with tiny flecks of white dancing over it like the petals of a shaken rose. Millicent opened the window and leaned out, confessing to herself that it was very fair. But what of that? To-morrow the fog might come back again; and even if it did not, fine weather was a poor thing for happiness to depend upon.

Clamorous voices reached her ear as she went down stairs; a patter of tiny feet along the hall, rosy lips upturned to kiss her, fat hands

thrust out in riotous glee to display the treasures of the letter-bag.

'My valentine!' screamed Carl. 'Look at mine first. Never mind Bertie's; mine's the best; all roses and paint; and little boys with wings, and cheeks like blowing a trumpet.'

'And mine's nicer,' vociferated the other nephew. 'Come on, come on! papa 's got one for you, too—he said so. A valentine for Aunt Milly!'

She went on into the breakfast-room with the two children clinging to her. She looked at the letter lying beside her plate, and felt all at once, with a great pang of sorrow, and shame, and anger—'I know from whom it comes, and what is in it.'

Sir George looked at her from his own letters, and said, 'Good morning;' Lady Rochelle gave her the usual kiss; and the children buzzed round her like bees, eager to pounce upon the supposed honey in that envelope and criticise it.

'It 's not as good as mine, I know,' said Carl, eyeing it jealously. 'Why, she hasn't opened it! She's put it in her pocket! Mamma, Aunt Milly won't open her valentine.'

Then Sir George called them off, and said, looking at his sister, 'I met Archie Stuart last night at the gate. He comes here rather often, doesn't he?'

To which Lady Rochelle responded, 'Was he here last night? I didn't see him.'

'He stayed just ten minutes,' said Millicent, shortly, 'and came, I should think, partly to play with Carl, for that was what he did most of the time.'

And then she made her escape to open that valentine, which was indeed not so good as Carl's, inasmuch as whilst his had produced only noisy glee, a few bitter remorseful tears rose, against her will, to Millicent's eyes, as she read what Archie Stuart had to say.

'His wife! Oh, never, never!'

She folded the letter and leaned again out of the window; but not to look at any real feature of the landscape. Instead of it she saw a house of many gables, standing in its own grounds. She looked in at the windows upon a room warm with ruddy light and flowing drapery; but silent, dull—unutterably. A solitary figure walked up and down from fire to window and wrung its hands. That was herself. Below rose up smoke from other houses and many cottages; and amongst them stood the tower of the village church. She turned from the prospect, and it vanished. Millicent Rochelle was herself again, instead of that solitary silent figure, watching in vain for an absent husband.

'I could not do it,' she repeated. 'I am not mad enough to care for him; it is fancy only—sorrow that he should be hurt through my means. Oh, if I were back in town out of it all!'

She could not do it. Even for such love as that which he told so quietly, but which she felt in every throb of her heart to be so true and tender, was it not possible for her to give up the other glories calling to her from afar, with music sweet but hollow?

Archie Stuart—No.

THE SECOND.

Pass on summer and winter, snow and sunbeams. Cut away five years more from the life of the old man, Time. He was grey when we were boys; and the five years alter us, but he looks little changed, we think.

Millicent Rochelle had come down again after this long interval to pay a visit at her brother's house. She had been there some weeks—for this was again the eve of St. Valentine; she sat in her old seat by the fire, and Archie Stuart stood opposite to her; but scant words and distant courtesy had passed between them, and he was not talking to her. He was going to take the boys—those dreadful creatures into which Carl and Bertie had developed—to a merrymaking specially got up for such creatures; and they were sitting uneasily on chairs, alternately reminding Mr. Stuart that they were ready, and sparring at each other. For Bertie had ventured to introduce the word valentine, upon which

Carl grew red, and ejaculated, 'Pshaw! valentines are for girls. I might *send* one, for a lark; but as to having one sent to me—I shouldn't take it in.'

'But you know, Carl,' insisted Bertie, 'that last year you——'

Mr. Carl looked straight at his brother, thrust his hands into his pockets, and uttered an emphatic monosyllable, 'Pig!'

Mr. Stuart took no notice of them. A little girl had crept up to him, and he was playing with golden curls something like Carl's present furze bush had been five years ago. He was but little altered. The years that had swept like a hurricane over Millicent seemed scarcely to have touched him. Only in one thing he was changed. He saw in her simply her brother's guest, to be treated with all due deference and courtesy—nothing more.

She sat on quietly, speaking if she was spoken to, but rousing herself with apparent difficulty: and the shadows deepened over her face as the fire fell lower. They knew nothing of each other's thoughts—these two, who had once been drawn so closely together. They only saw the cold outside—the chilly formalisms, the studied politenesses. At least so each believed of the other.

Lady Rochelle came in, dressed to go to a dinner-party, and Sir George was heard in the hall giving orders concerning the carriage.

'It is so kind of you to take charge of them,' said Lady Rochelle, shaking hands with Archie. 'But are you sure we shall not victimize you? Boys, you must be very good, and remember, Carl, no roughness.'

'All right, mother,' responded Mr. Carl, already dropping 'mamma' as unmanly.

'The carriage is ready,' said Lady Rochelle. 'They shall set you down, and come back for us.'

Then Archibald Stuart moved. A little spasm of irresolution shook him. His heart ached with this icy shadow that had come between himself and Millicent. Surely it need not be so. He looked at her, wishing to take her hand, as he used to do. She might have read the wish in his pained, wistful face. Perhaps she did not dare to look at his face at all. Anyhow, nothing but a very grave and formal bow passed between them, and he was gone.

Then Millicent became aware that Lady Rochelle was looking at her with an air of bewilderment and dismay.

'Why, Milly! not dressed! Do you know how late we are already?'

'You must spare me the party,' replied Millicent. 'I shall stay at home.'

'At home! not going! But, my dear, I can't——'

'Yes you can. I never meant to go. I hate it.'

'Hate what?'

'Dinner parties.'

Lady Rochelle smoothed down the fingers of her white gloves meditatively.

'George!' she called out, 'Milly says she won't go.'

The baronet came in, and Millicent put up her two hands to ward off his remonstrances.

'You used to scold me for being dissipated, George. Let me alone, now; I'm tired.'

Sir George looked at her and said, 'Hem!' then he gave his arm to his wife, and they went away.

At last she was alone, and the fire leaped up and nodded to her; but the bunch of early snowdrops which Archie Stuart had brought hung their heads and drooped. He had not been thinking of her when he brought them; why had he left them behind him? She had a vague sentiment of pity for them, as though they had been sentient beings, and could feel the neglect that left them to die in the hot room, uncared for. And though Archie Stuart was gone, she hardly seemed to be rid of him. How many lips had spoken to her of love since he stood there five years ago, uttering her name and checking himself? And what was the worth of all the honeyed speeches and stiffly eligible proposals, backed by the arguments of her aunt and chaperone, beside the worn old valentine with which in her inconsistency she had never parted?

She had got to go back into the great world, and drop the curtain again over this bit of quiet starlight,

to drive about in the Parks, to leave cards and messages, to write scented notes full of polite shams, to dress, and dine, and dance, to rush from house to house, from one fête to another, from soirée musicale to conversazione, where the talk rattled in her ears like dry old bones, and the society was a strange medley of scientific gentlemanly ladies, lady-like young gentlemen, and fresh young girls in the bloom of their first season; to sleep a miserable broken sleep when the red of dawn began to paint the sky, and rise at noon, forlorn and jaded, to begin afresh the yesterday's mill-wheel round.

She felt very dreary as she thought of all this now. She was no longer young to enjoy it; elasticity and youthful energy had fled. She shrank back in the corner of the couch, and thought, with a sob in her throat, that it would be pleasant to stay there; never to speak to any one again; never to go back into the whirl whose memory made her brain ache and throb in this silent room; never to feel the sting of loneliness again; never to wonder with a hopeless questioning whether life might not have been different if, five years ago, she had acted differently: not exactly to die there, that was too terrible, but to fall into the haziness of quiet rest.

Throughout these years a strange, remorseful consciousness had haunted her—a tiny silent picture. It was this: An open window, and birds singing in the fickle February sunshine; a sky all flecked with white, and a face leaning out of the window, but seeing not so much the sky or the sunshine as the offer of a man's heart—a deep and tender love which would have folded its warm light about the life that was so desolate now. Nobody wanted her. No soul on earth sent forth a tender thought to her, absent or present; no soul on earth was the better or happier for her existence. Must it go on thus to the end? The thought was very bitter to her. Her heart was full of vain yearnings after peace; and the glitter of that far-off world to which she must return was as dreadful now as it had formerly been fascinating.

'I should like to do a little good before I die,' mused Millicent. 'I should like to be of some little use somewhere.'

She went to the table and took up the drooping snowdrops.

'They are dying here: he will never know if I take them.'

And them some sudden association stung her, and she threw them down and covered her face.

'Too late, too late! I did love him all the while; but I loved myself better.'

It had taken her five years to find that out, and she had never confessed it until to-night. She would have recalled the confession then, if it had been possible. She roused herself, and assumed involuntarily some little of that regal air with which she had once looked down upon Archie Stuart. In passing the piano she struck a few desultory chords; and then, as her fingers wandered over them, the notes formed themselves into a symphony, an air, finally an accompaniment to the old Scotch ballad—

'Douglass, tender and true.'

By-and-by she began to sing the words softly, losing in them all thought of the present and the waning night.

A shadow fell upon the distant wall from the doorway, but she did not see it. When the last tremulous notes of the song died away it vanished; there came a rush of noisy feet along the corridor, and the boys were shouting their adventures into Aunt Millicent's ear, each struggling to be first and loudest.

'And I got a fiddle for my prize,' cried Carl. 'It only cost sixpence; but it makes a jolly squeak. I meant to play all up the stairs, only Mr. Stuart wouldn't let me because you were singing. He listened at the door, and made us keep quiet. I did call him a sneak, but he went away and never said a word to us. Aunt Milly, how white you are! And what a jolly muff to stop here all by yourself instead of going with mamma! Why, a dinner party 's better than nothing, if it *is* a bit slow.'

'Do you hear that clock?' said Millicent. 'Be off, boys. Good night.'

But Archie Stuart went down the gravel sweep with a light in his eye and a verse of a song on his lips.

'Could ye come back to me, Douglass, Douglass,
Back with the form and the face that I knew,
I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglass,
Douglass, tender and true.'

And he leaned over the gate in the moonlight to look at those windows where the light shone dark red through the curtains, his heart full of the singer of the song, and hope.

In the morning the sunbeams fell warm upon the window of Millicent's room, but she never heeded them. They were but a type of that other sunshine which had come to melt away the ice from her path. She was leaning down over a little table beside the window, and on it there lay open what Carl would have called a valentine. The tears that rose to her eyes were no longer thrust back in bitter self-humiliation and pride; they fell gently upon the old valentine and the new one. She was so happy that she could only press her hands over her heart, and say, 'I don't deserve it; I don't deserve it,' as she wrote the single word for which he asked, in answer—'Come.'

Here was some one who wanted her, who might yet be happier for her existence; above all, some one who loved her, whom she loved.

Below in the village there rose up the smoke of many cottages; and the church tower reared itself amongst them in silent solid dullness; but a wonderful light had come over the world, and the very cottages glittered in it. The bare trees were no longer bleak, the few brown leaves no longer melancholy; all were units of a charmed whole.

Sir George Rochelle stood at the drawing-room window that evening, and saw Archie Stuart in the shrubbery with Millicent. He called to his wife to 'look there.'

'I thought she was trifling with him,' said Sir George; 'but it isn't so, is it?'

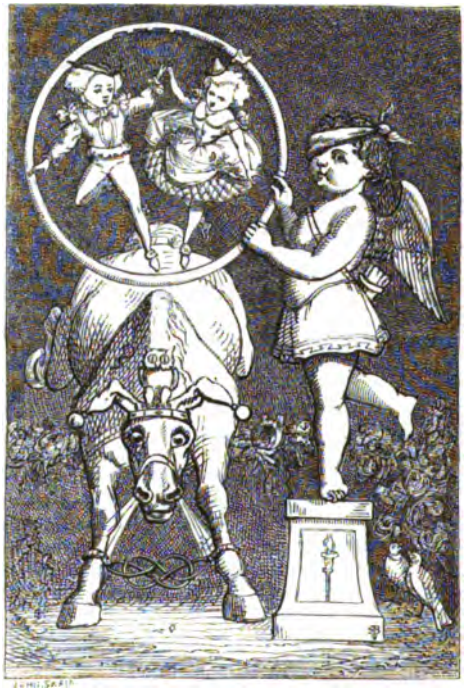
Lady Rochelle saw Archie Stuart turn to draw Millicent's shawl closer over her chest, and she smiled, and said, 'Come away; how would you have liked to be watched? No, there is no trifling there. May they be as happy as we are!'

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY IN LEAP YEAR.

A SOLEMN WARNING TO SINGLE MEN.

www.libtool.com.cn

(Illustrated by 'Phiz.')



BACHELORS all, of St. Valentine's Day beware!
This year is Leap Year: the ladies may choose!
How then you get in the fair sex's way beware,
Or both your hearts and your freedom you'll lose.
Princesses—waitresses,
Curly, or straight tresses,
Fond hearts, or traitresses,
Short ones or tall;
Elderly—youthful,
Deceitful or truthful,
Unfeeling or ruthful,
Beware of them all!

Theirs is the question this year; and for popping it,
No opportunity will they omit.
They may propose; and you've no chance of stopping it;
'Please ask mamma' does not answer a bit.
They'll grant no truces,
Delays, or excuses;
Resistance no use is
To Leap Year's mad freak,

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by "Phiz."

LEAP-YEAR.

See "A Solemn Warning to Single Men."

www.libtool.com.cn

That one chance of Hymen
For nervous and shy men,
(The girls can't think why men
Are frightened to speak).

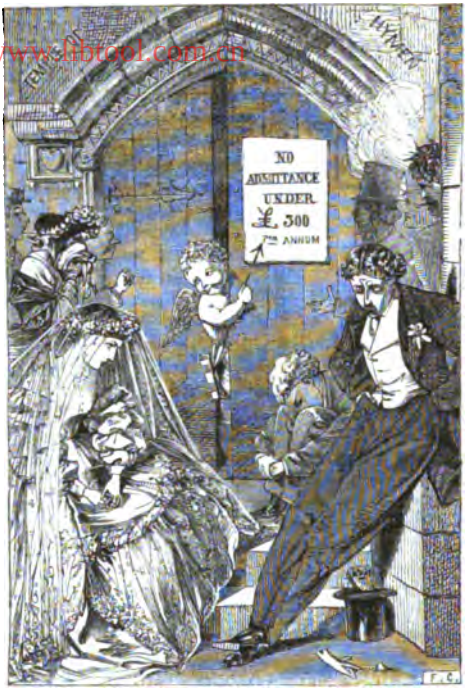
As for myself, I am terrified awfully—
'No' to a woman ne'er yet have I said,
So run a great risk of behaving unlawfully—
Marrying all who may ask me to wed.
In fear, dash my wig, am I
Standing of bigamy;
Not to say trigamy
Twenty times o'er.
There is no hope escape of;
I'm in for the scrape of
My fate, in the shape of
The year sixty-four.

Then bachelors all, be advised and take warning,
There's a great deal more danger than many suppose
Who are treating my sad admonition with scorning,
And make bosom friends of their poor bosoms' foes.
Of their dreams they will wake out
And find the mistake out,
When the fair ones they break out
On Valentine's Day.
And kneeling before us
Declare they adore us
And sing in a chorus—
'Be mine, love, I pray!'

This petticoat government's acts will be terrible,
Over our hearts most tyrannic in sway;
Rings for all fingers, and rings for each merry bell,
Their laws insist on for Valentine's Day.
For there's no need for angling—
To set the bells jangling—
For white favours dangling,
For bridesmaids a score;
For white orange flowers,
And weddings and dowers,
Since they hold full powers,
Leap Year, sixty-four.

A CHAT ABOUT VALENTINES.

www.libtool.com.cn



NO one seems to know at what period the 'Postman's Knock'—that peculiarly decisive kind of 'rapping'—began to be specially heard on St. Valentine's Day. Two or three quidnuncs have propounded this question, to be answered by other quidnuncs; but the answer has not yet come. As to the worthy saint himself, who lived sixteen hundred years ago, he appears to have been an unconscious originator of a system which has culminated in the sending of anonymous love-letters (sincere or satirical, as the case may be) on the 14th of February. At Rome, long before the Christian Era, there was a festival about the middle of February, during which the written names of young women were put into a box, and drawn out by the young men present, as a preliminary to a sort of chance love-making. The Christian priests in later ages, willing to divert the thoughts of the people into a different direction, substituted the names of saints for those of young women; but the people, finding this not half so exhilarating, reverted to their old practice. And so it gradually came about that, on or near the Feast of St. Valentine, young persons were accustomed to select their lovers and mistresses by a sort of lot or chance. In more recent times the custom spread to other countries, modified in its details. We learn from Chambers's 'Book of Days'—a storehouse of curious information not easily accessible elsewhere—that Misson, a learned traveller about two centuries ago, described a pretty custom as then prevailing in England and Scotland on the eve of St. Valentine's Day:—'An equal number of maids and bachelors get together; each writes their true or some feigned name upon separate billets,

which they roll up, and draw by way of lots, the maids taking the men's billets, and the men the maids'; so that each of the young men lights upon a girl that he calls his *Valentine*, and each of the girls upon a young man whom she calls hers. By this means each has two Valentines; but the man sticks faster to the Valentine that has fallen to him than to the Valentine to whom he has fallen. Fortune having thus divided the company into so many couples, the Valentines give balls and treats to their mistresses, wear their billets several days upon their bosoms or sleeves; and this little sport often ends in love.' There does not appear to be any antecedent partiality provided for in this programme: it is simply a love-lottery or raffle between the maidens and bachelors—'all prizes and no blanks.' And indeed destiny, or something distinct from mere will and determination, has often been accepted as the ruling power in this matter. It was an old English belief that the birds select their mates on St. Valentine's Day; and that an influence or potency was inherent in the day which rendered in some degree binding the lot or chance by which any bachelor or maiden was at this time led to fix his or her attention on a person of the opposite sex. Another popular belief was, that the first maiden whom a bachelor might see, or *vice versâ*, on the morning of the 14th of February, would be, not only the Valentine, but in good time the destined spouse; and hence sundry little cunning contrivances—such as lying in bed to a late hour, or looking the other way, or shutting the eyes—to insure that the first person seen should be some special or already-selected favourite. Herein a small attempt was made to circumvent Destiny by Inclination.

But the 'Postman's Knock' is another aspect of the affair, and, as we have said, is not easily traceable to its origin. It is not known when the custom began of sending pictorial love-letters by post, with no signature to denote from whom they came. Comparatively modern it certainly is. When we take into account the artistic and poetic quality of nine-tenths of these missives, we cannot escape the conclusion that St. Valentine has but little reason to be proud of his votaries. There are no direct means of ascertaining how many valentines are sent by post, or by any other channel; seeing that valentine-makers do not communicate to each other the extent of their trade, and that postmen are not authorized to peep too curiously inside the envelopes, even were they so inclined. The authorities at the General Post Office, about ten years ago, ascertained that, in the week containing the 14th of February, 800,000 more letters passed through the post than in the average of weeks about that period of the year; but we suspect that the valentines which are actually sent must now far exceed this number.

As for the productions themselves, as combinations of pictures and verses, they are pretty readily separable into three groups or classes—the *elegant*, the *vulgar*, and the *sentimental*. The elegant valentines are those which have come into fashion in recent years, since ornamental stationery has been produced in such excellence, and at the same time so cheaply. The vulgar valentines are those well-known caricatures of cooks, housemaids, nursemaids, coachmen, 'Jeameses,' gardeners, grooms, butlers, 'buttons,' policemen, tailors, tinkers, cobblers, &c.; servants and work-people, extravagantly drawn and gaudily painted; and accompanied by verses about as good (or as bad) as the pictures: while some of the specimens at the lowest extremity of this group are so exceedingly gross as to be fit only for the dens of Holywell Street. The sentimental valentines have been humorously described thus:—'Hearts transfixed by darts; turtle-doves apparently commiserating each other on the absurdity of the position they are made to occupy; a profusion of small fat boys, principally remarkable for their disinclination to patronize the cheap clothing establishments of the day—descendants, we always imagine, of our progenitors

the ancient Britons, whose costume was principally flesh-colour, with the addition of a little paint; pretty, but otherwise highly insipid young gentlemen; and mincing young ladies, looking fit for anything but useful domesticated wives.'

There are some noticeable features connected with the manufacture of valentines. It is not one that requires large factories. Although the numbers made annually must be reckoned by hundreds of thousands, yet—as there is a whole year available for producing that which is wanted for one single day only—small establishments will suffice. There are many such in London, and probably in some of the larger provincial towns. The actual printing, from stone, wood, or type, is the work of men and boys in the usual way; but nearly all else is fabricated by women and children—a light employment, paid for as women's and children's work usually is, humbly. The valentines which we have placed in the 'vulgar' class are, when printed, handed over to children, who daub them with staring, bright colours, in imitation of a pattern set before them—not always such patterns as young eyes and minds should be called upon to attend to. In the 'sentimental' valentines of the last generation, before lace-papers and coloured gelatine-sheets had come into vogue, the process of manufacture was the same in kind but better in quality, the printing being finer, the colours of the 'loves and doves, hearts and darts' more carefully managed, and the tender romantic versification written in a ladylike hand instead of being printed. The 'elegant' valentines of the present day, however, are far more pretentious affairs, calling for the exercise of some inventive power—not of a high order, it is true, but still something a little out of the common. The materials, very varied in character, are procured from diverse sources. Lace-paper, a really beautiful production, wrought by a combined process of stamping and perforating; lace-cardboard and cards, of similar character; colour-printed sheets of small leaves, twigs, fruit, berries, flowers, birds, butterflies, &c., ready to be cut out by scissors; plain-printed sheets of Cupids, Hymen, angels, fairies, cherubs, altars, flames, hearts, wreaths, and other prettinesses, to be coloured by hand, and then cut out; thin sheets of richly-coloured adhesive gelatine—that beautiful substance brought into use a few years ago; small pieces of satin, silk, and velvet, painted by hand (often by women of taste, whose lot in life is below the level of their accomplishments); small productions in coloured cambric and other material, such as are fabricated by or for artificial flower-makers; embossed papers and cards, with or without gold and silver as parts of the embossment; plain tissue-paper and cardboard of various kinds—such are the component elements of the more expensive and elaborate class of valentines. And then comes the process of putting together. The master (or mistress) of the workshop must be a person of some tact and taste, able to devise new forms and combinations, and to superintend the arrangements for realizing them in the finished valentine. Scissors and gum are greatly in request. If we follow the example of that famous juvenile hero who made experimental researches on the pneumatic principles of a pair of bellows—or, at any rate, if we spend a few pence on an 'elegant' valentine, and analyze it, with a view to discover its mode of production—we shall find that a good deal of ingenious work is bestowed upon these little productions: much more than seems consistent with the small price at which the articles are sold. All is head-work or finger-work in these making-up workshops, aided by a few small simple tools: no scope for large machines and apparatus after the sheets have once been printed, stamped, and embossed.

The principal valentine-makers must necessarily have some little capital to fall back upon. During the greater part of the year they are paying for labour and materials to produce articles which are only purchased by the public for one single day's use, and by the shopkeepers

chiefly in the month of January, in good time for the eventful 14th of February. The invested capital need not be large, however, for the costly valentines are few in number, and all the rest are very cheaply produced. The 'Trade' have their talk about valentines at three, five, seven, ten, and even a greater number of guineas each; of royalty sending such elegancies to royalty; of a wealthy cit who was wont some time ago to give to each of his daughters a five-guinea valentine every year. These, however, are the 'Upper Ten Thousand' of the valentine world, exerting very little influence on the trade in general; and we may fairly surmise that secrecy is not sought for nor maintained in regard to the name of the sender of such expensive presents.

When the end of the year is approaching, and the shopkeepers are laying plans for new enterprises after the Christmas and Twelfth Night trinkets shall have been all sold, the principal valentine-makers send their trade-circulars to their customers to denote what temptations are in store for the 14th of February. These circulars are curiosities in their way. Each maker has been striving during the year to strike out something new; and in this, as in muslin-printing and many other trades, a new pattern will by a lucky chance prove an immense success, a 'sensation,' not at all guessed or anticipated beforehand; while others, regarded as equally hopeful in the first instance, fall dead upon the market. One such success, a year or two ago, was the valentine with a slide, door, curtain, or other little mechanical contrivance, revealing certain amazing secrets when drawn aside—such as Mr. Caudle nursing the baby, while Mrs. C. is comfortably lying between the sheets; or the removal of a false head of hair from a fashionable beau; or the un-crinolining of an old young lady, exhibiting her as a skinny-de-leany; or the opening of a cupboard-door, and bringing to the light of day a policeman or a clandestine lover. The trade-circulars of which we have spoken contain multitudes of such choice bits as the following:—'Octavo embossed Comic and Sentimental, sorted.' 'Cupid hovering over the Forget-me-Not (bouquet in satin background).' 'Satirical Alphabet Valentines (of which one specimen is, "S stands for Sneak, the name reads a bitter one; and yet, truth to speak, for you there's no fitter one").' 'Butterfly Valentines (with printed verse under the wing).' 'Slightly Comic (of which one is, "Oh, name the happy day when I shall call thee mine!" lift up the centre, and there stands the Old Gentleman. N.B. This will be sure to take).' 'Comic tinted envelope Sell Valentines (packets of "Comforts for Old Maids," and "Discomforts for Bachelors," neatly packed up in envelopes, with appropriate mottoes).' 'A neat Comic Valentine (the picture poster for Monkeys, Jackasses, Bores, Puppies, Slovens, and other worthless animals).' 'The Valentine Blind ("Pray gently lift the window-blind, the lesson there you'll find").' 'A very neat imitation of a straw hamper, which, when opened, contains two little boys, with words in writing, "I send you a present, to add to your joys, and make life more pleasant, two nice little ——" with label attached tc the cover, "Pledges of affection").' 'Companion to the above, containing the clothes.' 'The Arrow of Love, and Wheel of Fortune (arrow moves round a circle, and points to the fortune of your love).' 'Coloured drawings, rather funny, with appropriate written mottoes (such as a picture of a gentleman examining his shirt and exclaiming, "Not a single button on!").' 'Silver-faced Clock Valentines, on which you can move the hands to point out your friend's sore places.' 'Cupid's Letter-box, gilt and decorated (words outside denoting the tenderness within; inside there is a touching love-letter, stamped and ready for despatch).' 'Trifles towards housekeeping (various domestic articles attached to octavo lace-paper: such as a pair of scissors, bellows, a broom, a chopping-board, dust-shovel, &c., with illustrative words).' 'Caught at last (effective landscape background,

with miniature jointed fishing-rod, line, and hook baited with a heart).' 'The Glove Valentine (octavo lace-lift; large satin centre, with words written on satin, "My Love, the Glove I send above, I mean not you should wear; but with your aid, my dearest Maid, we'll join and make a pair").' 'Comic Heraldic Series (such as Coat of Arms for a Donkey, "My Brother dear"). 'Photographic Tom-cat (likeness of yourself).' Such are samples of the satirical and the humorous valentines, according to the measure of strength in those who invent them; of course the merely elegant cannot so easily be described in words. We will not penetrate into the mysteries of trade so far as to ascertain what ratio the retail prices of such articles bear to the wholesale; but it is quite fair to mention that the profit *ought* to be good, because the shopkeeper never knows how many valentines he may have left upon his hands when the all-important day is past.

www.libook.com.cn

AD LUNAM.

OH THOU,* who shinest over Primrose Hill!—
You did last night, at least, and may do still—
Accept your slave's most humble adoration,
And deign to answer his interrogation.

I do believe sincerely, Moon, that thou
Hast, once or twice, been sonneted ere now,
And that, in point of fact, you're rather used to it,
Nor at all likely to be now confused through it.

'Tis not, you'll understand, as 'twas of yore;
I don't expect the 'party' I adore;
And that is lucky, for, as I remember,
When I made love 'twas ever in December.

And though those 'fervid everlasting vows'
Kept my heart warm the while (and also brows),
I am not likely ever to forget
The colds I caught. For why? I feel 'em yet.

Whenever rheumatism racks my bones—
You know quite well you often hear my groans—
I set it all to those 'delicious' hours
Of bliss, and so forth, beneath moonlit bowers.

Ugh! the mere recollection makes me chilly,
To think that I should e'er have been so silly!
'Twas all your fault—yes, I *will* speak so loud—
If you don't like it, get behind a cloud.

I say it's all your fault; you don't expect
More nonsense out of me: pray recollect
I'm—well, how old I am don't signify;
You're no such chicken either, Lady DI.

You'd doubtless like me now the hours to waste,
To call you a pale orb, and say you're chaste:
You are an orb I know, and rather pale,
But so much may be said of Bass's ale.

You're not so old? Well, I don't know the notions
That may spring out of your perpetual motions;
But all the world knows you were known much sooner
Than Greece or Rome (the Latins called you LUNA).

* '*Oh thou!*' quotation from the poets, *suum cuique.*

E'en old Anacreon knew all about you;
And poor mad Sappho never would, without you,
Have ventur'd o'er the cliffs; though *now* the rage,
'Headers' caus'd no 'sensation' in that age.

I can't help thinking, and I don't mind saying,
No good e'er came of all this nightly straying:
Such things perchance with goddesses agree—
I only know they never did with me.

Think what an earthly fond mamma would say
If her dear Mary Jane went on that way,
Wandering by night alone!—most indiscreet;
Pray let me ask you, 'How are your poor feet?'

Well, well! I hinted not so long ago
Of certain matters that I fain would know.
Imprimis, can you say that you're not fickle?
And don't you love to get folks in a pickle?

Are you not pleas'd when lovers pledge their troth?
And don't you laugh to see them break their oath?
And next, those flames of mine, what has become—a-hem!
I won't name all, but only whisper some of them.

Where are those sweet young ladies, seven in all,
For whom I climb'd so oft *that* garden wall?
You needn't smile—this is no jest or sonnet,
That wall, I beg to state, had bottles on it.

And that sweet maid (her papa dealt in leather)
Who vow'd she never could forget—no never;
Then ask'd so archly, 'Pray can you say so, sir?'
Didn't she elope with Mister Brown, the grocer?

And that fond fair who stole the garden key,
Then flung it (in the water-butt) to me;
And *all*, in short, those young Aurora Rabies,
Are they not married? haven't most got babies?

Then am I right—or any other man—
To call you an impostor, I who ran
Such risks of old to person and apparel,
And once was shot at from an old gun-barrel?

And now, dear Moon, the simple truth to speak,
And show no more of my most modest cheek,
When I began, I do not mind confessing,
Instead of railing I intended blessing,

And to myself did honestly propose
Some touching tender stanza to compose,
Such as I used—you know I used—to sing,
About the time a sailor was our king.

But in the very nick my pipe went out,
I had no light, and so I thought I'd flout;
But never mind, my verses have no spite,
You won't be friends? Well then, OLD HAG, good night!

T. M. S.

MRS. SPENCER'S PARTY, AND HOW THE PEOPLE AMUSED THEMSELVES.

www.libtool.com.cn

HE children were gone to bed, after making as much noise as modern civilization and Miss Smart's influence would allow; and then upon us old folk there fell the labour of entertaining ourselves and each other for two hours longer at least. We were not very musical; some of us, however, played. The two stout Miss Rowleys sang a charming duet, in which they described themselves as 'Two sweet fairy elves,' and Cousin Jack, than whom was never a merrier fellow, gave us 'When we two parted,' in very good style. The Lady Felicia Courtnay, a lady of an amazingly blue reputation, began to discuss Social Science with Mr. Grubbe, M.P. Mr. Syme seized Dr. Curry for a chat which threatened to turn medical. Miss Gentle being much pressed by Mr. Spooner, consented to sit down to a game at chess with him in a corner, reminding me of Ferdinand and Miranda; pretty Miss Gentle with her light curls shading her sweet face, and Mr. Spooner adorned with a dark moustache, looking no little admiration at his antagonist. I fancy the resemblance struck Cousin Jack too, for he rose abruptly from the piano, and crossing the room, began to talk rather loudly with Louisa Spencer, looking askance all the time at the chessplayers. The three Miss Silverdales fresh from school, all smiles and blushes, sat by the table, all three playing at once at *solitaire;* and young Harry Pickle and Thomas Fitz-Joy, too bashful to speak to them, looked on from afar. Mr. Spencer exerted himself indefatigably as host, sat in turn by the elderly ladies who occupied easy chairs and sofas, discussed politics with Mr. Maxwell Hyde, a budding representative of his country, spoke of bishops to Dr. Drawley and of admirals to Lieut. Warpe, R.N. But all in vain. Nor were Mrs. Spencer's lively efforts more happy. The company would not be amused; and I, a privileged looker-on, saw signs of its falling to pieces as it were, for want of a common object. Mrs. Spencer felt it too, and in her dilemma came to me: 'Dear Mr. Fogey,' she whispered, 'what shall we do to amuse ourselves? Here is every one so silent and so stupid, and they won't play cards, at least you know I could not ask them with Dr. Drawley here, and his curate too; and I can only think of 'Proverbs,' and Charles does not like them; and Cousin Jack is looking so cross I dare not ask him to set us on to anything; and there are Miss Gentle and Mr. Spooner so quiet over their game, and really every now and then there are such awful pauses my blood runs quite cold. Do suggest something!' 'Oh! dear madam,' I said, 'why not have a dance and let the old people enjoy a quiet rubber despite Dr. Draw—' 'Hush!' she said, 'of course we cannot, the rooms are far too small for that. No; it must be a round game, and I am quite at my wits' end,' 'Ask Lady Felicia,' I said, 'she comes fresh from the very heart of Belgravia, and will be sure to have something new (and blue) to entertain us with I have no doubt.' 'Oh you dear, naughty Mr. Fogey! but I will

indeed ask her,' said Mrs. Spencer, laughing, and at once running off to Charles to intrust him with the mission.

Now I heard Lady Felicia's clear voice at a little distance. She is not one of those slipshod speakers whose words all run into one another as closely as the omnibuses along the Strand. With her a word is a word, and as such to be treated with respect, and done full justice to. I heard her voice, I say, as she was conversing with Mr. Grubbe, 'On the subject of the Employment of Women there can be, I imagine, but one candid opinion. Women at least have minds capable of development as well as men. Why should they not use these for the benefit of others? Why should——' 'Pardon the interruption,' said Mr. Spencer at this moment, with his beaming face full of fun and good-humour; 'but may I not ask Lady Felicia to illustrate her own argument? Women have brains, why not employ them for the benefit of others? and how better than in helping to entertain us this very evening?' 'You know, dear Lady Felicia,' broke in Mrs. Spencer, taking by storm the grave and stately Woman's advocate, 'you know you always are so kind and willing to help, and you always bring something fresh with you. Now do set us on to play at something—we will do anything you tell us.' 'A game?' said Lady Felicia with a pleased smile. 'Let me think. The last new thing I have met with is not exactly a game or a puzzle, though it is both combined. Do you know Acrostics? Double Acrostics?' 'No, never heard of them; what are they?' 'I have my little collection of them here,' said Lady Felicia, 'and will soon explain them to you.' So saying, she drew from her bag a tiny manuscript volume, adding, 'I shall only be too happy to instruct you all in the art and science of Double Acrostics. But pray let us have a plentiful supply of paper and pencils to assist in the labour.' 'A new game! a new game!' cried the Miss Silverdales with glee, emboldened at the sight of which Harry Pickle and young Fitz-Joy ventured to break silence, and merrily the young people set to work together to cut pencils and divide sheets of paper. 'I am sorry to interrupt you,' said Cousin Jack, marching up to the chess corner, 'but we are going to play a new game, and are all requested to join in it.' 'Oh!—but,' objected Mr. Spooner. 'Yes, yes, indeed!' said Cousin Jack, sternly; 'we must of course, and Mrs. Spencer particularly bade me ask Miss Gentle to join her immediately at the table. Really sorry, but it can't be helped. Spooner, were you winning? will you put by the men—there's a good fellow?' and away he went with Miss Gentle, for whom he had secured a snug seat next his own at the table.

I sat near Dr. Drawley, and heard him (he is very deaf) say to his curate 'What is going to be done now, Mr. Thompson?' Thompson turned to Cousin Jack with the question. 'Why,' said he as grave as a judge, 'Lady Felicia is going to preach us a sermon, and we have to take notes.' 'What is it, Mr. Thompson? what does Mr. Lawless say?' The curate coughed and hesitated, but an impatient gesture from his principal obliged him to reply; and with some difficulty and considerable shouting he made the required explanation. The doctor grew very red and said nothing, but Mrs. Spencer hastened to the rescue. With her most winning smile she spake into his ear, 'Do you know Double Acrostics? Lady Felicia is going to tell us about Double Acrostics.' 'Do I know who the Gnostics were, madam?' said the doctor, not a whit less angry, 'I should think so, possibly as well as any Lady Felicia, madam; but pray don't let my presence interfere with her ladyship's entertainment, though for my part I should not call it seemly;' and he rose. 'My dear doctor,' said poor Mrs. Spencer, 'it is only a game, it is Acrostics, a game of words, quite new, Lady Felicia will explain it directly. We are all to play at it.' With some difficulty she persuaded the irascible divine to sit down, and herself sat by his side to repeat to him all that was said.

'Double Acrostics,' said Lady Felicia, in her clear, silvery voice (a faint echo of 'Double Knobsticks,' came I know from that horrid Cousin Jack),

'Double Acrostics is a game of words lately introduced. I will not prejudice you in its favour by saying it is a game that royalty itself delights in, though I have heard as much, because I think the intrinsic merits of the amusement, when once comprehended, will be enough to secure interest and approbation.' 'And approbation,' gasped Mr. Maxwell Hyde at my elbow. I looked round and perceived that excellent young man writing on the slip of paper in front of him some mystic strokes which seemed to be shorthand. Cousin Jack's idle words had taken effect, and Mr. Hyde was laboriously following every word of what I suppose he still fancied was a sermon. 'In short, ladies and gentlemen,' continued the clear voice, 'this is a game that requires your best attention, and if you will take your pencils in hand I will at once propound to you an Acrostic for solution. I will choose a simple one at first.'

'When I was a boy,' said Mr. Grubbe, 'we used to write acrostics at school on each other's names; but for my part, with every deference to her ladyship, they did not seem to me so great an exercise of the mental faculties as she represents them to be.' 'No, I dare say not,' said her ladyship, 'quickly, 'because they were quite a different kind of thing. Those you could read off at once by looking at the first letter of each line, which formed the word. Here each line or verse suggests a series of words whose initial and final letters form respectively the two wholes. But to begin.'

Now we were all sitting within a moderate radius of her ladyship. By this time we had begun to understand that something very serious was expected of our faculties, and we composed ourselves to gravity accordingly. Lady Felicia seated in a high capacious arm-chair, book in hand, presided over the assembly; round the table were seated the younger folks, among them Cousin Jack, no longer cross, and already busy with his pencil caricaturing some of our party, probably Mr. Spooner, much to the suppressed amusement of his fair neighbour. Dr. Drawley sat near Lady Felicia, on one side of him Mrs. Spencer, on the other the now subdued curate: he evidently considered Lady Felicia was intending to trifle with serious subjects, and his serenity was only partially restored even with that angel of a Mrs. Spencer at his side. Mr. Syme and Dr. Curry, Mr. and Mrs. Smythe, plain, good, also stupid people, Mrs. Doubleweed, the lively widow, and a few of the 'has-beens' of society, including myself, clustered as near as we could to the centre of attraction. 'Are you taking notes, may I ask?' said I to my neighbour. 'Ah! yes!—I have been doing my best, but it is hard work at first you know. Pitman's system. So superior —very useful in the House, I believe. Will it be a long address do you know?' 'I fancy it is nearly at a close,' said I, pitying the young man.

'This is the one I will ask you first,' said Lady Felicia. 'I will read it you all through and then we will take it to pieces.

A city, my First, which in power and rank
  And riches, unrivalled is reckoned;
And the river it stands on, which bears to and fro
  Her great treasures, you'll find is my Second.

1. No work of art am I, though cast and drawn.
2. Break me, but if you do you'll be forsworn.
3. Phonetic horses sure would spell this way.
4. Tired reason sleeps, while unchecked fancies play.
6. The eyes' soft glance charms only to destroy.
6. They call me Ben, though neither man nor boy.

'Very pretty,' said Mr. Grubbe, 'though strangely unconnected.' 'Now,' said Lady Felicia, 'you must think of a city, and a river. As this is the first, I will tell you if you guess the two wholes right.' 'What does she mean by two holes?' whispered Mr. Hyde to me. I shook my head. 'A city and a river we are to guess,' repeated Mrs. Spencer to the doctor.

'Shure it's Doblin and the Liffey,' said Captain O'Grady; 'isn't it the handsomest city in creation, and she's the most beautiful river!' 'Liverpool and the Mersey,' 'Lisbon and Tagus,' 'Rome and Tiber,' were rapidly suggested by one or another. 'I must tell you that these two words must always have the same number of letters,' added our instructress, 'and in this case there are six.' 'Then it's Doblin and the Liffey, of course,' said O'Grady; 'for isn't there six of one and half a dozen of the other?' We all echoed Dublin and the Liffey, declaring that must be the right guess, when Dr. Drawley, in his ponderous way, came out with, 'If I might venture to guess, I should suppose the words required might be our own city, London, and the river Thames.' 'Dr. Drawley is right,' said Lady Felicia, 'it is London and Thames. The city unrivalled for wealth and power, and the river that flows by it. Now you have not done. Please to write down these words at the head of your paper, and then put down in a column the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.' A pause, during which all were busy writing, and a good deal of discussion arose as to why, where, and how the numbers were to be put. At last, all being done, Lady Felicia continued: 'Now in order to prove that these words are right, you must find out all the words described by the following lines, and see whether they in their order begin and end with letters that form the two words London and Thames. Thus, for instance, the word suggested by the first line must begin with L and end with T.

'1. No work of art am I, though cast and drawn.'

We were all puzzled. 'A cab,' suggested Miss Spencer, on the ground of its being drawn. 'The Duke's statue,' cried Cousin Jack, 'which is certainly no work of art, though cast and drawn.' 'A net,' suggested Fitz-Joy. 'Very good,' we said; 'it must be Net.' 'Softly, softly,' interposed Lady Felicia; 'you are forgetting that this word must begin with L, and end with T, which Net does not. 'I can't see how that matters; can you?' sighed Mr. Maxwell Hyde to me. Though slightly in darkness myself as to all this guessing, I replied, with faith and firmness, 'Of course it does.' Again Dr. Drawley came in to our assistance. Fortunately deaf to all the little buzzings of sound that distracted our acuter senses, he, elated by his first success, bent his whole mind upon the subject, and having partly heard Lady Felicia, and had every word repeated by Mrs. Spencer, with shut eyes he pondered a while. 'I have it, I think, at last,' he said; 'is it Lot? You draw a lot, you cast a lot, and it is no work of art. Moreover, it begins with L and ends with T.' We grew enthusiastic, and clapped the doctor, who was now thoroughly restored to good-humour, and looked round upon us with a smile. 'Now write the word "Lot" after the figure 1 upon your papers,' said her ladyship; 'and then for No. 2.'

'2. Break me; but if you do you'll be forsworn.'

Pray attend to the letters this time; the second letter of London is——?' 'O!' we all exclaimed. 'And the second letter of Thames is——?' 'H,' we replied. 'Then No. 2 must begin with O, and end with H.'

'Oath!' exclaimed Cousin Jack and myself, simultaneously. And the oath was recorded.

'Now for No. 3,' said our president. 'It begins with N, and ends with A; and this is the line that describes it:—

'3. Phonetic horses sure would spell this way.'

'Fanatic horses?' said Dr. Drawley. 'Phonetic horses,' firmly repeated her ladyship. 'I think some one must have misinformed your ladyship, possibly,' said Mr. Syme, deferentially; 'but, as far as I know, there is no such race of horses in our country.' 'Faith! nor in Ireland either,' said O'Grady. 'Phonetic,' thought I; 'now Mr. Hyde's turn is come. Mr. Hyde, pray tell me how could a horse spell phonetically?' 'A horse? Dear me, how odd! I could tell you better how a donkey could; he! he

('I believe you,' I thought.) 'But, Mr. Fogey, it would depend upon what the horse wanted to say, of course.' 'Why, Neigh, certainly,' cried Miss Smart, who was close by. 'And N A spells it phonetically, does it not, Mr. Hyde?' 'Quite right,' pronounced Lady Felicia. It took some time to explain this thoroughly to all the company. Mr. and Mrs. Smythe were hopeless quite, but wrote down mechanically, as they were told, without the least idea of what it meant, but quite sure it was 'a very pretty game.'

'No. 4. Tired reason sleeps, while unchecked fancies play,

beginning with D, and ending in M.' 'Delirium,' said Dr. Curry, promptly; but this would not quite do; and Mrs. Spencer hit upon the right solution in 'Dream.'

'No. 5. The eyes' soft glance charms only to destroy.

O and E.' 'The eyes' soft glance,' said Cousin Jack, looking up at Miss Gentle, 'charms only to destroy? What can that be?' Miss Gentle blushed. 'Spooner must guess it,' continued Jack. 'If it began with a G instead of O, I could answer it.' 'O, E: '"The eyes'soft glance,"' murmured Mr. Spooner. 'The eyes' soft glance,' repeated Fitz-Joy and O'Grady. Here Miss Primeval opened her mouth for the first time in the game. She is a middle-aged spinster, sharp as a needle, bright as a spoon. 'I do declare it must be Ogle,' she said. 'I have heard my poor dear mother say that in her younger days every one used to ogle, but we could not do it now; only she would have said, "The eyes' *bright* glance."' 'We can find all about it in the "Spectator,"' said Miss Smart. 'Perhaps it depends entirely upon the eyes,' said Mr. Syme; 'it would be hard to deny the power of ogling to a soft or to a bright eye, when doubtless either would be sufficient to "destroy" the peace of mind of any victim among our weak sex.'

'Soft, or bright, for I like the correction Miss Primeval suggests,' said Lady Felicia; 'the word is Ogle. And now for the last of all.'

'6. They call me Ben, though neither man nor boy.'

'Ben—Ben. What can it be?' 'Beginning with N, and ending with S.' 'I can't think of any word beginning with N, and ending with S, but News.' 'And Nereus,' said Miss Smart. 'And Nephews and Nieces,' said Mrs. Spencer. 'And Nuts,' said Harry Pickles. 'And Neighbours,' said Mr. Spencer. 'And Nauseous,' said Dr. Curry. 'And Nautilus,' said Lieutenant Warpe. 'They call me Ben. It won't do.' We gave it up, and entreated a hint at least. 'Have you ever been to Scotland?' said Lady Felicia: 'that may help you.'

'Ben Nevis!' Miss Silverdale exclaimed, blushingly eager. And Ben Nevis it was.

'The Acrostic is done,' said the president. 'And now look at your papers, and you will see what I mean. The two wholes to be guessed are London and Thames: and you will find that the first letters of the words you have discovered, reading them down, form the word London, and the last letters the word Thames. As thus:—

London.	Thames.
1. Lo	T
2. Oat	H
3. N	A
4. DreaM	
5. Ogl	E
6. Nevi	S.

'Do you understand?'

'How do we make two holes?' said Mr. Hyde, who was still puzzled by this. 'With a penknife, to be sure,' said Cousin Jack, blandly. 'Just prod

your paper with it, and it's done directly.' 'For shame, Jack!' said Mr. Spencer.

Lady Felicia went over her explanations slowly and gently, until all with whom such a process was possible were enlightened. Then we begged for another. She gave us the following, telling us she would not afford a single hint this time:—

www.hbtool.com.cn

A tyrant, who most justly lost his life;
The failing of his hardly rescued wife.

1. A watchfire, with soldiers all resting around.
2. A carriage—its horses are pawing the ground.
3. The name of a hero—his son's better known.
4. A priest—his affection too weakly was shown.
5. The poor slave plays on it, and lightens his gloom.
6. No white flag is floating—the waves are his tomb.
7. Unjustly accused of a crime have you been,
   'Tis well you can prove yourself far from the scene.
8. The repose which we need our tired frames to restore.
9. The sweet, simple song we could hear o'er and o'er.

Observe, there are nine letters in each of the two words to be found out.' 'Then the tyrant can't be Nero;' 'or Robespierre;' 'or Charles the First;' 'or Julius Cæsar.' 'A tyrant,' sighed Miss Silverdale. 'Oh! I am sure 'we learned about him in Mangnall.' 'Let us try the words,' some one suggested; and accordingly we did so. Captain O'Grady pronounced the 'watchfire' line to be Bivouac. The priest was decided upon as Eli. The lightener of the slave's gloom Banjo. No. 7, Alibi. And so by degrees the whole words were discovered to be Bluebeard and Curiosity: and then the other words were decided upon, as—2. Landau; 3. Uther; 6. Egeus; 8. Rest; and 9. Ditty.

Now I noticed that Dr. Drawley had taken no part in this one of Bluebeard and Curiosity, rather to Mrs. Spencer's relief, who was thus set free to devote a fuller attention to the various problems in the solution of which she was very clever. But when she announced to the doctor that the discovery was made, and pointed out the row of answers complete, he nodded his head graciously, and asked for a slip of paper, upon which he at once began to write. 'Oh, Charles!' said Mrs. Spencer, delighted, 'Dr. Drawley has made an Acrostic himself. Now you must not laugh; I dare say it will be very nice.' 'Lady Felicia,' said Dr. Drawley, rising, and advancing to her ladyship with a bow, 'will you condescend to use your ingenuity in unravelling this Acrostic, made in humble imitation of your own?' Lady Felicia did condescend, and read it out for our benefit.

My First's bright hair floats in the midnight sky.
My Next's a trifle, though an honour high.
My Third doth not behove my dignity.
My Fourth defied a tyrant's malignity.
My Fifth a powerful European state.
My Sixth laments a murdered son too late.'
Jove gives my Last; and Jove's decree is fate.

Combine these letters in their order due,
And they a glorious Land will bring to view:
Freedom's fair home, where every man is free,
Ruler of kingdoms, monarch of the sea.
Her name in youth, and that in riper age,
Adorn with equal lustre the same page.

'Bravo! bravo!' resounded on all sides. 'Indeed,' said Lady Felicia, this "humble imitation" far surpasses the original. Let us guess the words immediately.' 'England is the land of the free!' shouted Fitz-Joy. 'Her name in youth, and that in riper age. Britain and England: that

must be it,' said Lady Felicia. Young Pickles hummed 'Rule Britannia' audibly, while we set to work to find out all the Acrostic.

'1. My First's bright hair floats in the midnight sky. B, and E.' 'Boreas,' said O'Grady, without reflection. 'Berenice,' said Lieutenant Warpe. 'I thought she was a queen,' objected Miss Rowley. 'I forget the story,' he replied; 'but Coma Berenices, or Berenice's Hair, is a constellation we sailors know pretty well.'

'My next's a trifle. R, and N.' 'Oh, Doctor Drawley, how can you call a ribbon a trifle!' said Miss Spencer; 'to us it is a most important affair sometimes.' 'How is it ever an honour?' asked Miss Silverdale. 'Why, faith!' replied O'Grady, 'if Her Majesty (long life to her!) was to summon you to her presence, and tie a blue ribbon round your neck, and say, "Pat, you villain, kneel down, and I'll make you a K.C.B.," would not that be an honour, do ye think?'

We could not guess I and G at all. Ironing was suggested, but failed; so Dr. Drawley consented to inform us that Infra dig. was what he meant. Miss Rowley thought Latin and Greek ought not to be allowed; but the rest let it pass. The 4th was soon found to be Tell; the 5th was guessed by the youngest Miss Silverdale to be Austria; the 6th Ivan the Czar; and the 7th we all felt sure was Nod. The doctor was happy, and the curate smiled again. We now all set to work to compose acrostics, and in the intervals of labour (for I, too, hammered these old brains to produce something in emulation of the doctor) it was amusing to watch the varied expressions on the faces of the would-be authors. Cousin Jack was alternately in fits of laughter at some joke that crossed his brain, or pulling a portentously long face—squeezing out some rhyme I felt sure. Miss Gentle had a pensive frown—a very unusual mark on her young face. O'Grady contorted all his features. Miss Primeval alone was unaltered; and her face gave no sign of the mental effort going on within. Mr. Maxwell Hyde wrote short-hand profusely. Dr. Curry wrote off a few pithy lines, and signed them with his well-known monograph, as if it was a prescription. Jack told me afterwards he had guessed it, and it really was Senna and Salts; but I do not more than half believe him.

Lady Felicia's composition was a marvel of ingenuity. It proved to be a Double Double Acrostic, every word with a double meaning. It was this:—

One deals destruction with a steady sweep;
One does much damage by a sidelong leap.
Or, if a further hint you needs must crave,
A lordly dwelling, and its inmate brave.

Who but an experienced chess-player would have thought this to be Castle and Knight? But so it was. O'Grady guessed the first word at once, though he pronounced it Car-r-r-k, and misled me for a time.

1. Many a throat has been stopped by me;
   A harbour fair, and a spreading tree.
2. A barren spot 'neath a burning sun,
   Where the desert king rests when the night is done.
3. A palace, the name of which promised a lot
   Which is no man's share in palace or cot.
4. In England each object, little or great;
   In Iceland (see Dasent) a part of the state.
5. He by whose orders this cure you apply,
   Was known by this name in days gone by.
6. To build with brick, or with wood, or stone;
   What the building is when it stands alone.

'What a head she has!' I said to Mrs. Spencer, when my own had been racked in finding out the words. 'Splendid woman! true blue every inch of her!' Mrs. Spencer echoed my enthusiasm.

My little effort was then called for. It was only this:—

In the sky, and in the sea,
Search them both, and you'll find me.

1. Idol of our dreams,
   Object of our schemes.
2. Mounds where buried lie
   A race of days gone by.
3. Who owns a bridge, alas!
   Himself may never pass.
4. I hear you critics say,
   'Stuff! Throw it all away.'

www.apnoi.com.cn

It was very favourably received, and, to my surprise, pronounced rather difficult. Then Mr. Spooner modestly declared that he really could not write poetry, but had made a little acrostic with the help of Byron, which he would venture to read to us. 'Not "Don Juan," I hope,' said Miss Rowley, sternly. 'I didn't think Spooner had so much in him,' whispered Cousin Jack.

'Here, where the Sword united nations drew,
Our countrymen were warring on that day.'
'The battle-field, where Persia's victim horde
First bowed beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword.

1. 'The First may turn, but not avenge the blow.'
2. 'My daughter! with thy name this song began,
   My daughter! with thy name this song shall end.'
3. 'This weapon of her weakness she can wield,
   To save, subdue; at once her spear and shield.'
4. 'Didst thou not thy breast to his replying
   Blend a celestial with a human heart?'
5. 'Placid sleep.'
6. 'He was sent, but not in mercy, there,
   To note how much the life yet left could bear.'
7. 'The proud lord on the instant, reddening, threw
   His glove on earth, and forth his sabre flew.'
8. 'Each zone
   Obeys thee, thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.'

This was too much for Mr. Hyde. 'Where has Spooner got all that stuff from, I wonder,' he said. 'And who is his daughter he speaks about? I did not think he was married. I thought he admired Miss Gentle. A widower, perhaps?' 'He is only quoting Lord Byron,' I explained; 'and Lord Byron, you know, had a daughter.' 'Ah! I see; very singular,' replied Mr. Hyde. Spooner helped us through his poetical mystery, which really was very clever. Then Mr. and Mrs. Spencer gave us their joint effusion, short, and not too difficult:—

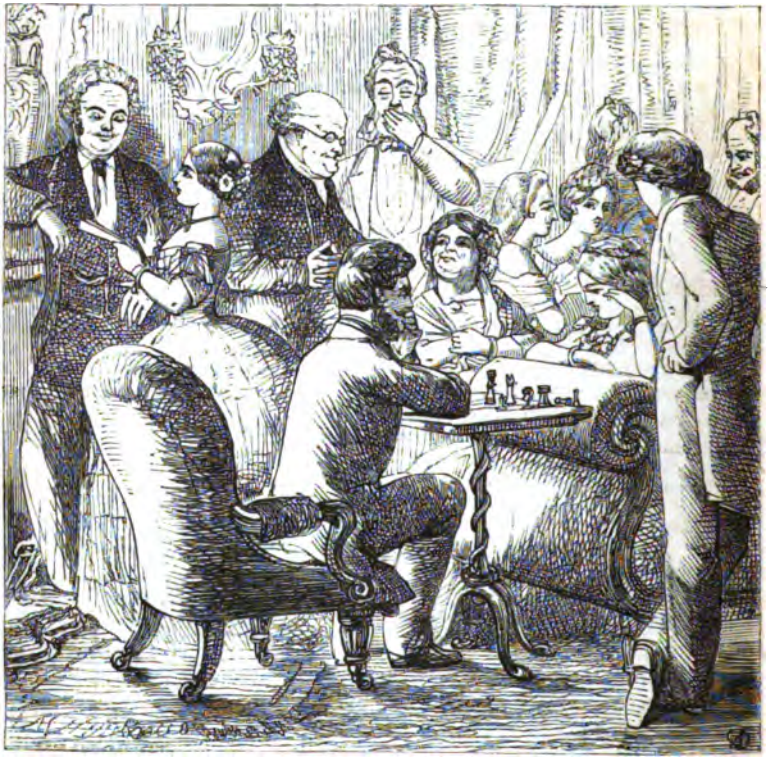
Where first young Zephyr breathes his tender sigh,
And bright Aurora blushes in the sky.

1. A very penetrating little thing.
2. What flames of fire are springing from my head.
3. The hating wife of a too loving king.
4. What idle schoolboys love to play, 'tis said.

We soon guessed it, though put off the right scent as to No. 4 by Pickles and Fitz-Joy, who enumerated a variety of juvenile pastimes, and thus kept us back for a while.

Supper was announced long before we had done acrostic making and guessing; and some of the ladies, who I am sure had written very pretty poetry, and Cousin Jack, who was burning to have his found out, were disappointed.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' said Mr. Spencer, as he wished us all the good wishes of the season, standing at the head of the table, which was crowded with good things, and most prettily decorated with holly and other evergreens, 'I wish you all a happy new year, and many of them! Put that into an acrostic, and I'll guess it directly! And may I hope that you will, one and all, condescend to favour my humble dwelling with your presence this day week to solve all the unsolvable acrostics and spend another merry evening together.'



LONDON SOCIETY.
www.libtool.com.cn

MARCH 1864.

HOW THE SHAREHOLDERS' MONEY GOES.

there be one phase of London Society with which London Society thinks itself more intimately acquainted than another, it is—thanks to the daily papers—probably that which those oracles are accustomed to describe as 'Proceedings in Parliament.' And when we say that on the present occasion we propose to occupy a few pages of 'London Society' in describing some of these proceedings, we shall seem to have undertaken a most unnecessary task unless we add at once that the proceedings with which we have now to do are not by any means those which fill the columns of the 'Times' and the 'Telegraph,' but proceedings of which the outer world (and, indeed, many of those most nearly concerned in them) know really very little, and with which the newspaper reader would gain no familiarity even if he read every word of his great state oracle every day of the week.

The place from which we report is not the gallery above the Speaker, but a corner of Committee Room No. 8 of the House of Commons. If the reader has only visited the House with a Chamberlain's order, and has merely gone the round of ordinary sight-seers, he will need some little instruction how to find Committee Room No. 8. Our instructions accordingly are that he proceed thus:—Let him go down to the House between the hours of twelve and four on any of the first five week-days during the session. Let him enter by the door opposite the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey, close this door very carefully behind him so as to make no noise, take off his hat as if he were in church, and proceed carefully across the top of Westminster Hall into the Statesman's Gallery just in front of him. If any one informs him that the large white marble statues on each side of this gallery are the 'statutes at large,' let him firmly disbelieve it. They are nothing of the kind. They are simply the statues—and very excellent statues too—of some of our great orators and patriots, long since gone mute. Note how Grattan, in the warm animation of

debate, seems as if he would step off his pedestal and come down to you:—with what calm self-possession Burke uplifts one single finger, as if gently keeping time to some wonderful discourse;—how Pitt, the hard-headed, obstinate little man, stands fronting the colossal Fox, who, with arm uplifted and fist clenched, looks inclined to drive home his arguments by main force:—how the boyish figure of Falkland, leaning on his sword, has the sweet face lit up by a half-sorrowful smile:—what an invincible, fixed resolve is in the clear-cut features of Hampden as he, too, grasps the sword, with lips compressed. And having noted all these our visitor can, if he likes, pass forward and examine the frescoes close at hand. After which, still with his hat off, and still moving very noiselessly, let him ask the first policeman he sees where this passage leads, and where that passage leads, and that functionary will be pretty sure to respond by promptly ejecting him from the building and assuring him that he is an audacious intruder.

If the prospect of this result is not satisfactory, then, as an alternative mode of procedure, we advise our friend to put on an air of important business,—to press forward and let the doors shut behind him with a good slam,—above all, to keep his hat on and look like a man who knows where he is going and who wants to be there as quickly as possible. If, beyond this, he will be at the trouble of carrying in his hand a roll of foolscap or brief paper we have no doubt he will find it a passport to the most secret and hidden penetralia of the building. Indeed, he would be an unusually astute policeman who would object, at sight of such a talisman, to admit a man of average impudence to join the Lord Chancellor himself upon the very woolsack. At any rate, he will be an unusually surly policeman who declines to point out the winding staircase beyond the telegraph office, &c., which leads to the long line of the Commons' Committee Rooms.

In fact, these rooms are open to the public, but as they are usually crowded with those who have business there, the guardians of order naturally enough try to keep away those who go merely to loiter.

The long elegant corridor which stretches by the seemingly interminable suite of Committee Rooms, each of which opens into it, has its windows looking into the interior courts of the structure. In the recess of each window is a little desk, with inkstand, pens, &c., for the convenience of the many who spend here so much of their time. On each side of the corridor are benches, which a few hours' standing in a committee room often make acceptable enough to tired legs. Lounging about, or sauntering up and down, groups of men, for the most part engaged in earnest conversation, throng this corridor or passage all day long (that is, all that part of the day during which the committees are sitting, for within five minutes of their rising the passage is deserted).

The excitement which attends the lottery of a Parliamentary Committee Room, where the prizes are so splendid and the blanks so many, yet so obstinately disbelieved in, would be well shown if we could analyze these groups and show what manner of men they are who are thus drawn together. Here are barristers, solicitors, parliamentary agents, clerks, clergymen, men of the sword and men of the sea, secretaries and projectors of every description of joint-stock enterprise beneath the moon, owners of mines and collieries, iron-founders, noblemen and their agents, railway chairmen, railway directors, railway managers, railway engineers, railway shareholders (though not so many of these last as there ought to be). The railway element is strongest of all, for at least four-fifths of the 'Private Bills' which come before the committees are promoted by railway companies. Scarcely a mile of railway in Britain but you will find some one here able (if willing) to give you a free pass over it. Scarcely an engineer of any eminence but you are more likely to find him here than at his own office. To such men this corridor and the committee rooms themselves are as much a rendez-

vous as the Exchange is to the broker and the merchant. Nowhere else can you see so clearly all the enthusiasm which attends the spending of vast sums of money foolishly,—and this enthusiasm is, after all, the most wonderful of any. Hardly anywhere else have you a prospect of seeing so clearly with what earnestness men can go about their projects, and about their principal project of making money,—for where many spend some must also gather.

Amongst so heterogeneous an assemblage it would be odd indeed did we not find some black sheep, and such sheep are to be found here in flocks. The professional projector, the unprincipled schemer, the bubble-blower,—men who care absolutely nothing for the intrinsic merits of the projects they are advocating,—who know well enough indeed that they have no intrinsic merits;—but whose one object is to squeeze as much out of the scheme as possible and then throw it away like a sucked orange. Such are to be found here by dozens.

But we do not hesitate to say that here also is to be found the true outdoor parliament that manages the home affairs of England. All that is most distinguished in our country for energy, ability, and enterprise in commercial pursuits is well represented here. Here are to be found the men who keep the great industrial machine of Britain moving by their enterprise and their skill. It is they and such as they who have made English industry and English progress what it is. It is amongst these and such as these that we find the Stephensons, the Brunels, the Watts, the Arkwrights of to-day. They are the salt of a great hard-working, money-making, money-spending people.

And though we speak of them merely as an outdoor parliament we see amongst them no small number of our legislators both hereditary and elective. It is true that we do not, as a rule, meet here our great politicians and diplomatists, for this is not their place, though on occasions they, too, may be seen flitting up and down. But here we meet day after day those Members of Parliament who have been sent up by their constituents not for their wonderful gifts of tongue, but for their proved ability at doing real hard work. Members who make, it may be, very poor speeches on reform bills, on party politics, or foreign affairs, and who have scant space allowed them in the 'Times;' but Members who can go through a bill that proposes to deal with millions of pounds, discuss it clause by clause, reconcile conflicting interests, discriminate between the scheme of the professional projector and the scheme that really supplies a national want, and give their prompt decisions honestly and justly. Such Members will sit five days a week through a long session, hearing often the dreariest of evidence on private bills, from eleven till four, then hurry away to prayers at the sound of the Speaker's bell, and scarcely ever fail to have their names in the list of votes, however late the division, or however tedious the debate. Happy are the constituents who are thus represented. As for the poor Members themselves, one scarcely sees *their* happiness so clearly.

It is time, however, that we leave the corridor and enter the Committee Room itself. And in doing so let us be specially careful to enter by the proper door. For each room has two doors—one for the entrance of the public, the other for the use of Members only. And many are the instances of utter discomfiture on the part of visitors who, entering by the wrong door, find themselves suddenly in the immediate, august presence of the committee itself, and as suddenly bundled out again by the offended clerk.

Most of these rooms are much alike in their general aspect. They look down upon the great silent highway of the penny boats, which are continually passing and repassing beneath the windows. And often, in hot weather, the odours which Father Thames sends up from his lucid waters are so overpowering that these windows have to be kept close shut.

Each room is divided about equally

by a low handrail running from side to side, and designed to separate those who are officially engaged upon the bill from the public and those who are merely interested in its fate. Outside the rail, therefore, there is merely standing room. Immediately inside it is a long table with seats for the barristers, solicitors, and chief promoters and opponents of the bill. But as this table does not extend quite across the room it leaves space for a few chairs and another table for the convenience of witnesses in waiting, or, indeed, of any one who chooses to push forward and make himself at home.

[And here I hope I may be allowed to pause from charitable motives, and drop a hint which I am sure will be gratefully received by my needy literary brethren. They will always find at this spare table a plentiful supply of the best of pens, ink, and paper (paper with embossed heading, 'House of Commons,' which is surely respectable), all of which they are free to use *ad libitum*, and no questions asked. The only deficiency, to which I would respectfully call the attention of the officers of the House, is that postage-stamps are not supplied also. But this, however, is merely within parentheses.]

Beyond this barristers' table and witnesses' table the room is sacred to the committee and its officers. There is a horseshoe table at which sits the committee itself;—the chairman in the convex centre and two other members on each side of him. The committees usually consist of five. The chairman is generally an experienced Member of the House—always a gentleman of thorough business capacity. The other four members (if we may venture to say it without fear of impeachment) as often as not contain amongst them gentlemen who know very little of, and care still less for, what is going on, and who leave themselves implicitly in the hands of their chairman with a confidence that is well deserved.

In the concave recess of the horseshoe is another small oblong table, on one side of which is a chair for the witness under examination [the witness being examined in a chair, not in a box], and opposite to him sits the official reporter of the committee, who is a personage of sufficient importance to have a paragraph to himself.

He is invested with much more plenary powers than are given to the gentlemen in the gallery above the Speaker. There, if one does not catch what Lord Palmerston says, he is by no means allowed to interrupt his lordship and make him say it over again. But here our reporter in a similar emergency is allowed to interrupt counsel, witness, or committee until his notes are correct. He is, in fact, the recognized officer of the House, whose duty it is to take verbatim notes of the whole of the proceedings. These notes of his are referred to very frequently in the course of the proceedings, and what is found written there is held conclusive in cases of dispute. Probably some of the most rapid shorthand writers of the day are to be found in attendance on these committees—men who will write from two hundred to two hundred and fifty words per minute without any apparent exertion, and who will continue their work without relief from the time of the committee taking its seat to its rising again. Perhaps such a man might be very much out of his place as a reporter of the debates, where speed and endurance are by no means the only qualities that are requisite. But, on the other hand, the reporter from the gallery would be often quite as much out of place in the committee room. The committee's reporter has no scope whatever for the exercise of his genius, and not much for the exercise of his judgment. He is never worried with a classical quotation. It is no part of his duty to improve the eloquence of the counsel, to condense the verbosity of the witness or correct his grammar, to gloss over ugly mistakes, or add point to a pointless answer. His business is to photograph the proceedings as well as pen and stenography will do it. If a witness acquits himself well he may depend on finding his performance put down to his credit. If he makes himself an ass he is

equally sure to find himself written down one. Our reporter's chief difficulties are with figures, gradients, radii, and names of places of which he knows nothing (and of these he certainly does make sad work sometimes). He is not, as we implied, relieved at short intervals, as are the gentlemen of the gallery, but sits and writes for the committee all day. An attendant comes in quietly now and then and fetches away his note-book, replacing it with another. So that while he writes others are transcribing his notes, and others again are at work lithographing the transcript. Each morning, when the committee meets, there is ready for the members lithographed copies of the proceedings of the day previous, often filling several hundred sheets of brief paper. These lithographed documents are supplied also to the counsel, solicitors, promoters, opponents, and to all interested in the bill who are prepared to pay a good stiff price for them. So much can be done by combination and system which at first sight would seem impracticable.

The young gentleman who sits alone at the little side table is the only one whom we have yet to introduce to the reader. He is the 'committee clerk,' and his arduous duties consist chiefly in paring his nails and stretching his legs, to both of which employments he devotes himself with quite exemplary attention, and we hope he is liberally remunerated.

And now, having cleared the way by these preliminary notes, let it be supposed that we are promoters of a bill for a new line of railway from Malley-Vron in the county of Denbigh to Bryn-ffrood in Merionethshire. Our prospectus has already pointed out the inadequate railway accommodation of North Wales in general, and of the district which we propose to serve in particular. Our leading counsel, Serjeant Blarney, will enlarge upon these topics at greater length forthwith. For the present, suffice it to say, that having completed our surveys, we duly advertised our parliamentary notices in October and November last in the county papers, and in the 'London Gazette.' We also, before the end of November, duly lodged our plans and specifications in the place appointed by the House. We duly deposited in the Bank of England eight per cent. on the amount of the share capital which we ask leave to raise. We have passed the trying ordeal of the standing orders' examiner. Leave has been given us to bring in our little bill. The committee of selection has appointed the committees of investigation—has grouped all the schemes before Parliament for the session, and we find ourselves remitted to the tender mercies of Lord Marmion, the member for East Bidford, who opens his inquiry this morning along with his honourable colleague, Mr. Slingsby (East Warwickshire), Sir William Chandler (Staley-Bridge), Mr. Waterfield (Clerkenwell), and Viscount Wygram (Llandaff).

Our bill is one of Group xii., a list of which hangs in the corridor, and may be read there on the usual notice board. It will be seen that the group embraces about a dozen different projects, all for railways in North Wales. But we have only to do with the first four of them. Our own bill is first on the list. The next three are rival schemes which aim jointly to fill up the same district which we wish to accommodate singly. These three schemes, therefore, are to be taken as substantially one. They are introduced separately that we may have three opponents instead of one, and in the hope that perhaps one of the three lines may pass, and so form a basis for further extensions hereafter.

Our respective positions, however, are all marked on a huge outline map, our scheme being marked No. 1., and our rivals No. 2, 3, and 4, as shown upon it.

Serjeant Blarney, of course, when he opened our case to 'My lords and gentlemen,' had a rod with which as he spoke he pointed out the several places which he named as they were shown upon this map hanging conspicuously on the wall.

He began by stating that never in the whole course of his parlia-

mentary experience had it been his happiness — he thought he might almost add, never had it been the happiness of 'any other man'—to lay before a committee a scheme which was able to stand so entirely on its own merits, and which needed so little encomium or explanation from him as the scheme which he now begged to introduce to their notice. He should, indeed, feel that he was offering an insult to the judgment of the committee if he dwelt on the advantages of the line which he had the honour to advocate, otherwise than in the most cursory manner. Gentlemen of the bar, he knew, did not always get credit for superfluous modesty in the acceptance of their honorarium; but certainly when he received his brief and saw the liberal retaining fee which was marked upon it he had said to himself, 'Now am I justified in taking this case up, where my services are really not wanted, and where the bill could hardly fail to pass without a word said, or a witness called in its favour?'* He assured the committee that he had felt these serious scruples of conscience at undertaking a work which he felt to be, if they would allow the use of the metaphor, a gilding of refined gold, and an adding of perfume to—certainly he could scarcely compare a railway bill to a violet, but he might say to—to a scheme which was already in perfectly good odour.

Briefly, then, he would say, that the line which his clients, whom he was sure he was hardly premature in already calling the North Cymry Railway Company, proposed to construct was to be of the length of about 52 miles. The capital, which they proposed to raise by shares, was 500,000*l.*, and the further amount which they proposed to borrow was 166,667*l.* With these sums and the increased value of surplus property which they might have to dispose of hereafter he anticipated that they would have so considerable a surplus fund on hand that it was not improbable the company would, in a few years, come again for powers to construct one or two short branches without asking for any additional capital whatever. At present, however, the feeling of the gentlemen who had subscribed the share list was, that they should put their undertaking at once and for ever out of the way of pecuniary embarrassment, and so he asked for power to raise a capital somewhat larger than the amount for which it was absolutely certain the line would be constructed. [Here Mr. Phibber, Q.C., the leader on one of the rival schemes, shakes his head and says, 'Oh, oh!' mournfully.]

He overheard his learned friend groaning, and saw that he was shaking his head in a way that must be dangerous for the fine ideas which were inside it, if, indeed, it did not quite addle them. But he could easily understand that his learned friend must feel painfully the contrast that he saw in the projects which they respectively advocated.

The town of Malley-Vron, as was already within the knowledge of the committee, though at present destitute of railway accommodation, would soon (independent of the schemes now waiting their decision) no longer be so. The line to it from Pont-Uyn was already nearly completed by the Grand Trunk Company. The question now at issue, therefore, was by whom, and by what route should the railway system be extended southward into the principality. And he had no wish to keep back the fact that this again was not merely a question between two or three small companies. For though his clients were perfectly independent, they did not wish to conceal that they were in close alliance with the Great Southern Company, and that they designed their line to be worked by that company, and in that company's interest. On the other hand, the three rival schemes with which they were met, were avowedly Grand Trunk schemes, and supported by Grand Trunk capital. The committee would find, therefore, that prac-

* The solicitor certainly did hint that the learned serjeant objected to receive his brief, which was marked two hundred guineas. But he added that the objection was no longer made when this was altered to two hundred and fifty guineas.

tically the issue which they had to decide was, whether the territory of North Wales was to be handed over to the Grand Trunk Company, whose main lines were palpably inconvenient for connection with it, and who wanted it merely from a grasping dog-in-the-manger policy; or whether it was to be confided to the care of the Great Southern Company, whose lines already embraced nearly all its borders, and whose natural interests were already bound up with those of the district they sought to serve.

He was not there, however, to advocate Great Southern interests or Great Southern policy, but would address himself to the consideration of their project as a local line. And first he would ask the committee to consider the urgent necessity there was of giving an outlet southward to the rapidly developing trade of the town of Malley-Vron, which outlet his clients proposed to give first by a junction with the Great Southern line at Llangwffl, and, second, by their main line to Bryn-ffrood. He would call witnesses to prove how greatly the want of such an outlet was felt locally, and how seriously it affected the commercial interests of the rapidly rising town which they had selected as their starting terminus,—if he might be allowed to make the palpable bull so common in railway phraseology of calling a starting-point a terminus. He would also call witnesses who had embarked large sums of money in the great industrial works which existed along the route which they proposed to take. He would call the proprietor of the immense and well-known brick and tile works of Eyton-Brymbo, who was at present, for want of means of transport, compelled to make his trade comparatively a local one. He would call the owners of the great iron-ore works of Mæsy-unwin and Ebbw-Wem. He would call the noble proprietor of the world-renowned slate quarries of Llan-y-ffrog, and Savan-y-Rhyg, of which the committee had heard so much.

Lord Marmion here interrupts the learned serjeant to say he has never in his life heard of any of these places. Viscount Wygram looks much relieved at this, he having apparently begun to fear that somehow he has overlooked a most important district of country.

Serjeant Blarney asked if anything could possibly strengthen his case more than this remark of his lordship's. Here were the teeming industries and the busy populations of the places which he had named going on year after year increasing in numbers, in extent, and in value, and yet so entirely were they isolated from the rest of the world for want of that railway accommodation, which had become to commerce as vital as the air we breathe is to ourselves, that even his lordship had to this day never heard of them. After such a testimony he would leave the local case, as regarded these towns, in the hands of the unimpeachable witnesses whom he should have the honour to call before the committee. There was, however, still the town of Malla with its famous lakes, and their southern terminus Bryn-ffrood, both places dear to all tourists, and which it was the object of his clients to make accessible to many thousands who otherwise might never see them. For he was sure the committee would agree with him, that however charming to those with plenty of time and plenty of money might be the idea of pedestrian excursions in this beautiful country of North Wales, there were a vast majority who had but scant leisure and shallow purses, and with whom considerations touching their poor feet and their poor pockets must always have great weight, and whose love of the beauties of nature, and whose finer feelings could only—

'Shut that door,' roars Lord Marmion.

Mr. Wigsby, our junior, takes advantage of this interruption to make one or two remarks to the learned serjeant. His lordship enters into a private conversation, apparently of a jocular tendency, wth Sir Wm. Chandler. Two or three other members of the committee who have been much engaged with sherry and sandwiches become suddenly interested in the proceedings, their

attention being aroused by the cessation of the sound of the serjeant's voice. The learned serjeant takes breath, and also snuff, and waits very patiently till the noble chairman says, 'Now, Mr. Blarney, where had you got us to?'

The learned serjeant never finishes that eloquent sentence on which he was engaged, but starts a new theme. He had, he said, been given to understand that his learned friends on the opposite side, with a valour worthy of a better cause, intended to raise objections to the length of tunneling which his clients proposed to construct on the route of their railway. They proposed also, he was told, to take similar objections to certain proposed gradients and radii. But he hoped this was not correct, as he should much regret that the time of the committee should be taken up to so little purpose. At the same time, he should feel it necessary to have engineering evidence ready of a character quite unimpeachable.

Then perhaps he might be expected, before he sat down, to say something regarding the three rival schemes which were put forward as an alternative to the project he had the honour of advocating. But really he waited in dumb amazement to hear first by what possible flight of imaginative genius anything could be said in their favour. He was disarmed from attack, not because he found no point of attack, but because he could see no possible defence. He felt that if he spoke against these poor abortions, he should be doing a no more valiant act than to push down a decrepit old man, or to strike a man who was down already. He would merely point out the nature of the country which these lines proposed to traverse. Why, gentlemen, it might be doubted whether it could ever be said of it with truth, that 'every rood of ground maintained its rat,' so barren was it and uninhabited. It was a district in which there was no traffic to carry and no passenger to travel. It was probably this latter consideration which had weighed with the projectors in drawing up their schemes. If they had thought it at all probable that they would ever have a passenger to carry, his friends would never have come before Parliament with a route made up of petty junction-lines over which no one of the three applying companies would have power to work a through train. It was clear, however, that the contingency of a passenger presenting himself who wanted to go from one end of the route to the other had been thought so remote, that it was not worth while providing for it.

'In conclusion,' says the learned serjeant (and thereupon his lordship, the chairman, looks pleased), 'I feel that it is quite unnecessary for me to enlarge upon the shameless manner in which these three vexatious and senseless projects have been intruded on the legislature, but I will just remark——'

And now Lord Marmion looks very sad again. For his lordship knows, from long experience, that when a learned serjeant says he find it 'quite unnecessary to enlarge,' that learned serjeant is just about to enlarge at very great length indeed. So his lordship lays himself back in his chair, folds his arms, and waits with resignation. And Serjeant Blarney finds so many matters on which he considers it quite unnecessary to enlarge, and he really does enlarge upon them all to that degree, that when at last he sits down, the committee instantly rises up. In fact, our serjeant, who begins by saying he has nothing to say, occupies exactly the whole of the first day in saying it, so it is evident how little even of the outline of his arguments is given here.

'We meet again at eleven to-morrow,' says the chairman, as we all put away our papers, and disperse with as much noise as a pack of urchins leaving school.

Punctually as the clock strikes eleven on the morrow, the chairman steps into the room, as if he had been waiting at the door, and business is resumed at once by the examination of witnesses on our behalf.

Our first witness is the proprietor of extensive coal mines, which will be well accommodated by our scheme, and which are at present without

www.libtool.com.cn

HOW THE SHAREHOLDERS' MONEY GOES.

A RAILWAY BATTLE AT ST. STEPHEN'S, WESTMINSTER.

railway accommodation of any kind. The question of getting a railway to his collieries is to this gentleman a question probably of quadrupling his trade within a year or two. The number of men whom he employs; the amount he pays in weekly wages; the number of tons of coal which he raises per annum; the limited districts to which he supplies this coal; the number of men whom he *could* employ, and the number of tons which he could raise and sell if he had the means of railway transit;—all this is elaborately brought out, and perhaps a trifle exaggerated. All his evidence, of course, is as strongly in our favour as he knows how to make it, and cross-examination does not materially shake it.

After him we have the brick and tile makers, the iron-ore people, several large landed proprietors (a real duke amongst them), corn-factors, provision merchants, an agricultural machine-maker, a hotel-keeper, a grocer, a chemist, a gentleman-farmer or two, a brewer, even a clergyman, owners of stone quarries, with many others of trades, professions, callings, and stations, too various to mention. But as these local witnesses are rarely either examined or cross-examined at any great length, they are turned off pretty rapidly, and do not attract much attention. Local evidence, indeed, though sometimes the most valuable of any, is always considered as merely preliminary to the sort of evidence on which the fighting takes place. We get through the whole of our rural magnates on the second day, and we do not consider it necessary to give any of their evidence in detail here.

We open the third day with our scientific evidence. First we call our local engineer, who has laid out the line. He speaks to the extremely practical nature of the route which he has selected. He admits that there is a gradient of 1 in 46, and another of 1 in 50; but they are only short, and the engines will be specially adapted to the working of them. There are also one or two sharp curves, but not sharper than many which he knows to have been worked with safety for years on other lines. There is about three miles of tunneling, but the rocks are of an extremely soft nature, and will be easily worked. In fact, he has the strongest possible opinion as to the general simplicity and economy of all our arrangements.

Then follows Professor Rock, the eminent geologist, who speaks very learnedly of strata, and deposits, and secondary and tertiary formations, and trap, and alluvium, and who thinks the tunnels will be made very cheaply. In cross-examination, he admits that his own property, which happens to be in the neighbourhood, will probably be increased in value by the proposed line; but he gives his evidence entirely on public grounds, and has not been biassed by personal considerations.

After the professor, we bring up one of our great guns, Mr. Bowler, C.E., the eminent consulting engineer of several large companies. He has given evidence on a thousand projects; and is known to the committee as a very cool hand indeed, and a thoroughly clever fellow, though perhaps rather slow to see any merit at all in the scheme of a rival company or a rival engineer.

Examined by Serjeant Blarney, he says he is well acquainted with the district proposed to be traversed (we wonder, indeed, with what district he is not well acquainted). He has been over the route of the proposed line, and he thinks it eminently a practical one. He thinks the local engineer is perhaps a little too sanguine in saying that it can be worked when made at 44·60 per cent. He himself should say it could hardly be worked for less than 45·10; that is, his estimate is full one half per cent. above that of his friend. With this exception, he agrees substantially with all the engineering evidence which has previously been given.

Cross-examined by Mr. Phibber, Q.C. *Has* had a day's shooting in the neighbourhood of the proposed line: has had several days' shooting, in fact, and hopes to have several more. That is *not* all he meant when he said he had been over the route proposed to be taken by the projected railway: probably the learned counsel's

friends have mistaken his theodolite for a gun. He meant to say that he has made a careful, scientific survey of the route, and that it has his thorough approval. Does not call to mind having given evidence of a directly contrary nature two years ago when the Grand Trunk introduced a scheme for a line to serve almost the identical country now in question. May possibly recollect if an extract be given him from his former evidence. Is quite sure that the slip of paper now placed in his hands contains no portion of his evidence. Is certain of this without reading it, because he knows he always has given his evidence in English, and this seems to be Latin.

Mr. Phibber looks puzzled, and Mr. Greenish, his junior, is seen to redden.

'Allow me,' says the noble chairman, taking the slip from the witness:—

'Eo memoratum mercatorem fortunatum
Atque filiâ pulcherrimâ bonâque donatum
Cui nomen fuit Dina annos sexdecim habenti
Cum opibus permultis auri et argenti?'

'Some of your friends, I think, Mr. Phibber, have been pursuing their classical studies, and have handed in, by mistake, a document which does not seem materially to bear upon the question.'

There is a hearty laugh, in which the committee and all join. Mr. Greenish finds the proper document and tears up his translation. Mr. Bowler, though now clearly convicted, is too experienced to be much abashed at a slight contradiction. He blandly asks to be reminded *what he was trying to prove* on the former occasion. He easily explains away his former evidence, and Mr. Phibber takes very little by his motion.

When Mr. Bowler is dismissed, our next witness, one of the managers of the Great Southern Company, whom we intend to examine at great length, is not forthcoming. Serjeant Blarney asks 'leave to call a short witness out of order.'

The chairman hopes that in this case 'a short witness' does not mean an irrelevant witness, as he often finds such witnesses *are* introduced to kill time when the right man is not at hand.

Some laughter arises when our 'short witness' proves to be, as is natural, and, indeed, necessary for the consistency of the joke, a very tall man.

Whether his evidence be relevant or not, he certainly is not considered of sufficient importance to be examined by Serjeant Blarney himself, so that learned gentleman hands him over to Mr. Wigsby, and saunters out into the corridor, into the refreshment room, into the next committee—takes a stroll, in fact, for the remainder of the day.

The 'short witness,' with Mr. Wigsby's assistance, contrives to hold out for an hour, by which time it is nearly four o'clock and the committee again adjourns.

The fourth day sees us all hard at work again, and the missing railway manager of the day before gives evidence which occupies the entire day. He is, in fact, so glib of tongue, and pours out such volumes of answers to the briefest questions, that he works the reporter very hard indeed. He is ready with all manner of rates and statistics of traffic. He can tell the committee the number of miles between any two points in the kingdom by the very shortest route. He knows to a nicety the extent of traffic which will be furnished by every manufacturer on the route of the proposed line. He knows exactly how much it will be worth to us, and how much to his own company. Consequently, he can also say what is the very lowest rate at which he can convey it, and he names a rate so low, that his company seem to be actuated entirely by motives of public philanthropy. He is the most fluent of witnesses, with a head like a Babbage's calculating machine. And when Mr. Phibber comes to cross-examine him, we see that those two gentlemen approach each other as warily as a couple of wrestlers. They have all manner of feints and inuendoes and civil palaver before they really come to open struggling. And when at length Mr. Phibber finds, from receiving two or three severe falls, that the witness really

is a great deal too strong for him, he gives up the attempt to shake his evidence, and leaves him master of the field with a mental resolve that he will damage him all he can on the morrow.

www.libtool.com.cn

For the morrow begins, we having completed *our* case, with Mr. Phibber's opening speech on behalf of project number two, for which he is leading counsel. And of course he makes it his principal business to comment unfavourably on the opening speech of Serjeant Blarney, and on the utter failure (so he calls it) of our evidence to support that speech. He had had the misfortune, he said, to be engaged in another room for great part of the day on which that speech was made, and had therefore been deprived—a deprivation in which he was sure the committee would sympathize with him—of the pleasure of listening to the eloquence of the learned serjeant so uninterruptedly as he could have wished. They all knew to what heights his learned friend was accustomed to soar on these occasions; how he disdained to found his arguments on the mere, base ground of sordid facts and figures, but always winged his flight upward and far away into

'Regions mild of calm and serene air,'

and built his structures there to his own entire satisfaction. He had been informed, however, that on this particular occasion his learned friend had quite surpassed himself. He had not been content to accompany those delightful fictions, with which, *suo more*, he charmed the committee, in this instance with even his usual narrow basis of rationality. He had quite spurned that description of sense which is called *common*, and therefore it was not to be wondered, &c., &c., and so on, for a good hour by the chairman's watch.

Then leaving the subject of the learned serjeant's powers of imagination, he went to that of his powers of vituperation. Though unhappily he had missed those flowers of rhetoric to which he had alluded, it had been, he scarcely knew whether he should say his fortune or his misfortune, to be present in time to be visited with the expression of his learned friend's indignation. The committee would remember how upon his devoted head were poured expressions of a nature which it would be very painful to him to repeat, and how his clients had been stigmatized as unprincipled adventurers for whom the hulks would be almost too good.

The chairman: 'Well, well, Mr. Phibber, you have survived it, and we have now the pleasure of hearing you.'

Mr. Phibber was thankful that he *had* survived it. But he assured the committee that when he went home that evening, he had covered his face with his robe and prepared for the less happy result which he feared was imminent. His clients, too, had held a meeting at which they were with difficulty dissuaded from leaving their country, so keen had been their sense of the withering scorn of his learned friend. One of the three schemes now to be introduced to the committee, was, as they knew, commonly spoken of as 'the suspended line,' from its having been before Parliament once or twice before, and postponed under peculiar circumstances. Well, a grimly facetious sketch had been handed round in which this 'suspended line' was represented as being of hemp, with a gibbet for one terminus, and its projector for the other. He feared this was scarcely an exaggeration of the feeling entertained towards his clients and their allies by the gentlemen whom they had the unhappiness of meeting as opponents. But from the committee he was sure of much more gentle consideration and much more comfortable handling than that at which the satirical artist hinted so grimly.

And, next, Mr. Phibber addressed himself to the demolition of our witnesses, all of whom he took in detail. Our traders were all petty shopkeepers. Our great landowners were mushrooms of yesterday. Our great employers of labour were, he feared, only great *in posse* and not *in esse*. Our engineers were charlatans. Our practical allies, the

managers of the neighbouring large company, were, he feared, gentlemen who would not strain either at gnats or camels or the Berwyn mountains themselves; and he thought that one of them, at any rate (the one from whom he had tried so long and so vainly to obtain any satisfactory answers) had—he would not say shown peculiar powers of hard swearing—but had certainly exhibited a lively faith in the credulity of the committee.

And then Mr. Phibber begins his eulogium of his own project, which in the course of other two hours' time he makes out to be all that Serjeant Blarney's scheme is not, and all that any scheme ought to be. He enumerates the witnesses whom he will call, and the irresistible evidence which they will give. He has indeed only got well into his brilliant peroration when the remorseless chairman rises;—the honourable committee put on their honourable hats; and Mr. Phibber, without being in the least disconcerted, packs up his papers, as, indeed, we all do.

It is actually four o'clock again. The fifth day's (and the first week's) proceedings are ended. It is Friday night. Members, counsel, witnesses—everybody, is off to his home, perhaps in the neighbouring suburb—perhaps five hundred miles away. But at home, at any rate, we can spend Saturday and Sunday, if only we can be back again on Monday by eleven o'clock.

It would be but a vain repetition for me to continue and relate in any detail how the investigation drags its slow length along through the second week and beyond it. Suffice it that Mr. Phibber calls, in support of his scheme, landowners, colliery owners, corn-factors, traders, engineers, and railway managers even like unto ours,—but, as he declares, more unimpeachable and of far greater weight. Two days more are taken up with their examination and cross-examination. Then Sir Thomas Wobbley, the leader on project number three opens his case, and being a modest man, and having providentially a slight impediment in his speech, he is content with an oration of about three hours. He also takes up only about one day more with his witnesses. And on the afternoon of the ninth day Serjeant Wrangler rises to advocate project number four, which is the last with which we have in this inquiry anything to do. He does not, however, finish his speech till the next morning, and when the evening of the tenth day comes he has only got two or three of his local witnesses turned off. And so ends the second week of this investigation.

The first two days of the third week finish Serjeant Wrangler's case. And on the morning of the thirteenth day our old friend Serjeant Blarney once more rises to have his second innings, and give a final reply to his antagonists.

Would the reader like to hear another speech from the learned serjeant? We have copious notes of it here, and can oblige him if needful. But we decide to withhold it. Eloquence of learned serjeants and Q.C.'s is undoubtedly good;—but, after all, it is perhaps not the very best. We leave, therefore, to the reader's imagination to conceive all the learned orator's indignation, all his surprise, all his incredulity, all his inability to comprehend, all his convictions that he must have misunderstood this and not rightly heard that—in fact, all his utter despair at the retrogression of the human race if his own scheme does not receive the sanction of the intelligent committee, and if the schemes of his opponents do receive it.

When the learned serjeant has thus emptied himself of all his pent-up feelings (which takes a long time), he sits down and refreshes himself copiously with snuff, passing on the box to Mr. Phibber, who also helps himself in the most amicable manner.

The noble chairman at once says that the committee will consider their decision with closed doors, and we all clear out into the corridor to wait the verdict of the great quintumvirate.

Some trifling bets are made as to the result while we wait outside. But, on the whole, we wait patiently,

and without much excitement. In about an hour the chairman's bell rings, and then we all rush in with excitement and eagerness enough. As soon as silence is obtained the chairman reads very distinctly and deliberately the decisions which have been arrived at:—

'As regards Bill No. 1, the committee find that the preamble is not proved.

'As regards Bill No. 2, the committee find that the preamble is not proved.

'As regards Bill No. 3, the committee find that the preamble is not proved.

'As regards Bill No. 4, the committee find that the preamble is not proved.'

Our surprise is very great; but there is no doubt that we have heard aright. We had been sure that one or other of us must win, and we are all told in so many words that *none of us*, and none of our railways, are wanted or will be accepted:—that those philanthropic preambles of ours which begin with 'Whereas, the making and maintaining of [our respective railways] will be of great public benefit and advantage' are altogether mendacious, and that we had better go about our business. And about our business accordingly we do go, reflecting for our consolation that if we had got our bills it is still very doubtful whether we should ever have made our railways, and that, as we have not got them, we can, nevertheless, come again next session, and fight the battle afresh, perhaps before a less Rhadamanthine chairman. At any rate there is at present nothing left for us to do but to pay the piper.

And how much does the reader suppose the piper will charge for this entertainment? There is our learned serjeant's retaining fee of two hundred and fifty guineas, and his daily refresher of ten guineas. There is Mr. Wigsby's retainer of seventy-five guineas and his daily refresher of ten. There are our solicitors' bills;—our parliamentary agents' bills;—our witnesses' fees, varying from ten guineas to fifty guineas apiece and upwards;—there are our fees to officers of the house;—our hotel expenses, our printing and advertising expenses:—in fact, we shall consider ourselves let off cheaply if we get over the present application for less than four thousand pounds, while our three antagonists will, amongst them, no doubt have to disburse about double that amount. All this is cast into the great gulf where the bodies of abortive projects lie for ever, and which yawns for ever for fresh prey.

'Where does the money come from?' That is our secret. Perhaps the deposits paid upon the shares bear the brunt of it. Perhaps our neighbours the Great Southern Company guaranteed us our parliamentary expenses, as the Grand Trunk guaranteed our opponents'. We must decline to make any positive statement on this subject. All we say is that it is *shareholders' money*, and shareholders' money is well known to be nobody's money.

Leaving, then, these supposititious projects, whose progress we have tried to describe, we are prepared to be charged with exaggeration and to meet the charge. We admit that such schemes as we describe partake of the nature of bubble schemes. But when we consider that there were last session 230 separate bills introduced into Parliament, nearly all of them by railway companies, it would not be hard to find some dozen amongst them of whom we might say

'Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur.'

To say that such a description would in any way apply to all the inquiries into private bills would be simply absurd. It would be a scandal not on the legislative body only, but on the entire nation, were not the great proportion of committee business of a vastly different nature, and vastly more honourable and more profitable. But we put forward most prominently the foolish scheme and the scheme got up merely to enrich lawyers, projectors, and contractors, because it is this real scandal which most requires abatement. And no session ever

passes in which such projects are not brought forward, debated as unnecessarily and extravagantly, and money spent as profligately, as in the scheme we have imagined.

When two large companies go to loggerheads with each other there seems to be no limit to their extravagance and their insane rivalry. We will take one actual case from the business of the last session, which will show that, had we chosen, we might have filled our paper with it instead of imagining one.

The most exciting, and probably the most expensive contest of the session, was that known to railway people as the 'Andover and Redbridge contest.' Neither Andover nor Redbridge are places of very great fame; but had they been a new Liverpool and Manchester suddenly discovered, the possession of the railway that is now being constructed to connect them could not have been more eagerly contested than in the battle that was fought between the Great Western Company and the South-Western Company.

The inquiry before Mr. Adair involved the fate of seven bills. One of these was a bill promoted by the Andover and Redbridge Company itself to obtain power to raise an additional 15,000*l.* to complete their railway. The next three were Great Western projects: one to take a lease of the Andover and Redbridge Railway: another to make branches from Redbridge into Southampton: the third to make a new railway from Andover to Newbury on the line of the Great Western Railway. The effect of the last three bills would have been to give the Great Western Company an independent route from London and the rest of their line to Southampton, and deprive the South-Western of its present lucrative monopoly.

In opposition to these bills the South-Western promoted one for securing the Andover and Redbridge to themselves by means of certain new junctions, &c. And in further retaliation for the attempted inroad on their territory they carried the war home into the enemy's quarters; and as the Great Western had tried to get to Southampton, so the South-Western tried to get to Bristol by making 43 miles of new railway at a cost of upwards of a million pounds. Lastly, to weaken the chance of the South-Western getting this last bill, the Great Western put forward a project for a railway in the Bristol district to be made by them (from Radstock to Keynsham, 15 miles), at a cost of 213,000*l.* Altogether these schemes involved the spending of about two million pounds, supposing the lines to be made within the estimated cost.

For thirty-five days did Mr. Adair's committee continue its investigation into these bills. Every man of local influence who could be got to come forward was examined on one side or other. Amongst the landowners we see that Lord Palmerston was a witness,—his Romsey estates lying on the contested route. All the mayors of the district—including the Mayor of Southampton and the Lord Mayor of London—engineers, managers, secretaries, every man of railway experience who could be thought to have weight with the committee:—all were marshalled on one side or the other by the ablest counsel who could be had for money. And the end of it all was that the preambles of six out of these seven bills were declared to be not proved, the only bill that passed being that for raising an additional 15,000*l.* to finish the railway of the Andover and Redbridge Company.

The effect of such contests of course is shown by rapidly decreasing dividends. When the end of the first half-year of 1862 arrived the Great Western Company divided amongst their fortunate proprietary the sum of five shillings per cent., with an admission that the parliamentary expenses of the session had not yet been charged against revenue. What the expenses of this contest really were shareholders probably will never know. Speculation varies from 15,000*l.* a side to double that amount. But as Lord Mayor Rose has been elected for Southampton on a distinct pledge to bring the broad gauge into that town, if possible, the contest may be renewed by-and-by; the share-

holders will then have another chance of learning how much it costs, and may possibly be called upon to hand their five shillings per cent. back again to make up the deficiency of revenue on a line which once paid eight per cent. with a good surplus.

That bubble schemes should be brought forward session after session is, we suppose, a necessary consequence of the permanence of human gullibility. So long as needy secretaries, professional witnesses, professional projectors, and gambling contractors can be found to puff a bubble into existence (and that will doubtless be as long as the moon endureth), so long will shareholders no doubt rush forward and entreat the bubble-blowers to take their gold and play at ducks and drakes with it. This undoubtedly does seem to be a necessity of human nature. The pleasure of being cheated is one which we cannot and will not give up.

But that old-established companies with abundant traffic to develop should exceed the wildest follies of these bubble schemes does not seem to be by any means so necessary; and it will be a happy day for many thousands who have invested their little all in these undertakings when legislative restraint is brought to bear on and to curb such excesses as that of the 'Andover and Redbridge contest.'

The march of legislation in railway matters goes on at railway speed. Since the preceding pages were written there have been other and more recent contests as keen and as profligate as that we have last mentioned. The session of 1863 saw 258 new bills lodged in Parliament, of which 150 were passed, authorizing the construction of nearly 800 miles of new railway, and the raising of twenty-three millions of new capital. The most memorable contest of the session was that on the scheme of the ambitious Chatham and Dover for a new line from London to Brighton, which, after about forty days of inquiry, the committee decided they must please to do without. This year, however, they come forward again with the same scheme, and the battle has to be fought anew.

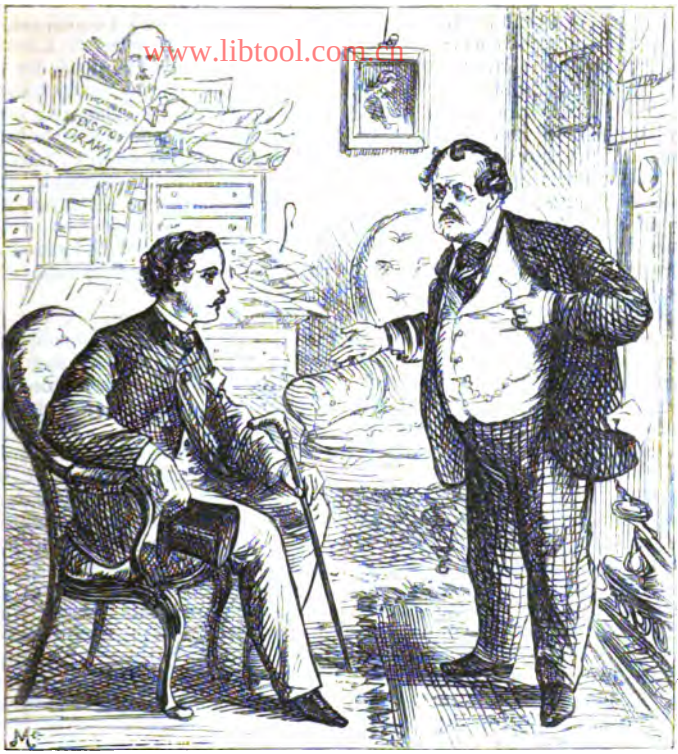
Large as was the number of bills deposited last year, it is this year considerably increased, there being as many as 336 new acts asked for. Of these no fewer than twenty-five are projects for the construction of subterranean gridirons for London itself, for which the promoters ask leave to raise in the aggregate the modest trifle of sixty-four million pounds. In connection with these the most sanguinary contests may with confidence be looked for. The merits and demerits of Messrs. Fowler and Hawkshaw in their rival schemes will be trumpeted with no uncertain sound by learned serjeants and Q.C.'s. All who have a taste for such refreshment may walk up to St. Stephen's any day, sure that they will be privileged to drink in the eloquence of Serjeant Merewether, of Mr. Denison, of Mr. Hope Scott, pure and fresh as it flows from those perennial fountains—

'Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.'

Householders along the line of the Euston and Marylebone Roads already complain of fearful underground rumblings and vibrations, of horrible dancings of their crockery, of difficulty in shutting doors and windows, of difficulty even in shutting their own eyes at night; and though it is possible that some of these complaints are exaggerated, it is still certain that if half the projects for metropolitan railways now before Parliament are carried out, London will for some years to come be hardly habitable. We shall not for a long time know which of our public buildings is not having its foundation sapped, or which of our main streets is not trembling to its fall. The business, not of these London railways only, but of railway legislation generally, is one that needs to be dealt with at once by a strong hand, and a prompt one. And the sooner it is so dealt with the better will it be for all of us, but more especially for such amongst us as have found out by sad experience 'How the Shareholders' money goes.'

R. H.

www.libtool.com.cn



'"I can't do it, Charley; I really cannot. It is as much as I can do to keep my head above water" (the continual performance of this aquatic feat is the normal condition of managers); "and what with the heavy expenses for the coming burlesque, between paying for the puns, and paying for the paint, I must end in taking the benefit of the Act as the only *benefit* I can get," he added, with a bitter humour.—*Page* 210.

I COMMENCED in a very humble walk of my profession — very humble indeed. For a considerable period I did simply nothing but announce 'The dinner waits!' and so introduce a brilliant assemblage to the festivity of gilt goblets, and all the (pasteboard) rarities of the season, or I formed a unit in the crowd of villagers who are intensely happy at the prospect of a ballet, and take a delighted interest in things in general, always giving expression to their feelings in a singularly unanimous fashion. From this I was promoted to carrying a letter, and was sometimes intrusted with half a speech: this latter piece of good luck was, however, confined to those occasions when I acted valet to the hero; and I was nearly always interrupted in the midst of my modest address by the usual phrases expressive of dramatic impatience, which, though effective in a stage point of view, are neither flattering nor agreeable to the individual at whom they are flung. In short, I did all those menial offices which, however necessary, and demanding an infinite amount of patience, do not command large remuneration. But by perseverance, by studying good models, by reading carefully, avoiding all kinds of intemperance, and paying the strictest attention to my business, I got, after some time, into fair remunerative employment

as a comedian. My ambition was to become first rate, and though, for myself, I must say, I used every exertion to attain that desirable end, I found I had not talent enough. Well, though I could not be 'Cæsar,' I couldn't at all afford to be 'nullus,' and so I fell into my proper place without grumbling or jealousy, and for several years took the leading light comic parts at various minor theatres. Having thus made my bow, as it were, I will proceed to tell my little story.

One morning I was seated in the manager's room of the —— Theatre. The season was just about half over, and superior 'star' attractions at other houses, and more especially the gorgeous scenery of one, had diminished our receipts beyond all precedent. As a very natural consequence, the manager was not in good humour. He had just fought with the première danseuse, and cursed a drunken supernumerary who had the previous night suspended one of the finest effects in a melodrama by falling dead out of time; then there was the stage carpenter, who insisted on money to mend his wings and balance his flies; and to crown misfortune, there was the leader of the orchestra after, angrily complaining of his 'cues' being so altered and inverted by some of the performers, that it was impossible for him to bring in his music properly. In fact, I could scarcely have selected a more inopportune occasion for the success of my delicate mission—that of demanding an increase of salary. I use the word demand, because it was understood between us that if I undertook a part in a new piece I should be further remunerated over and above the stipulated wage. It was under this circumstance I now came to him.

'I can't do it, Charley; I really cannot. It is as much as I can do to keep my head above water' (the continual performance of this aquatic feat is the normal condition of managers); 'and what with the heavy expenses for the coming burlesque, between paying for the puns, and paying for the paint, I must end in taking the benefit of the Act as the only *benefit* I can get,' he added, with a bitter humour.

'Well,' said I, 'but you know this new piece, "Blessed Confederates," is drawing — drawing.' Here I caught his eye, and stopped, for my sense of the ludicrous was not equal to its expression of mingled astonishment at what he considered my coolness, and rage at what he conceived inappropriate chaffing. He swallowed his anger, however, and replied, with a sneer—

'Yes, drawing indeed; but a draft payable on order, and by admission at sight.'

'Come, now, Raynor,' I put in, 'we are better off than we were a week since, and if we can only keep the "Blessed Confederates" on for a few nights longer, it may revive the Treasury.'

'Read that,' was his only reply: and he flung me a letter, and then threw himself back with a sigh almost of despair into his managerial arm-chair. I opened the note, and read—

'Miss Beauchamp presents her compliments to the manager, and regrets that pressing business, over which she has no control, compels her to absent herself for a week. Of course she is prepared to forfeit, &c.'

This was indeed a sad *contretemps*. Here was our first lady in the light business pitching up her engagement, and nobody to take her place, and this, too, at a juncture when our only chance of getting safe out of the season was by holding on to the 'Blessed Confederates,' in which she sustained the principal part! I confess I pitied from my heart George F. Raynor, Manager, as he sat looking at me wistfully, and Ingoldsby's lines occurred to my mind:—

> 'Doldrum the manager sits in his chair
> With a gloomy brow and dissatisfied air.'

I was quite ashamed to press the matter of salary, and endeavoured to administer some consolation and advice. 'Suppose, Raynor,' said I, 'you try something in the illegitimate way. Get a fellow that whistles like a bird, and mimics an entire farm-yard, pigs and all. Call

him Herr or Signor in the bills, and run him on between the acts; or suppose you fish out a juggler, or an elastic brother, or a Brazilian wire-walker, or a—' I don't know how many more suggestions of this ingenious kind I would have offered, when they were cut short by an impatient 'pshaw!' or at least a sound which that word is meant to represent, for who ever heard a human being *say* pshaw?

'It's no use, Charley; the public won't swallow those things unless they can wash them down with beer, and have them served up with tobacco, as at the harmonic halls; but I'll tell you what I'll do with you: find me somebody to act with you efficiently in the "Confederates," and I'll double the advance you are asking.'

'Done!' I cried, without the least sensible consideration of what I was binding myself to; 'but—'

'Come now, my boy, no buts. Go off and see to it at once. I will leave everything to yourself: bring in any one, I will ask no questions, and give her the same terms as I did that (adjective) minx Beauchamp. Down in the country, indeed! I know the part of the country she goes to!'

We arranged business for that evening, and shook hands, and in a minute after I found myself standing in the street, outside the stage entrance—standing in that stupidly absorbed manner of a person who is utterly bewildered as to his next movement. Rousing myself at last, I ran over in my mind the names of such professional ladies as I was acquainted with, but I found they had all engagements either in London or the provinces. The part required not only a competent actress, but an actress with a good voice, as there were several choice bits of music interspersed through it. At last a happy thought occurred to me. Living at St. John's Wood was an old friend of mine, and formerly of my mother's. In her day this old woman had been a famous Lady Teazle, and she now added to a comfortable income by training pupils for the stage. If there was any one in town capable of helping me in the present strait, she was just that individual. I knew she would be most anxious to assist me, for I had often put in a favourable word for her *protegées*. I hailed a cab, drove off to her quarters, and fortunately found her at home. She received me very warmly, and after a few commonplace inquiries, I opened the object of my visit.

'I am glad,' said she, 'that curmudgeon Raynor is in such a fix; it was only last week I offered to send him a singing chambermaid, cleverer than any he ever had in his house, and he had the impudence to tell me she should come for six months on trial as a walking lady, look as pretty as she could, and try to forget my old-fashioned teaching. Walking lady! why the poor thing only wants an opportunity, and would take her place before the best of them all.'

'Could I see this prodigy?' I broke in, hastily.

'Well,' said the old lady, answering my thoughts, 'you could not see her before to-morrow, and I am sorry for it, for I am certain she would suit you.'

'To-morrow would be too late, Mrs. Layton,' I replied, despondingly; 'Raynor will break off with me unless I succeed before Thursday' (it was then Tuesday), 'and whatever your paragon may do, she could scarcely get over all these lengths and songs.' And here I handed her the 'study,' rolled up in that telescopic shape in which we always carry the lucubrations of dramatic authorship. She glanced over it hastily.

'Charley,' said she, 'this is the very thing for Louise, and if you call here at ten o'clock to-morrow, I will introduce you; but mind,' she laughed, 'you don't fall in love with her: she is a dear little girl, and a pet of mine, and I won't have her dangled after by a clever eccentric, who rather likes the reputation of a conquest.'

'Come, come, mother,' returned I—*Honi soit qui mal y pense*; 'is there no way of seeing her before to-morrow?' (For, to tell the truth, I was anxious to have an opportu-

nity of extending my search if I was not satisfied with the result of the inspection.)

'There is a way, if I was certain I could trust you. Will you pledge your word not to tell on me afterwards, or use the information I give you further than is absolutely requisite?' I gave the required promise. 'Well, then, I have been striving everywhere to get an opening for Loo, and cannot succeed. She is badly off, and is obliged to support a drunken father, who insists on her bringing him money, and never asks where she gets it. The poor girl, in short, has been driven to take employment at a harmonic hall' (here she told me the particular one), 'and she sings there every night. I myself take her there, and from, and can assure you she is as good and innocent a creature as ever lived. Now if your curiosity must be gratified, you can go to the place this evening, get into one of the supper-boxes, and ask a waiter to show you Louise Deltour. When you come here tomorrow, of course you won't pretend anything. Now, good-bye,' and she nodded me off.

I managed to have my work over at ten o'clock, and half-past ten found me seated in a side box at the harmonic hall. Strange to say, this was my first visit to an establishment of the kind, and the impression made on me was so peculiar I may be excused for recording it. Though so well accustomed to face an audience, I felt I could no more go on that stage, before the men and women assembled in that splendidly-decorated room, than I could shoot myself. The half-bemused stare of the crowd, the noise, clinking of spoons and glasses, popping of aërated drinks, the unsuppressed laugh, the careless, insolent applause, the groups of simpering painted things that lined the galleries, all and everything so unsuited for an exhibition of decent art, and so suited for the exhibition of that lamp-black nigger, who brayed, and jabbered, and stamped before the foot-lights! I took a moral from the latter disgusting mimicry of my profession, as a Greek child might in the olden time when shown a drunken Helot in his cups. But I had very little time to continue my reflections, when a waiter appeared.

'Shall I take your order, sir?'

'Yes, bring me—no, stop. Waiter, is Miss Deltour here?'

'Miss Deltour, sir? Yes, sir; but you can't see Miss Deltour; she never sees nobody; but if you wish for Miss Brown, or Miss Flithers, I dessay they'll be 'appy to be introduced if you ask the manager, sir.'

I looked at the fellow, and must have stared him into perceiving his mistake, for he went on, perceptibly embarrassed—

'Oh! I see, sir; take supper alone, sir; beg pardon, did you say cham—?'

'No; a glass of sherry, and tell me when Miss Deltour sings.'

'Miss Deltour sings, sir, hin the selections hafter the moosical stones, which the moosical stones is now hon view. There's the purfessor hisself, just a-goin' to begin. *Much* obliged to *you*, sir.'

I paid very little attention to the bearded and dissipated-looking personage who was knocking short jerky sounds out of a wooden trough, which, I suppose, contained the 'moosical' stones. I waited impatiently for the selections, which I guessed would be operatic. After a great deal too much of it, the professor gave a final beat on his parallelogram, and disappeared to an uncertain murmur liable to be equivocally interpreted; and immediately afterwards a small, but noisy orchestra commenced the overture to 'Martha.' I think there were five in all came forward to sing in some part music from Flotow's agreeable opera. Glancing at the women, I had not much difficulty in fixing on Miss Deltour. If there was only one lady in the concern who would not accept acquaintances made in such a free and easy manner, it must be that rather petite, well-set one with the grave and but slightly rouged face, who sang with a clever artistic grace, and carefully avoided that vulgar exaggeration and emphasis, so liberally imparted to the scena by

her companions. She was perfectly modest in her demeanour, her gestures were correct and appropriate, and she had a finish of manner which more than made up for a voice which though very sweet was somewhat deficient in vibration. When the violins were tearing furiously through the final 'hurries,' and the singers were screaming and bawling to their utmost, amidst the cheers and stamping of beery soldiers, fast young men from shops, mechanics, cheap swells and seedy ringdoves, she preserved the same placid, almost disdainful expression, which raised her immeasurably above the ranting group by which she was surrounded.

I was punctual to my appoint-

Page 212.

ment next morning. Mrs. Layton introduced me formally, and acquainted Miss Deltour fully with the curious accident that put such a chance in her way. 'She has gone over the part, Charley, and says she will be able for it. Suppose, dear, you rehearse a little now with Mr. Cleveland; it will be easier for you than doing it for the first time before the company. Mr. Cleveland will, I am sure, make every allowance for your inexperience.'

'But,' I interrupted, 'Miss Deltour could scarce have had time to read the piece.'

'I think I know it, sir,' said she, quietly.

So we went to work. The entire business, dialogue and all, was, I may say, confined to the characters we represented—in fact, it had been written expressly for Miss Fanny Beauchamp and myself. I was surprised and delighted at Miss Deltour's rehearsal. She so thoroughly comprehended the spirit of the lively *mélange*, rendered the songs so neatly and perfectly, and bandied the hits with me in the proper shuttlecock style, quip for quip and joke for joke, never missing a word or even hesitating for one, that I completely forgot I was merely helping a neophyte, and dashed away as if the house was full, and I was standing beside the most accomplished and experienced of actresses. Mrs. Layton (who held the book to prompt, but had no occasion to use it) was overjoyed beyond anything when I heartily congratulated her on her pupil. She kissed her affectionately, and told her over and over again her fortune was made. I now took more particular notice of Miss Deltour. She was not positively handsome, though her features were well shaped. Her eyes were dark-blue, with a deep sunk fire of passion and sensibility dwelling in them, under such restraint though, that you should look carefully to perceive it. Her mouth was small, but drooped and quivered at the corners sometimes, as if she had gone through harder lines than suited her age, which might be about twenty. Her hands were long and white, finished with thorough-bred filbert-shaped nails. Her manner was that of a self-possessed lady, who could not afford to give herself extra airs, but was simply polite to a brother artist. I was, I believe, the least bit disappointed she did not express any special gratitude or thankfulness to me—though, on second thoughts, I had to admit I ought not to expect gratitude from a young lady whom I turned to account to raise my salary. I told her I would undertake all the necessary arrangements for her with the manager, and that one other rehearsal would be amply sufficient after what I had seen. I would be happy to meet her next morning at the theatre, at 11 o'clock.

G. F. Raynor was puzzled when I told him I thought I had won our bet. He could scarce believe it possible. Of course I said nothing about the harmonic hall. If there was an institution on earth upon which he would emphatically invoke the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah, that institution was a harmonic hall. He was the most eager to prosecute them of all the managers, and cursed them by night and day, as the destruction of the British theatre. I knew if I mentioned Miss Deltour in connection with them, even her extraordinary ability would not save her the situation. She was at our next rehearsal. She had to stand all the whispered remarks and titterings of the walking ladies and the limp *corps de ballet*, who came to practise the gaieties of the 'Bower of Roses,' done to a single violin, and in long dresses, high bonnets, and Balmoral boots. But she went through without paying the slightest attention to their interruptions; and at night took both them and the audience by storm. We had a very considerable house, drawn partly by the revival of the comedietta, which had been favourably spoken of by the press, and partly by the curiosity of the public, who flocked to see a new actress. I had taken care whatever could be done on the bills in two days was done. We made so decided a hit in 'Blessed Confederates' that we were over and over again enthusiastically called for; and the play was announced for representation until further notice. G. F. was excited to a pitch of good-humour I believed him incapable of.

'By Jove, Cleveland!' said he, 'I'll carry out my wager with you, and throw a white-bait into the bargain.'

'Blessed Confederates' had a run of three weeks, and I verily think saved Raynor from bankruptcy. I might as well confess at once that I fell over head and ears in love with my interesting playmate. The old, old sentiment took first the softening guise of pity, then of admiration,

and then came a wild impassioned affection, for which I could give neither date nor reason. Once I recollect acting 'Poor Pillicoddy' with her, and delivering the mock pathos of the Cockney nurseryman in a Romeo-in-the-garden tone of voice which brought down the house in roars. She gave me a look of grave and distant reproach which soon brought me to my senses, for her womanly instinct detected my indecorous earnestness, veiled from all others under the jingling patter of the farce. I suspect she knew of my feelings for her as soon as I knew them myself. Yet somehow I was afraid to hint anything, for, except on the stage, I am timid and bashful to a degree, especially with ladies whom I respect. I called her Louise, with her tacit permission, but she never addressed me except as Mr. Cleveland. To the rest of the company she was reserved, nay almost haughty, and was consequently no favourite.

One evening—it is fixed in my memory as if it only occurred yesterday—after the drop had fallen, we both went into the green-room, where the rest of the corps were assembled, together with a number of the usual stage danglers. All were apparently doing complimentary homage to a lady dressed in walking costume, who was seated on a lounger. On my entrance with Louise, she rose, and I recognized my original 'Confederate,' Fanny Beauchamp. She trotted over to me immediately, and saucily turned down her cheek. Now, a month since, diffident as I am, I would certainly have accepted the challenge, but now I felt that Louise was watching me, and experienced a repugnance to such a familiarity, which I could not explain. To relieve the awkwardness of the situation, I introduced Miss Beauchamp —Miss Deltour. Louise curtseyed; but to the astonishment of every one (and they were regarding the meeting with some interest) Fanny returned her salute with a cold, hard stare, with so much of downright insult conveyed in it, that poor Louise coloured up like crimson.

'Look here, George Raynor! come here, I say!' said Miss Fanny, stamping her little foot nervously against the ground. 'So you supply your ladies from the singing-women of harmonic halls?'

'No, certainly not. What the deuce do you mean, Fanny?' answered the puzzled manager.

'Ask Miss Deltour,' replied Fanny with a sneer. The bystanders tittered sympathisingly.

'Mr. Raynor,' said Louise, stepping forward, her pale face paler now, but sending a brave keen glance that made them shrink like frightened curs from her, 'I regret having placed you in a false position: this person is right' (Fanny quailed at the contemptuous way she used the slight word); 'and I now remember the occasion, and the associate she was with, when she acquired her information. If you have any hesitation about retaining me, I will remove the embarrassment in the only manner in my power. Mr. Cleveland, your arm.' And there we left them in as dramatic a situation as ever they found themselves.

'Come now,' said she, 'walk home part of my way this evening; I will never go near that place again, and I want to thank you for all your kindness: perhaps, however' (here she stopped suddenly), 'Mr. Cleveland would not care to be seen with me since he has become acquainted with my antecedents?'

'I knew them before. I knew of the harmonic hall,' I returned quietly.

'Did you?' she asked, and as we passed near a lamp I thought I saw her glance at me kindly, and even —I thought so—more than kindly; I am sure her hand closed almost involuntarily on my arm.

'I have gone through a great deal —a great deal,' she said sadly, and half to herself. 'Oh, how weary it is, this life! I often wish I were dead, and out of it.'

'Louise,' said I, 'I love you sincerely, and if you only——'

'There—there,' interrupted she, quickly, but not angrily; 'don't talk that way to me. I don't dislike you, Charley' (I started—this was the first time she had called me by

my Christian name); 'but I cannot listen to you at present. You deserve better than I am. I will leave London to-morrow for Glasgow. It is more than probable we shall never see each other again. I will not forget you easily. Good-bye.' And she spoke all this as if she were choking.

I bent over her hand, and pressed my lips to it, and she drew it gently from me and turned away. Then I watched her to the end of the street, and thought she looked round once another moment, and she was gone.

Raynor did not much care for losing Miss Deltour, now that Fanny had returned to him. That young lady exercised an influence over him through means which I do not care to detail. What misery I endured acting with her night after night, and hating her with a sickening intensity even while she laughingly surrendered herself to my stage caresses! At times I felt I could even strike her. When, a few days after, I parted with my darling, I related the occurrence from beginning to end to Mrs. Layton, she could not suppress her indignation.

'Fanny Beauchamp has no right to turn up her nose at any one. If I were near her, I would remind her of the time her mother was capering on piebald ponies at Astley's, and was remarkable for having about as much character as petticoat. But, Charley, Louise is gone off, and left something with me for you, if you should call. Here it is. I hope you have not had a lovers' quarrel, and that she is returning you your letters.'

'No, indeed, Mrs. Layton; she would not have me at all.'

'I am sorry for that; but she is sensitive, and foolish on many points, and has devoted her talents, her health, and chance of position in society, to support a sot of a father who has been turned very properly adrift by all belonging to him. But I suppose she has acquainted you with her circumstances. I know she liked you extremely.'

'Did she say so?' I asked, eagerly.

'Come, sir, I won't be cross-questioned. Away with you, and read your fate in that envelope.'

I took it home—if I could call my furnished lodgings a home—and could scarce break the seal, my eagerness and anxiety were so great. Would she commence 'My dear sir,' or 'Dear Mr. Cleveland,' or 'Dear Charley?' When I did summon up courage enough two letters fell out of the enclosure, and there was a small folded note addressed to me. It began without any heading at all; it was merely to say that before leaving she had found the enclosed letters in her father's room, and from his (here 'habits' was evidently erased, and 'carelessness' substituted), she suspected he had neglected to answer them. Would I be kind enough to see after them if they were of any consequence? The note was subscribed 'Clare Stevens,' so that Deltour was evidently but a *nom de théâtre*. I read the two letters carefully. They were from a solicitor's firm—Messrs. Seal and Stamp—requesting Mr. Stevens or his daughter to call at their office, as they had intelligence of importance to communicate. I went directly to the place, and was ushered in to the principal—a mild, gentlemanly man, with a peculiarity about his mildness that somehow immediately impressed you with the idea that it would be a sheer impossibility to take him in. He politely pointed to a seat, and waited for me to introduce my business. This I did in very few words. Mr. Stevens and his daughter were obliged to leave town suddenly. I would take any intelligence for them.

'Well, sir,' said Mr. Seal, smiling most benevolently, 'my business with them was of a very agreeable character. Some time since we received an advice from our Irish correspondent that a considerable legacy had been left Miss Stevens, who was supposed to be living with her father towards the west end of London. After innumerable inquiries, we have now reason to believe your friends, to whom my letters were sent, are the parties we are in quest of. One interview, even a letter answering

certain formal questions, will be sufficient as a preliminary, and then I shall have the pleasure of handing over the amount to Miss Stevens, or lodging it to her credit. Could you give me their present address?' I gave it him. 'I shall write immediately.' 'Yes,' said I, 'and if you want the matter directly attended to, communicate with Miss Stevens herself.'

Love is selfish, despite what poets write. If a man loves a woman, his dearest and first wish is that she be brought close and near to him, and he is jealous of any fortune that puts her beyond his reach. I was perhaps more sorry than glad when I learned of Clare's good luck. My very connection with the stage made me specially distrustful of romantic conclusions, and I believed she was lost to me for ever now that she had become rich. Friends would come, and then a husband. A husband! Until that thought struck me I did not fully know how I was absorbed in her. When I pictured to myself another in that place I believed to be mine by right—mine, above all others living! For who could love her as I did? Who else would discover beneath that placid, absent face those depths of sensibility and yearning tenderness which it was, almost unconsciously to myself, my secret hope and dream to bring forth into a warm and stirring affection, which we two were to share together, and never, never part from until death? And in this strain my mind ran on, and one day slipped by and another came, and each night I had to laugh and joke in the midst of the wretchedness gnawing at my heart. Often was I cheered for the wild exuberance and spirit of my acting when I was merely delirious with this fire of disappointment in my brain, burning there—burning there, until my poor head throbbed on my pillow at night, and, worn out with the fever, I dropped off into a sleep—sometimes into a long dream, in which she was kind to me, and we were all I wished us to be! But then the bitter waking came, and another day and night of misery!

I could not bring myself to inquire any particulars at Messrs. Seal and Stamp's. I had a nervous dread of knowing more, and for the same silly reason I avoided calling on Mrs. Layton. I would try and forget Clare. That was all left me now. I would even go away from every scene that reminded me of her; and so, when my engagement was concluded with Raynor, I joined a company on a provincial tour, and travelled with them to Liverpool, remaining a few weeks in Douglas, Isle of Man. When I returned to London I found my health so impaired from excessive work and want of rest that I was obliged to consult a physician. I was fortunate enough to have hit upon an intelligent and kindly man. He put a few sensible queries to me, inquired my profession and habits, and then tested my lungs with his stethoscope. I thought he looked rather grave when removing the instrument.

'Is it in your power, sir,' said he, 'to take a long sea voyage?'

'Well,' I replied, 'I have had a good offer to go to Australia.'

'Then I can recommend you no better medicine, sir, than to accept the offer; and the sooner you start the sooner will your constitution mend. You have no immediate danger to fear, but rest and change are absolutely requisite for you.'

Two days before my intended departure from London for Australia, I determined to call on Mrs. Layton, partly from a wish to bid her farewell, and principally, if the truth must be owned, to get some news about Clare, and talk of her for the last time. When Mrs. Layton saw me she could not conceal her apprehension and pity at my appearance. I told her how my mind was made up to leave England.

'And so you are going off for good, or bad, and you have never asked me for Louise—or rather Clare. Of course you know her name.'

I had been there half an hour with that name on my lips, and afraid to trust myself to speak it!

'And how—how is she?' I managed to blurt out. 'Have you heard from her?'

'Heard from her! to be sure I have heard from her! Look at this shawl and chain, and tell me who else would be kind enough to make an old woman like me such presents. Why there is not a day she does not come here!'

'Come here!' I repeated. 'Then she is in London?'

'Yes, Cleveland, Clare is in London,' returned she, archly; 'and very lonely, I suspect, in London, too, despite her money. Her wretched father died in Glasgow a few days after they arrived there; and what between the shock his death gave her, and this strange turn in her fortune, she was nigh distracted. I cannot imagine what brought her back here, but here she came; renewed an old acquaintance who was glad enough to be renewed when she found Clare was well off, and she is now living at Brompton. This is one of her days for visiting me. Would you not like to see her before you go among the aborigines?'

'I would indeed,' I said, in a dazed, feeble sort of way; for what with surprise, and a thousand strange emotions of hope and love, I was scarce able to speak. The old lady poured out a glass of wine for me, and kindly pressed me to take it.

Then we were silent. It was late in the autumn, and the days were becoming short. I can call to mind now the quiet grey closing of that day, and the myriad noises of the city, and the clang of some church clock, and a ringing, surging sound in my ears. My whole frame, weakened as it was, was morbidly alive and sensitive to every influence, however remote, that could touch on Clare. This was the room we first acted in together. It was there she stood near the piano, and I by the fireplace. The very feel and rustle of her dress seemed to come to me at the moment! Should I really see her again? And then if I did, would—*Rat-tat-tat-tat!*

'Here she is at last,' said Mrs. Layton, rising up. 'Excuse me, Charley; I always run down to meet her.'

And I was quite alone waiting for her—only a moment, though; and I hear her voice and her step; she is coming up stairs; but I could not stir. I sat there trembling, and my heart beating wildly.

'Why, Mrs. Layton——.' And then a figure in black, which had half opened the door, turned round and whispered something.

'Oh, it's only Mr. Cleveland! He is going away to Australia, and has come to bid us good-bye. I made him stay for you.' I thought Mrs. Layton was very quick in making this announcement about Australia.

I made an effort to rise, and went over and took her hand. She said nothing, but let it rest in mine. Mrs. Layton had glided from the room like a ghost. It was nearly dark, and I had to stand very near Clare to see her.

'Do you go at once, Charley?'

'Yes,' said I, hesitatingly. 'I leave Liverpool on Wednesday—that is if—if——'

'If what, Charley?'

'If you do not bid me stay, Clare.'

It was darker than before, and I had to go nearer and lean down my head to catch her answer; and her velvet cheek was to mine when she murmured—

'Stay with me, Charley. I would be lonely without you always.'

And this is my story. I bade farewell to the stage; and what with some little money I had saved, and my wife's income, we are better than well off. I did not go to Australia; rest and home comforts cured me perfectly. And many a time have Clare and I laughed over the strange chance that made us 'Blessed Confederates' for life.

ST. DAVID'S DAY.

IN that veracious and delightful history of the 'Seven Champions of Christendom,' which we all read with such thrilling interest as boys and girls, we learned how St. David, the patron saint of Wales, roamed about in like manner with his six fellow-champions, as a knight-errant, rescuing unprotected females, fighting against wrong and oppression, and ridding the world of giants and other monstrosities, until he unfortunately fell into the power of the vile magician, Ormandine, whose spells threw the doughty Welshman into an enchanted sleep of (as nearly as we recollect) some centuries' duration. From other chronicles, perhaps equally veracious, we learn that instead of being a warrior, St. David was in reality a priest, 'a wonder in his learning and eloquence,' that both during his life and for many, very many years after his decease, he worked the most astounding miracles; that he was the son of Xantus, prince of Cardiganshire, and that when he died, A. D. 544, his spirit was distinctly seen by St. Kentigern, carried upwards by angels.

Of the two accounts, we must admit the monkish legend has one advantage over the old favourite romance. It is at any rate 'particular in dates.' To a matter-of-fact age like the present, 'A. D. 544' certainly appears a more authentic period than 'once upon a time.' The statement, too, that St. David was the son of Xantus, prince of Cardiganshire, especially when accompanied, as it is, by a seemingly reluctant admission by the chronicler that our hero's mother was not married to his father, bears about it a degree of circumstantiality very different from the vague manner in which we are first introduced to him in the company of the other six champions of Christendom, prisoners in the magic castle of the Enchantress Kalyba. We know of a certainty that there is such a place as Cardiganshire; we can place our fingers on it on the map —nay, we can even go by railway there, and see it for ourselves. We know, too, that there must have been a year 544; we can count up exactly how many years it was ago. But who shall tell us where (if anywhere) the magic castle of the Enchantress Kalyba was situate? Who can say in what year (if ever) the seven champions were imprisoned there?

Still are we loath to give up the St. David of our school-days. Our early hero-worship is too apt to get rude shocks from after-reading. Have we not heard that our great English Champion, the renowned St. George himself, was a mere swindling army-contractor—in fact, a bacon-merchant?—that, instead of going about spearing dragons, his chief avocation was sticking pigs! Out on such so-called useful knowledge! Some wiseacre will next, perhaps, discover that our favourite St. David was nothing more than a market-gardener, who amassed a fortune by cultivating leeks, and that his countrymen have adopted that savoury esculent as their national emblem in honour of the commercial success of their patron saint!

St. David has indeed already been made the victim of gross misrepresentation. Vile calumny, in combination with equally vile orthography, has made free with his name, in every sense of the word. Who among us does not remember the slanderous verses, commencing, 'Taffy,' (a palpable corruption of the honoured name of 'David' or 'Davy')—

> 'Taffy was a Welshman,
> Taffy was a thief,
> Taffy came to my house,
> And stole a leg of beef?'

And then the ridiculous assertions that follow, of how the anonymous libeller went to Taffy's house, and found 'he wasn't at home.' (He does not tell us what petty-larceny advantage he himself took of David's absence!)—how David afterwards revisited the scene of his former theft (a likely story).

> 'Taffy came to *my* house.'

(Whose house? Has the fellow

no name to give, who brings such charges?)

'And stole a marrow-bone!'

Here the slanderer confutes himself—as slanderers always do in the long run. We thought we should catch him. Had the first theft David is charged with really been committed, the second would have been obviously unnecessary—not to say impossible. Had David really stolen the leg of beef on his first visit, why return for the marrow-bone? HE WOULD HAVE HAD IT ALREADY INSIDE THE LEG! So we dismiss the subsequent charge of sluggishness brought against David, and the alleged punishment inflicted upon him with the purloined marrow-bone, while he was still 'in bed,' as utterly unworthy of credence.

On this present First of March, which, as every reader of an almanack will know, is St. David's Day, individuals will be met with in almost all parts of the United Kingdom—ay, and in far-off Australia, in America (especially we should say in the distant Salt-lake settlement, which has been largely stocked by Welshmen),—in every place, in short, where Britons find a home, individuals will be met with wearing imitation leeks, either in their hats or button-holes. This custom, like the similar one of Irishmen wearing the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day, is gradually dying out, but still the custom and the sentiment which prompts it do exist. And who shall mock that sentiment? Patriotism may sink to provincialism, to parochialism, even to egotism, but in itself it is a noble feeling. In theory, doubtless, it were better all were cosmopolitan—that to love our neighbour as ourselves should be the maxim with states and provinces as with individuals. But who does not feel that there is a natural sentiment in the human breast, that when we think of our birthplace—whether nation, county, nay, even village, leads us to say—

'In one delightful word, it is our home!'

All honour then to the Welshmen, who are not ashamed to proclaim their nationality upon their own saint's day!

Of the origin of this custom of wearing leeks upon St. David's Day (formerly the real article was worn, the artificial leek is an innovation) we have, as with everything else connected with our saint, most varying accounts. Of one thing only can we be sure. It dates from a very remote antiquity. One set of writers declare that the custom arose from St. David having caused the Britons under King Cadwallader, 'to wear each a leek as a mark to distinguish themselves from their enemies during a great battle in which St. David caused the victory to rest with the Britons.' Others, again, trace it to the time of the Druids, and see in it a symbol employed in honour of the British Ceudven—or Ceres.

Shakespeare evidently inclined to the former belief, for in the well-known scene of Henry V., when Fluellen makes the braggart Pistol eat the leek he had mocked at, we find Gower upbraiding Pistol, after his punishment, in these words, 'Will you mock at an ancient tradition—begun upon an honourable respect, and worn as a memorable trophy of predeceased valour?'

Be the origin of wearing the leek, however, what it may, it is certain that for a very long time the exhibition of this national symbol by Welshmen on St. David's Day was considered a terrible offence by Englishmen. It appears to have aroused in the Anglo-Saxon breast much the same kind of unreasoning fury that a red rag excites in the cerebral organs of a bull or turkey-cock. So also, on the other hand, the non-exhibition of the leek upon the national saint's day, even by an Englishman, excited an equal amount of indignation in the Cambrian mind. One quaint old writer, after dwelling upon the 'manie thousands' of miracles worked by St. David, says, 'I only desire all true-hearted Welchmen alwaies to honour this their great patrone and protector, and supplicate the divine goodness to reduce his sometimes beloved countrey out of the blindness of *Protestancie*, grovelling in which it languisheth. Not only in Wales, but all England over is most famous in memory of St. David. But in these our unhappie days th e

greatest part of his solemnitie consisteth in wearing of a greene leeke, and it is a sufficient theme for a zealous Welchman to ground a quarrel against him that doth not honour his capp with a like ornament that day.'

So far from the Welsh point of view. On the other side we all know how the braggart Pistol beforenamed threatened to resent Fluellen wearing of the leek he had himself afterwards to eat, with sauce of oaken cudgel.

'Tell him I'll knock his leek about his pate,
Upon Saint Davy's Day.'

Welshmen, however, as instanced in this very case of Pistol *versus* Fluellen, do not always stand quiet to have their leeks knocked about their pates—so the angry Saxon adopts other, and perhaps safer modes of giving vent to his *Cymrophobia*. If he cannot thrash Taffy in person he can at any rate hang him in effigy. Thus we find that best of all gossipers, Mr. Pepys, writing on March 1, 1666-7—

'In Mark-lane, I do observe (it being St. David's Day) the picture of a man dressed like a Welshman, hanging by the neck upon one of the poles that stand out at the top of one of the merchant's houses, in full proportion and very handsomely done, which is one of the oddest sights I have seen a good while.'

Oh, Mr. Pepys! Had a Fluellen of your day been at your elbow when you described this sight as 'very handsomely done,' of a truth you would yourself have been cudgelled into 'one of the oddest sights you had seen a good while.'

We have said that this hostile feeling caused by the presence or absence of the leek upon St. David's Day, between the two nationalities, was of very long duration. One more instance to verify the statement, and we have done with this part of our subject. Shakespeare in the sixteenth century, Pepys (not quite so great a man), in the seventeenth, allude to it. 'Poor Robin' (good in his way, but not a Shakespeare—not even a Pepys) shall speak for the eighteenth. In 'Poor Robin's Almanac,' so late as the year 1757, we have a lot of verses telling us how the Welsh angered the English on St. David's Day, by wearing leeks. 'But,' he goes on to say in a quasi-triumphant strain—

'But it would make a stranger laugh
To see the English hang poor Taff;
A pair of breeches, and a coat,
Hat, shoes, and stockings, and what not
All stuffed with hay, to represent
The Cambrian hero thereby meant;
With sword sometimes three inches broad,
And other armour made of wood,
They drag him to some publick tree,
And hang him up in effigy.'

And now, having had out our gossip with the reader about St. David and his Day, what, let us ask ourselves, are these countrymen of his—these Welshmen—of whom we hear so little in the current literature of the day? Well, truth to tell, they are very much like ourselves. Your railway is a great destroyer of landmarks. Trains running to and fro daily tend vastly to amalgamate the characteristics of the dwellers at either end of the line. The Welsh—save that their women (many of them) still wear the hat known as the chimney-pot, of which even men in England are beginning to get tired (the Welsh hat being more conical and flatter in the brim than ours); save that they speak another language (though fewer and fewer every year speak Welsh); save that all Welshmen who think at all of what they are and have been, feel that they have a national history, traditions, and a language, older by centuries than the English, by whom they are being rapidly absorbed; save that they were, until this present railway era, a race shut up apart in their own charming though secluded vales and mountains — the Welsh are very much as we are. They buy and sell as we do, only they do it better. Perhaps no race that ever lived—perhaps no individual, even supposing him of Jewish parents, born in Scotland, and brought up in America, can beat your Welshman at a bargain. If you would buy of a Welshman, and he asks you a sovereign, offer him ten shillings. He will swear a good deal (we mean he will use solemn affirmations—not bad language), he will protest more. But be sure he will ultimately take

twelve or fourteen shillings, and then feel he has done a good stroke of trade. If you would sell to a Welshman what you deem a pound's worth, ask him one pound ten. He will beat you down for a certainty to the original sovereign. So you will get your money, and he will rejoice over having got a bargain. And so both parties will be satisfied, and the greatest happiness will be insured to the greatest number.

We have said that fewer Welshmen every year speak Welsh. They may form themselves into Cymrygyddion societies, may speechify, and sing, and write penillion and englynion * in praise of Welsh; may inscribe upon their banners the motto, 'Oes y byd i'r iaith gymraeg' (The duration of the world to the Welsh language); may hold their bardic meetings or Eisteddfodau,† with a view to the preservation of the old language; yet spite of all, as surely as the ship will sink when all the efforts of the crew cannot prevent the leak from gaining on them, so surely will the ancient tongue of Wales become extinct. A brave and noble language it is, but none the less a doomed and dying one. To inquire into all the various causes which are at work, surely and by no means slowly banishing Welsh from among the spoken languages of the earth, would demand an amount of space far beyond that at our command. One will suffice. Welsh is not—nor ever was to any great extent—the language of commerce. Retail trade is of course conducted in the native tongue (though few indeed even of the smallest shopkeepers, except in the very remote districts, are unacquainted with English); but for the more important commercial operations, the language of that enterprising Anglo-Saxon race which has taught Wales what commerce means is universally adopted. A contract of any magnitude, written in Welsh, would be a curiosity. Hence it arises that every Welshman who desires his children should get on in life, has them taught English, as a matter of necessity; whether or not they acquire a knowledge of their own language also, is quite a secondary consideration. As an instance of how strongly the natives are impressed with the superior advantages of speaking English, we may mention, that some years back, when we ourselves, residing in the principality, endeavoured to learn the language as a mere accomplishment, our blundering attempts to converse in Welsh were set down to our pride! It is a fact, strange though it may seem, in a people that profess (and feel) such love for their own tongue. 'Iss indeed, look ye-ou,' said an old Welsh native, referring to our own miserable lingual failure. 'He could speak Welsh well enough if he liked, *but he's too proud!*'

Many of our English readers will doubtless smile at the idea of our learning Welsh as an accomplishment, as well as at our speaking of it as a noble language. It is the fashion to consider Welsh a hideous, uncouth, and barbarous tongue. It is really nothing of the kind. Printed in our English types, it is not, we confess, prepossessing at first sight. It certainly presents strange combinations of letters, and is apparently made up of unpronounceable clusters of consonants. But it is only apparently so. To begin with, the constantly recurring 'w' and 'y' are always vowels in Welsh, not, as with us, more frequently consonants. The double letters, again, we so often meet with, 'dd' and 'll,' and such combinations as 'nh,' 'ngh,' represent single sounds. So far, indeed, is the Welsh language from having a superabundance of consonant sounds, that on a comparison of English and Welsh (the same matter being chosen at random in both languages), it was found that in English there was considerably more than four times the excess of consonants over vowels that there was in Welsh! Is the reader still incredulous? Will no assurance of ours disabuse him of the notion that the ancient language of Wales is a jaw-breaking mass of consonants? What will he say, then, to a verse of four lines, made up wholly and exclusively of vowels! Any one acquainted with

* Different kinds of Welsh poetry.

† The plural of 'Eisteddfod,' of which more hereafter.

the language will tell him that the following is good Welsh:—

'O'i wiw'dy i weu â â, a'i weau,
O'i wyau'e weua,
E' weua ei dŷe sia',
A'i weau yw ieuan lâ.' *

There! Four lines without a single consonant! Let any one do that in English if he can!

Well, well; and after all, what does it signify? Is it worth taking up the cudgels in defence of a language which even its most enthusiastic admirers admit to be moribund? We ourselves know Welshmen who will tell you, and believe they prove it by certain names in Genesis, and what not, that Welsh was the primeval language; that when our mother Eve called her first-born Cain, and said, 'I have gotten a man from the Lord,' she used two Welsh words signifying, 'I have got one,' and which, we must admit, are strikingly like the sound of the name Cain; that when her second saw the light, and was called Abel, it was because he was *ab ail* (Welsh for 'the second son'); that the names Adam, Eve, and others, can be perfectly accounted for in Welsh, more readily than in any other known language. We say we know of Welshmen who maintain all this; but none have we ever met with who venture to prophesy for the Welsh tongue a long duration.

We have said it is not the language of commerce. Whether or not it ever could have been made so had the race who spoke it been the leading merchants in their own land, we know not; but to an English mind it seems but ill adapted to business purposes. Apart from the fact that it has no words to express any of the modern inventions and articles of commerce, its numeration appears clumsy in the extreme. From one to ten it goes on all right. Then come one-and-ten, two-and-ten, &c., up to fifteen; then one-and-fifteen, &c., up to twenty; thirty is ten-and-twenty; thirty-five, fifteen-and-twenty; thirty-six, one-and-fifteen and twenty; forty, two-twenties; and so on, until ninety-nine becomes four-twenties-and-four-and-fifteen! Could such a mode of reckoning succeed in business? And yet, who knows? France, with the most scientific decimal system in the world, has managed pretty well, though 'quatre-vingt-dix-neuf' is not, after all, so very much more simple than the Welsh ninety-nine.

And what is the Eisteddfod which, as we have said, aims at the preservation of this language? The word literally means a 'sitting' or 'session;' and originally, when the Bards and Druids were the governors of the country, a most important session it was, being neither more nor less than the assemblage of what we may call the bardic parliament. It was summoned by special commission by the Princes of Wales, who were *not* then, as now, the eldest sons of English kings or queens; and its business was to rehearse the traditions of the bardic system, and to regulate all matters respecting their religion and public policy. But Druidism gave place to Christianity, and the bards no longer had all the church and state combined in their own keeping. Still the Eisteddfodau were held, though they became less and less political, and at last purely artistic. Devoted to poetry and song, these sittings of the constituted judges awarded honours, degrees, and emoluments; and no one was qualified to exercise the profession, either of bard or minstrel, till he had (if we may be allowed a modern expression), 'passed the college.' When the English monarchs became rulers of Wales, the Eisteddfodau were still summoned by royal authority as they had been by the native princes, the last of them of which we have any record having been called together by good Queen Bess.

But the Eisteddfod is still held. Granted. But the meetings, which to our day take place from time in time in Wales—albeit the old Druidic forms are studiously observed; the same division into three

* These lines, which we need hardly say have been composed expressly to show the possibility of dispensing with consonants, refer to the spider or silk-worm, and are thus translated:—

'I perish by my art; dig my own grave;
I spin my thread of life; my death I weave.'

www.libtool.com.cn

classes, poets, minstrels, and singers; the same awarding of a silver harp as the first prize and highest badge of merit — bear about as much resemblance to the real thing as the Eglinton Tournament did to Ashby-de-la-Zouch. It may be the means of bringing out now and then an extra-good harpist or singer; for all of which we should be thankful. But it can no more prevent the decline and ultimate extinction of the Welsh language than it can restore the government of the principality to the Druids.

There is no denying the fact—whether we mourn or exult over it is all the same — Wales is being gradually but surely absorbed by England. Year by year the Welsh are becoming more like ourselves. Like us, as we have seen, they buy and sell; like us they marry and are given in marriage. Yet stay; perhaps not quite like us in this point. There is (or was) a custom (it is some years since the present writer was in the principality) which might, we think, be copied with advantage by ourselves. We all know what a struggle it is for a young man (with nothing but his own earnings to depend on) to commence housekeeping; we also know the old proverb how 'many can help one.' The custom we speak of is an illustration of this proverb. So soon as a young man had made up his mind to marry, he would call together all his friends and acquaintances—not to feast and make merry at the expense of the young couple or their families, as with us; but to contribute—each according to his means—towards setting up the new household. This is called a 'bidding;' and everything given on such occasions is deemed a debt of honour, invariably repaid whenever the donor should in his turn assume the matrimonial yoke. We annex a copy of a circular which we have preserved for some years. Similar invitations are (or were) always sent out when a wedding among the peasantry was, as fashionable reporters say, on the *tapis*. (We have altered the name and address in the circular.)

'*Llandovery, March* 20*th*, 18—.

'As I intend to enter the matrimonial state on Easter Monday, the 19th of April next, I am encouraged by my friends to make a Bidding on the occasion the same day, at my dwelling-house in Market Street, when the favour of your good company is humbly solicited; and whatever donation you will be pleased to confer on me then will be gratefully received and cheerfully repaid whenever demanded on a similar occasion, by

'Your humble servant,

'Thomas Griffiths.

'P.S.—The young man's mother, brother, and sister, Eliza, David, and Martha Griffiths, desire that all gifts of the above nature due to them may be returned to the young man on the said day, and will be thankful for any additional favours bestowed on him.'

Cakes and ale are abundantly furnished at these 'biddings' by the bridegroom; and the guests who assist at them enjoy themselves none the less for the knowledge that they have by their presence contributed to give the young couple a fair start in life.

And now take we our leave of St. David and his Day. One more observation, and only one, have we to make. We know not whether to address it to Garter King-at-Arms, or to whom. But we find that in the reign of Queen Elizabeth there was an order of knighthood—that of St. David of Wales. What has become of it? We have no knowledge when it was instituted or when it died out. But might it not be revived? Now when all England is rejoicing over the birth of a Prince, who must, if he live long enough, one day be King of all this land, could not the Order of St. David once again have being, and might not its first and foremost knight be Albert Edward Prince of Wales?

W. B.

AN HOUR WITH A SNAKE-CHARMER.

'SEEING is believing;' so says the proverb, and if any one is anxious to have doubts removed on any subject, no process will be found so effectual as that of careful ocular demonstration—more especially when that evidence is sceptically examined before its reception as truth. Such was my intention when, for the first time in my life, I was lately introduced to an Indian snake-charmer.

During a professional ride through the station in which I am quartered, I felt somewhat fatigued with the heat of the sun, which was just then excessive, and ventured to call on a friend for a short shelter, despite the full conviction that I should find him indulging in that mid-day 'siesta,' so common a luxury to the Europeans living in this climate, and yet so fearfully productive of liver congestion, plethora, and splenic disease.

I was not mistaken. 'Never mind me; come in, old boy,' was my friend's salutation, which I answered in person by entering his bedroom, darkened and cooled by artificial means. Making my way to his bedside, I was surprised at seeing two peculiarly bright glistening objects in the corner of the room. I

advanced towards them, but more quickly retired, on being assailed by a loud and unmistakable hiss. Involuntarily a scream in duet was performed by my friend and myself, and the native servants were somewhat startled by shrieks of 'A snake, a snake! Get a gun!'

A consultation was held—of course *outside* the room, and, I need not say, some distance from the door. Various results were arrived at; some suggesting 'shooting,' others 'smoking.' One, more courageous apparently than the rest, proposed that the snake should be 'caught,' and then destroyed.

However, as the originator of this bright idea did not seem in haste to carry his suggestion into practice, and as none of us wished to deprive him of the honour, it was agreed to send to the native bazaar for an Indian snake-charmer. In the meantime we thought another look could do no harm. Carefully and slowly was that door opened. Nervously and tremblingly we peeped in—gradually advanced, looking everywhere—jumped at the least rustle or sound, presenting sorry spectacles of Her Majesty's British soldiers. But soldiers don't like snakes. Why should they?

'Why, he's gone!' 'Take care!' 'Look in the bed, cupboard, drawers, nooks and corners.' No snake!

Then, for the first time, we laughed.

'Hallo! what's this piece of stick near the wall?' 'By Jove, it's his tail!' 'Phew!' 'Don't speak, we shall lose him!' 'Here's the charmer.'

He came, a tall muscular native, a strip of cloth round his waist, his hair long and matted except on the centre of his head, which was shaved close in a circle, and a turban covering it, bearing over his shoulders two baskets and his musical instrument, made out of a gourd with a single bamboo pipe coming from its upper end and two similar ones from its lower, which, being pierced with holes, are played upon like a flute, whilst the breath is blown through the upper and single one.

Before he was allowed to enter the room he was searched, and his baskets and instrument taken from him. Nothing could have been concealed, for his clothing was reduced to its minimum, and he only carried a short iron rod.

He was shown the hole in which we supposed the snake to be, for now the reptile's tail had disappeared. He lay down on the floor, and placing his face close to the hole, exclaimed, 'Burra sap, sahib, bahut burra.' (Big snake, your honour, very big.) Without any more preparation he commenced digging round the hole, and removed some of the brick-work. In a few minutes he showed us the tail of the reptile, and with sundry incantations in Hindostanee and curious contortions of his body, seized hold of the tail, and gradually drew forth the snake. It proved to be a fine specimen of the cobra—a black, shiny, wriggling, hissing, deadly cobra, about five feet long, and at the thickest part eight inches round, with a hood measuring, when extended, five inches across. This reptile he handled freely whilst it was hissing and darting its tongue out every second. Removing it into the yard or compound, he released it. The brute wriggled towards him, and when within a foot or so reared itself up, spread out the enormous hood, and prepared itself to strike at its captor. But the charmer was not to be wounded. He seized his primitive musical instrument, and commenced very slowly to produce low and soft tones, very harmonious but unconnected. The snake seemed astonished; his hood gradually collapsed, his head and about a foot of his body that was raised from the ground commenced to sway from side to side in perfect harmony with the music, and slower and quicker as the time was decreased or increased. As the man played louder the snake got more excited, until its rapid and unusual movements had quite exhausted it, and it subsided.

Again the charmer seized it, and quick as lightning ran his hand up its body, holding it firmly by the throat. By pressing on its neck, the cobra's mouth opened, and he disclosed the fangs, poison bags,

and apparatus complete; thus proving beyond a doubt that it was not a trained or tame reptile he had been treating like a plaything.

Doubts still arose in my mind, however, about the genuineness of the performance, for I could not bring myself to believe that a man would willingly place himself in such close proximity to certain death.

A fowl was now obtained and placed about a foot from the reptile, which was again set free. With the same movements it raised itself a foot from the ground, spread out its hood, and with a loud hiss, apparently of satisfaction, darted upon and seized the fowl by the back of its neck. Hanging there for a few seconds, it let go its hold, and the man at the same instant seized it, as he had formerly done, by the head. The fowl almost instantaneously became drowsy, its head falling forwards, and the beak striking with considerable force into the ground. This convulsive movement lasted ten seconds, and then the bird lay down as if completely comatose and powerless. In fifteen seconds it gave a sudden start, and fell back quite dead. This was the first time I witnessed death from a snake-bite, and it is unquestionably a sudden, quiet, and overpowering poison.

As no deception could have been practised in this instance, I was most anxious to see the reptile killed; but the charmer said he would not have it destroyed; that if it were injured the power he had over the snakes would be interfered with, and the next one would no doubt bite and kill him. He accounted for his easy capture by saying that this was a great holiday for the snakes, and they had been enjoying themselves. 'This one,' said he, 'is not living in this house. He has come from his own home visiting, and has lost his way. On this account he got down a wrong hole, and I was enabled to pull him out. Nasty neighbours and abominable visitors, these cobras! I will take this snake home and feed him and make him tame.'

However, we insisted upon seeing him made harmless, or comparatively so, and directed the man to remove his fangs. This he agreed to do, and performed it in this manner: a piece of wood was cut about an inch square, and held by the charmer to the head of the snake. The reptile seized it as he had done the fowl, and with a dexterous twist of his hand the most primitive performance of dentistry was accomplished. The *four* fangs sticking into the wood were extracted by the roots and given to me. I have them now, and look upon them as more 'suicidally' pleasant than a pint of prussic acid or a cask of white arsenic.

Another fowl was now brought and attacked by the snake as before, but without any effect; it shook itself, rustled its feathers, and walked away consequentially. It is alive still, unless some enterprising culinary agent has converted it into 'curry' or 'devil.'

So it was proved beyond any doubt that an Indian snake-charmer was not a 'humbug and swindler,' as many suppose, but a strong-minded, quick-eyed, active, courageous man. The cool determination and heroism of the charmer in the present instance was rewarded by the sum of two rupees (4*s.*); and he left the compound with an extra snake in his basket, thankful to 'his preservers and feeders of his children,' as he styled us, and to whom, he said, he owed his life and his existence.

J. J. P.

THE GULLIBILITY OF MAN.

NOT long since, a case of swindling before a London magistrate made known the fact that a livery-stable-keeper—a man with some opportunity of learning the habits of society—had actually lent a man five shillings and paid for two glassss of gin and water at eleven o'clock in the morning, on the representation that he was Lord John Russell in a great hurry to hire a carriage to go down to Windsor.

A humorous friend of ours while boasting of the success of some absurd poem he had published, gravely said the Queen Dowager was so much pleased with it that she sent him a very friendly note, to say she should like to make his acquaintance, and if he came near Bushy Park, she trusted he would slip in and take a glass of sherry.

This, of course, was a jest; but the following, which would betray no less ignorance of the manners and customs of the royal family of England in the middle of the nineteenth century, was no jest at all; but we can honestly venture to record it as evidence of the extraordinary degree of ignorance which is compatible even with age, experience, and fair standing in society.

A retired naval officer, apt to boast at the expense of truth, a man of good property and standing in the society of North Devon, who also possessed landed property in the Isle of Wight, actually described over a dinner-table a half-hour's haggle he pretended to have carried on face to face with her Majesty about some fields adjoining Osborne, which fields, he alleged, her Majesty wanted to buy too cheap; but he plainly told her Majesty that happy as he should be to oblige her, 'land was land now-a-days, so *we* parted without a deal.'

The remarks we have to make upon man's gullibility we preface with these instances of ignorance because where such ignorance is possible, credulity and imposition must of course be possible to the same extent. And whenever anything occurs to startle us with the credulity of the world, we shall find, on consideration, that error is traceable to one of two distinct principles.

The first is, that the standard of probability is at fault; the dupe is a poor observer of reality and a bad judge of truth. The *vraisemblance* of the French, or the *verisimile*, the 'truth-like' of the Romans, are more expressive words than our word 'probable.' These words remind us that probability depends on resemblance to the truth; and, naturally, persons who have an imperfect knowledge of the real must also be bad judges of the counterfeit. They may argue rationally, but from wrong data, which lead them to ridiculous conclusions.

The second cause of credulity is, that the greed of money, or other violent passion or affection of the mind, makes us see through a delusive medium. We see only one side of the matter, the mind being dragged so forcibly in one direction that we cannot see the other.

In the latter case, it matters not how 'sensible and sane on other points' may be the victim of the temporary hallucination, for it is not a question of wit but of attention; and Bishop Butler very wisely observed, 'though a man have the best eyes in the world, he can only see the way he turns them.'

In all the notable instances of imposture on the one hand and of credulity on the other, we shall find the two sources of error centering in one and the same person.—We may trace a degree of ignorance of men and manners and of the way persons in any given state of society, rank, or character, act under particular circumstances. We may trace, also, a state of mental delusion, an impatience of testing a made-up story even by the little experience that the victim happened to possess.

In the last novel* by the author of 'Twenty Years in the Church,' the plot turns on the clever devices of one Hannah Hengen, a very remarkable adventuress. The scheme

* Dragons' Teeth. By the Rev. James Pycroft. 2 vols. At Booth's, Regent Street, and all libraries.

is so remarkable, that the author vindicates the probability of his story by saying that 'he pledges himself that, from his own limited experience, he could name no less than three adventuresses who severally victimized gentlemen of good standing and worldly experience by stories yet more easy to detect.

Having reason to believe—especially from some remarks in the press while reviewing this popular story—that some curiosity has been excited on the subject, we are happy in being favoured with the following account of the three 'facts stranger than fiction' to which the novelist referred.

I. A friend of the author one day told him that an extraordinary adventure in real life, with which members of his family had been nearly connected, happened in the manner following:—

One day, about twenty years since, at the end of the session, as Mr. Salter, an Irish Member of Parliament, was returning home by the London and North-Western Railway, he became much interested in the conversation of two of his fellow-travellers—a young officer with a lady companion. When the train stopped at the Wolverhampton station, the officer came up to Mr. Salter and said, that, however strange it might seem, he was encouraged by his profession to reveal to Mr. Salter circumstances personal to himself and lady friend. The fact was, they were both on their way to Gretna Green: the lady was flying from a brute of a father who, because she would not be persuaded to sacrifice herself and fortune to some very objectionable suitor, had used her so ill that she did not dare to return to his house again; while the young officer was fired with love ennobled by pity, at once to rescue a charming girl from the extremity of misery, and (of course he promised himself) to raise her to the serenest altitudes of mortal bliss and joy without end.

'Well, well!' said the M.P., 'no man alive is more ready than I am to help a fine fellow in a strait like this. But—but—you know what the world is made of; you know business is business: there are some ordinary forms and precautions in use among men of the world, and therefore, not that I really suspect anything for a moment, all is so simple and artless; but the long and short of the matter is, I must just, *pro formâ*, have the satisfaction of hearing the sad case you relate, and asking a few questions of the lady also.

The story of the fugitive lady seemed to the openhearted M.P. as simple, as ingenuous, and as transparent as that of the gentleman; and —as a striking corroboration of the description which the officer had given of the suddenness of the determination to elope—the lady had no luggage of any kind! Young runaway ladies do usually secrete a bundle by help of the waiting-maid, but one pocket-handkerchief and one parasol formed the complete inventory of the lady's superfluities. The officer related that he met the lady of his love that very morning in Rotten Row, attended, as usual, by her maid, and from painful information from that maid received, he had hurried the ill-used lady all in a moment to fly from the cruel designs of her most unnatural father on the wings of love and—the London and North-Western Railway.

The Irish gentleman was quite excited by the tale. He was also, like his countrymen in general, delighted at the dash of adventure and the romance of the movement. What Irishman's sympathies ever failed to take part with those who show themselves superior to the stupidities of order or of law?

'My purse,' he said, 'is at your command, but unfortunately, at the present moment, there is nothing in it. All I can say is, come over with me to Dublin, I then can get at my money. This unavoidable delay, however provoking, will, at all events, baffle all imaginable pursuit, and Gretna will be reached without further impediments of any kind.'

The officer and lady accepted the kind proposal, accompanied this friend in need to Dublin, and received cash quite equal to their necessities,

The good friend's wife also volunteered her assistance, and lent articles from her wardrobe to obviate the inconveniences of so precipitate an expedition.

www.libtool.com.cn

As soon as we had heard the story so far, we naturally anticipated that the end of the matter would prove to be, that the Irish gentleman never saw his money, and that his good lady's wardrobe remained minus all the garments so kindly supplied. But not so. The money was punctually repaid and the wearing apparel was as honestly returned. That there was a dupe in the case was true enough; but that dupe was the *officer*, not the friend.

For the officer conducted his bride to his father's house; and as soon as time had been allowed for some kind of overtures to the relatives of the runaway lady, to appear only reasonable, all parties were surprised at observing that there was a continued refusal on the part of the lady, who every day found some fresh reason for delay when offers of intercession were forced upon her. At last, some one remarked that never once, in the morning's distribution of the contents of the letter-bag, had there been a single epistle for the bride—albeit, a lady of fortune with a wide circle of family connections. 'Surely all her relatives and friends could not be so implacably offended; and if so, displeasure finds its vent in words as often as in emphatic silence.'

When suspicion is once excited, the days of imposture are few indeed, and the bride was soon compelled to confess that she had no father, cruel or kind; that she had no fortune, and—it was readily concluded—she had no *character;* and her pretended 'lady's maid' as little as herself.

And what became of the unhappy officer who had linked himself to an abandoned woman for a life?

Most fortunately, a rigid investigation of her antecedents elicited that she had another husband living; so the second marriage was void; and the threat of a prosecution for bigamy gave the family little trouble for the future.

II. The second case of successful imposture to which the author of 'Dragons' Teeth' alludes, he has related thus:—

Some years since, while living in the city of Chester, I became acquainted with a Mr. Buller (this name will serve), an Oxonian, about three-and-twenty years of age—a member of an excellent family, who was reading for holy orders. He was a man of excellent character, of some accomplishments, especially music, and was generally much esteemed as a man highly honourable and utterly incapable of deceit by all who knew him. After about a year, he went to visit his father and mother—persons of middle age and of ordinary intelligence and worldly experience; and during his absence, a report reached Chester that Mr. Buller was engaged to be married to a ward in Chancery, a lady of noble family and of immense estates in England, with chateaux and wide domains in Italy also.

In course of time, Mr. Buller rejoined his Chester relatives, but only for a visit of a few days, and brought his intended wife and introduced her to my family as among the most intimate of his friends in that city. The morning after, he visited us alone, was very communicative, and related incidents in the lady's history more like a romance than sober truth. However, the more strange this adventure, we felt, the more impossible that he could be deceived; for, as to staring improbabilities, where we believe the narrator, we naturally think, no one would dare to mention them if not true. Still, everything seemed to set at defiance the experience of our lives as also the evidence of all our senses.

1. The lady, he said, wanted a few weeks of being of age, although she seemed to us five-and-thirty at least; but—she had survived an illness so remarkable, and had also an accident which resulted in diminishing the bloom of her youthful features.

2. The lady was an accomplished musician; her singing and playing were the envy of professors; but—just at that time there was a reason that she could not give even her intended husband a sample of either.

3. She was an excellent linguist, but—when some ladies from the Continent addressed her in French as naturally as they would speak English, she drew back at once; she did not deem it consistent with the etiquette of high life to parade her accomplishments by talking French in English society.

In short, a mystery hung over everything: if Lord Eldon (he was then Chancellor) knew—for so she persuaded Mr. Buller—what he was doing with so wealthy a ward, above all, if he dared to marry her before she was of age, he would be imprisoned for contempt of court.

It so happened that the Marchioness of Conyngham was at that time announced as spending a few days in Chester; whereupon the lady exclaimed at once, 'I must avoid all the leading streets, for if the marchioness only catches a glimpse of me, she will tell Lord Eldon to a certainty and we shall be undone.' The end of all was, Mr. Buller was tricked into marrying a woman whose connection with the peerage and extensive estates will best be understood if we say she had once been a servant in the family of Lord ——.

This adventuress deceived not only one young man but all his family, carrying on the imposition over a period of many months. She was even working coronets on a baby's robe when the imposture was discovered! Mr. Buller and his family were as select in their society as most country gentlemen, so it has always been unintelligible how this woman ever attained a position even to attempt so audacious a deception.

III. The third instance of marrying under a mistake, which the author of 'Dragons' Teeth' had in view, happened about twenty years since in the west of England, and at that time supplied points for repeated application to the law courts for setting aside the marriage, but we believe without effect. This case may be more briefly told, though it resembles the plot of the novel aforesaid more nearly than either of the other instances.

A merchant of middle age had, unhappily for him, provoked either the mirth or the malice of a female relative—Mrs. Clyde—who determined to practise on his credulity by taking advantage at the same time both of his vanity and his greed.

It was well known to the merchant that an heiress of large estate was living in Steep Street. With this lady, Mrs. Clyde pretended to have become acquainted; and, being quite her confidante in affairs of the heart, gladdened the ears of the merchant with the news that the heiress had set her affections upon him, fired by his mere looks—a case of love at the very first sight.

The only personal communication the bridegroom-elect could be allowed, was on one occasion to kiss the hand of the lady through a half-opened door.

The connection between Mrs. Clyde and the heiress, who in reality was quite a stranger to her pretended confidante and go-between, was established to the satisfaction of the gentleman in a very ingenious way. While Mrs. Clyde and the gentleman were passing the lady's house on one occasion, the lady was observed at the window. In an instant Mrs. Clyde said she would just run in and bring him a few words in the lady's handwriting. Accordingly, she knocked at the door, ran in past the servant, as if quite intimate, saying, 'Your mistress, I see, is in the drawing-room,' pretended that she and the clergyman of the parish were collecting for coals for the poor, and with an apology for the sudden intrusion, said that the loan of pen and ink for one moment would oblige. Pen and ink were produced, when Mrs. Clyde's hand, she said, was too numbed, and 'would you be so kind as to write these few words for me?' From that hour all chance of suspicion was obviated, in this vital point, at all events.

The end of all was that the merchant met at the altar, and plighted his troth, 'for better, for worse, till death us do part,' to a bride enveloped in a thick veil, which veil was no sooner thrown off than it revealed the well-known features of —a fishwoman!

Mammas and daughters may learn a useful lesson from these three stories. Such imposition, involving misery for life, it has been proved is possible, even where there is no love to charm with siren spell, no passion to drown the voice of reason—none of that blissful hallucination which makes all the hours between the 'offer' and the wedding hours of the heart, but not of the head; hours during which we have seen even a lady of half a hundred years in a mood to credit everything from her hoary-headed lover, deaf to the warnings of all the world besides.

Affection of all kinds makes men gullible, because it blinds them. The folly of parents with their children is so proverbial that *fond* and *foolish* have become convertible terms. Most romantic and marvellous stories in a court of justice have been traced to the creative powers of a parent's mind; leading on, step by step, some wicked, lying child who had wit enough to adopt the suggestions of leading questions. For nothing is too improbable for a parent to believe, in excuse for a child.

It is commonly remarked, 'If persons would dispassionately consider;' 'If they would honestly consult their own sense,' and the like.—But on any question vitally affecting us, it is not so easy to think dispassionately. Do you doubt it? This shall be the proof: How seldom do persons really ask advice; how much more frequently do they only ask for confirmation? Every lawyer will tell you that the very client who comes for an opinion invariably rather argues than consults, and so pertinaciously conceals or glosses over the very facts on which any impartial opinion can possibly be formed, that it is often hard to torture and to wrest them from him. And could not the Mentor within the breast tell the same story? Can we imagine that we are ever likely to advise with ourselves at all more honestly than when we consult our lawyer or our friend?

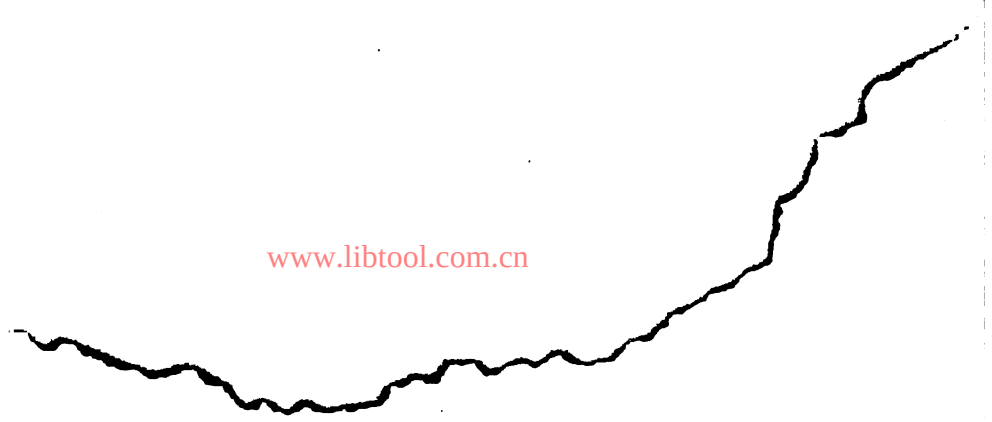
The reason of this preposterous folly is, that a man never takes the trouble to consult or ask advice till he is already interested in one conclusion; and that interest draws the mind aside so forcibly in one direction, that he proves utterly impatient of being made to look in the other.

In the three cases related, the greed of money, as well as conceit and self-love, supplied the delusive medium. Of all dust to throw in a man's eyes there is none like gold dust. The very news of a fortune to be had almost for the asking; the lottery prize, the opening of the millionaire's will, or the ventures of California—the very thoughts of such golden visions will throw even sober-minded people off their balance in a moment. In the times of bubble manias, more brains have been turned by fortunes gained than by fortunes lost; and every season of speculation proves again and again that, if once you quicken the pulse—if once you fire the minds of men by the prospect of sudden riches, and the earnings of a life all grasped within an hour—so all-engrossing is the object, that there is no limit to a man's credulity about the means of realizing it. It is true now, as in the days of Thucydides, that in all such exciting moments, men will only talk one way; and whoever is bold enough to talk the other is at once set down as disaffected, or at all events as a very disagreeable sort of fellow.

One fact in the merchant's history singularly illustrates a very common fallacy—one that has hoodwinked many a dupe. When Mrs. Clyde had been seen to run like an intimate friend into the rich lady's house, this confirmation of one point was taken as a confirmation of all; so very slight a matter will satisfy us of what we wish to find true. In looking for proofs, men are too ready to generalize. After cracking one or two nuts, though chosen by the audacious seller, we too fondly believe well of the rest.

While, then, we are so ready to deceive ourselves, who can wonder at the success of any imposture, where others are artfully flattering and inflaming our own self-love, and leading us on in the very direction in which we are already too prone to go?

www.libtool.com.cn



www.libtool.com.cn

DR. JOHN BLACK,

Editor and Political Economist.

See "London Papers and London Editors."

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

London Papers and London Editors.

NO. IV.

www.libtool.com.cn

'Times' first began to shoot ahead of its contemporaries, both in the amount of circulation and in the influence it exercised on public opinion, about the year 1820. We have already referred to the part which Walter and Barnes took in elevating it to the commanding position it then gained, and which it has never since then ceased to occupy. But there was a third coadjutor who in his way was as efficient as either of the two others, and without whom it is probable the success of the paper would not have been so brilliant, nor the distance with which it overpassed all other competitors so marked and complete. This third member of the trio was Captain Sterling, the principal leader-writer in the journal, and for many years popularly known as the 'Thunderer' of the 'Times.'

Edward Sterling was born at Waterford in the year 1773. The future vigorous denouncer of corruption and jobbery was destined to illustrate one of the most flagrant instances of political jobbery in his own family and person. His grandfather was Clerk to the Irish House of Commons at the time of the Union; and as the extinction of the local parliament deprived the clerk of his emoluments it was decided that he should be compensated by a pension equivalent to the sum the Union deprived him of. To this there was of course nothing to object; but as all offices were held in reversion in those vicious days, Mr. Sterling found means to induce the Government to believe that this office, which was so convenient for himself, had been, or might, or ought to have been secured in reversion to his son and his grandson after him; and the pension was accordingly continued, not only during the life of the original holder, but for the two lives that succeeded him, and only expired on the death of the great political essayist in 1847. It may be said in excuse for him that he was ready to fulfil the duties of the office if there had been any to fulfil; but even that poor pretext would hardly have availed his father, for he entered the Church, though he never advanced higher than to be a curate in the Cathedral of Waterford, where, as we have intimated, his son was born. Young Edward was destined for the bar, and was in due time entered at Trinity College, Dublin, to pursue his studies in that direction. When in his twenty-fifth year the Irish rebellion broke out, and that event gave a new direction to the whole course of his life. His family, as may be inferred from the position of the grandfather, were ardent loyalists, and the grandson threw the whole force of his excitable, impulsive nature into the ranks of authority. He was among the first to join a volunteer corps which was formed from among the Inns of Court—a service which was a very different affair then from what it has become in our day. There was no need for sham fights in those days, for the foe was in the land, and the volunteer regiments were hurried forward, as fast as they could be formed, into the battle field. Their drill and discipline might be little more

than elementary, but at any rate it was on a level, if not superior to the condition of the raw levies of peasantry who had been in too many cases goaded into rebellion by local tyranny. Young Sterling marched with his regiment, and encountered the rebels in several skirmishes, besides taking an active part in the victory so dear to Orangemen under the name of Vinegar Hill. These incidents fired him with military ardour, and he soon afterwards obtained a captain's commission in a Lancashire militia regiment then quartered in Ireland. A militia regiment, however, was not exactly the post he coveted, and soon afterwards he and his company volunteered into the line. Their services were accepted; but it must have been extremely mortifying to the young military aspirant to find that he was embodied in the 8th battalion of reserve. While waiting for the opportunity of another exchange into a position where he was likely to see more active service, the tide of war rolled for the moment in another direction; the necessity for maintaining reserves appeared to the Government to have passed away; Sterling's regiment was disembodied, and he was placed upon half-pay. This seems to have quenched Mr. Sterling's ardour for a military life, and he retired with his half-pay and his unearned pension to the cultivation of a small farm in the Isle of Bute. The place appears to have commended itself to him not so much from the quality of the land or the lowness of the rent, as from the fact that the farmhouse was in part a fragment from the old baronial castle, and gave the owner the appearance, in the eye of the world, of living in greater state and dignity than an ordinary farmer could pretend to do. It may be easily guessed from this that the actual work of the farm was not very congenial to the tastes of this grandiose, ostentatious Irishman, and that, this being the case, the farm itself soon ceased to be a prosperous concern. He managed, however, to retain the favour of his landlord, the Marquis of Bute, and on giving up the Kanes Castle Farm in Scotland he was transferred to a cottage, unencumbered with any land, upon the marquis's Welsh estates in Glamorganshire; and there, by the favour of his kind patron, he was appointed to the adjutantcy of the Glamorganshire Militia—a situation which added still further to his settled income. Hitherto he had been making experiments in life; and though none of them could be pronounced successful, they had not turned out such dead failures as experiments made on so momentous a question, and persisted in for so late a period in life, generally do. At each remove he had continued to add a little to his scanty income; but the great aim of his life, the achievement of a brilliant place in society, was still unsolved, and he was like a blind prisoner groping along the walls of his dungeon hoping he might find some exit. And now he was on the eve of deliverance. Being relieved from all necessity for action, except so much as the duties of his adjutancy imposed upon him, he was fain to relieve the overflowing of his restless mind by the employment of his pen, and here at last he found his true vocation. In 1811 he wrote a pamphlet on military reform, which he dedicated to the Duke of Kent. That pamphlet does not appear to have made much sensation either in military circles or elsewhere; but he followed up this first essay in authorship by a series of letters on the passing politics of the day, which he sent to the 'Times' under the signature of 'Vetus.' The anxiety with which he regarded these ventures was described in later years by his son, the well-known John Sterling, who told his friend and future biographer, Mr. Carlyle, that he well remembered how his father used to walk out in those days to the hill above his house, there to watch the coming of the London mail. His son was too young then to understand the nervous and tremulous anxiety which his father displayed on those occasions, though he came to know afterwards that the difference between the London newspaper continuing or omitting the

letters of 'Vetus' was the difference between his father becoming a famous man and a power in the State, or remaining for life eating his heart out amid the solitudes of Llanbethion. There was no cause for anxiety, however. The letters were duly inserted, and in due time came offers of further employment and an invitation to London, both of which, it is needless to say, were eagerly accepted. The value that was put upon the services of the new contributor may be inferred from the circumstance that as soon as the abdication of Napoleon and the peace of 1814 had opened the Continent to Englishmen, Captain Sterling—for he never abandoned his half-pay military title—was sent over to Paris to assist in describing the brilliant scenes of the Allied occupation and the return of the Bourbons—a vocation that was suddenly and most disagreeably cut short by the return of Bonaparte from Elba, when the captain, with his wife and family, had to make a hasty flight to England. He did not return after Waterloo. His merits were still more clearly recognized by the keen eyes of Walter, and he was soon installed as one of their best and most frequent leader-writers.

The career of Captain Sterling in this new capacity embraced some of the most stirring scenes of modern political history. The dearth and consequent discontent that followed the war—the clamours for Radical reform—the demand for Catholic Emancipation—the Reform Bill—and the great reaction which followed the establishment of that landmark in modern history, all in turn came under his notice, and were illustrated by his flashing and slashing pen. In all of them he rode triumphant on the top of the highest wave, and seemed to lead while he was actually borne along by the force of the popular opinion. His articles had the rare merit of always hitting the public taste and falling in with the current humour. The tact which was shown in discerning the first faint indications of the changing tide, the skill with which he kept his finger on the popular pulse, and noted down every phase and variation in the rate of its beating, display a sagacity that would have made the reputation of a diplomatist, and is marvellous when considered as the work of a quick, impulsive, excitable man. There are those, indeed, who deny that any part of the merit was his beyond the brilliant and picturesque style in which these changing opinions were clothed. Their theory is that the real merit is attached to Barnes, who really watched and noted down the ebbs and flows of popular opinion, and who, having discovered in Sterling a pipe of marvellous compass, governed all his stops and ventages, and sounded on him what notes he pleased. They add that Sterling was very slow to take in new ideas, and that his inspirers had often great difficulty in getting him to take the cue which they wished him to take, but that once caught there was no further difficulty—the invective roared and poured and dashed in a continuous torrent. To some extent there may be ground for this theory. It is certain that when the 'Times' did execute its great wheel from the support of the Reform ministry it was done reluctantly, after several warnings, and must have engaged the frequent and anxious deliberations of those concerned in its management. But it is a very shallow view of human nature to suppose that the brilliant exponent of this change was himself unaffected by it, cared nothing about it, and was ready to write with equal force on any side his patrons might espouse. There was a vehemence—almost a ferocity of tone shown in his leaders, which proved incontestably that the writer's whole soul was in his work. And Sterling was just the man who would feel disappointment and chagrin at the course taken by the Reform ministry most strongly. He who had hoped the most from their advent to power would be the least likely to make allowances for the difficulties in their path, and the most prompt to charge them with insincerity and treachery. Such was the view taken of his course. Thomas Car-

lyle, who frequently met him in society, and whose powers of reading character few will be disposed to deny, in his 'Memoirs of John Sterling' thus discourses of the oscillations of opinion in the 'Times,' and its brilliant writer:—

'The sudden changes of doctrine in the "Times," which failed not to excite loud censure and indignant amazement in those days, were first intelligible to you when you came to interpret them as his changes. These sudden whirls from east to west on his part, and total changes of party and articulate opinion at a day's warning, lay in the nature of the man, and could not be helped; products of his fiery impatience, of the combined impetuosity and limitation of an intellect which did, nevertheless, continually gravitate towards what was loyal, true, and right on all manners of subjects. These, as I define them, were the mere scoriæ and pumice wreck of a steady central lava flood, which truly was volcanic and explosive to a strange degree, but did rest, as few others, on the grand fire-depths of the world. Thus, if he stormed along ten thousand strong in the time of the Reform Bill, indignantly denouncing Toryism and its obsolete, insane pretensions; and then if, after some experience of Whig management, he discerned that Wellington and Peel, by whatever name entitled, were the men to be depended on by England,—there lay in all this, visible enough, a deeper consistency far more important than the superficial one so much clamoured after by the vulgar. Which is the lion's skin; which is the real lion? Let a man, if he is prudent, ascertain that before speaking;—but, above and beyond all things, let him ascertain it and stand valiantly to it when ascertained! In the latter essential part of the operation Edward Stirling was honourably successful to a really marked degree; in the former, or prudential part, very much the reverse, as his history, in the journalistic department at least, was continually teaching him.'

Sterling's nature was of that kind that he could not live without an idol. His disappointments in men never dimmed the brightness of his faith in man. Having dethroned Lords Grey, Brougham, and their companions from the pedestals which they had occupied in his heart of hearts, it was natural that he should look about for another. He had not far to seek. Sir Robert Peel, no longer the leader of a dominant oligarchy, but the chief of a shattered and dismembered band, who were only saved from utter despair by his words of cheer, and whom he was striving patiently and perseveringly to mould together into the consistency and cohesion of a party, was just the kind of hero that was fitted to attract his admiration, and to call forth his most fervid enthusiasm. He became his champion, his advocate, his untiring and most effective defender. No man hailed his advent to power with warmer congratulations than Edward Sterling; none shouted more lustily for fair play for his government when he took office in 1834-5;' none more vehemently denounced the manœuvres by which he was removed from office within a year of his taking it. Whether a more lengthened tenure would not have been as fatal to the reputation of the new idol as the three years of office had been to the old, may be doubtful; but there can be no doubt that all through that short but fierce struggle of parties, the Conservative minister found his most effective support next to his own skilful and ambidextrous management, in the anonymous writer, who day by day thundered forth on his behalf in the columns of the 'Times.' Peel's own sentiments on this point are happily on record, and as they form a curious episode in newspaper history, it will find its natural place here. The letter of Sir Robert transmitted to the 'Times' had been handed by the editor to Captain Sterling, as the person most entitled to the thanks so warmly expressed; and among his papers it was found, after his death, along with the draft of the reply, which had evidently been intrusted to him to draw up. We believe the letter itself first

saw the light in Carlyle's 'Life of John Sterling.'

Private—To the Editor of the 'Times.'

'Whitehall, April 18th, 1835.

'Sir,—Having this day delivered into the hands of the king the seals of office, I can, without any imputation of an interested motive, or any impediment from scrupulous feelings of delicacy, express my deep sense of the powerful support which that government over which I had the honour to preside, received from the "Times" newspaper. If I do not offer the expressions of personal gratitude, it is because I feel that such expressions would do injustice to the character of a support which was given exclusively on the highest and most independent grounds of public principle. I can say this with perfect truth, as I am addressing one whose person even is unknown to me, and who, during my tenure of power, studiously avoided every species of intercourse which could throw a suspicion upon the motives by which he was actuated. I should, however, be doing injustice to my own feelings, if I were to retire from office without one word of acknowledgment—without, at least, assuring you of the admiration with which I witnessed, during the arduous contest in which I was engaged, the daily exhibition of that extraordinary ability to which I was indebted for a support, the more valuable because it was an impartial and discriminating support.

'I have the honour to be,
'Sir,
'Ever your most obedient
and faithful servant,
'ROBERT PEEL.'

'To the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart., &c.

'Sir,—It gives me sincere satisfaction to learn from the letter with which you have honoured me, bearing yesterday's date, that you estimate so highly the efforts which have been made during the last five months by the "Times," newspaper, to support the cause of rational and wholesome government which his Majesty had intrusted to your guidance; and that you appreciate fairly the disinterested motive of regard to public welfare, and to that alone, through which this journal has been prompted to pursue a policy in accordance with that of your administration. It is, permit me to say, by such motives only, that the "Times" ever since I have known it, has been influenced, whether in defence of the government of the day, or in constitutional resistance to it; and indeed there exist no other motives of action for a journalist, compatible either with the safety of the press, or with the political morality of the great bulk of its readers.

'With much respect,
'I have the honour to be,
'Sir, &c. &c. &c.,
'THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."'

Sterling died, as we have mentioned, in 1847, and his place has never been filled up.

While the 'Times' was thus illustrated by Barnes and Sterling, the 'Morning Chronicle' proved itself no contemptible rival under the auspices of Dr. John Black. Black, like so many of the early lights of the newspaper press, was a Scotchman, born in the little border town of Dunse, and educated at the University of Edinburgh. In or about the year 1806, he came to London, having resolved to make literature his profession; and for some years he obtained a precarious livelihood as a translator and hack writer to the booksellers. In the course of a few years he obtained an introduction to Perry, and received an appointment as one of the reporters of that paper. His acute discrimination, and his solid acquirements, soon made themselves conspicuous, and procured congenial employment for their possessor. In 1817 he was appointed assistant-editor; and on the death of Perry, in 1821, the sole responsibility of the newspaper was placed in his hands, and retained by him till 1843. For twenty-two years, therefore, at a critical period of modern history, Dr. Black had a large share in shaping the politics and moulding the opinions of the Whig party, to which he attached

himself. It must be said of him, however, that he was then what would now-a-days be called an Advanced Liberal. Under his guidance the 'Morning Chronicle' advocated bolder and broader views of political questions than it had done under the mild and jovial-tempered Perry. On those subjects that were purely political indeed, he never proceeded so far as to break away from the bulk of his party; and the 'Morning Chronicle' remained, all through Black's management, the recognized organ of the Whig party. But in those questions of a moral and social nature which were then just beginning to force themselves upon public notice, and which may be called the neutral ground of all parties, Black became conspicuous as the advocate of the most extreme opinions. In the 'dreary science' of political economy he was a willing pupil, and a frequent exponent of the theories of Ricardo, Malthus, and the other sages of that branch of science; and there can be no doubt that the circulation of the paper was somewhat checked, though its influence among the thinkers of society was heightened by the often-repeated exposition of those opinions which were 'caviare to the million,' and which, as far as they were understood, were rather distasteful to the ordinary class of readers. It is said that much of this was due to the influence which James Mill, the historian of India, exercised upon the mind of the editor. The two Scotchmen lived in the same quarter of the town, and were in the frequent habit of meeting and of walking together. Congenial tastes rendered them intimate, and the higher and harder nature of Mill soon asserted its predominance over Black. The editor became the pupil of the philosopher; and these sworn and sincere friends of the people conversed together on principles and adopted views of society, in which, as rendered in the editorial columns, the mass of the people had no sympathy. The days of the popularity of free trade had not come; the artisans had no objection to the free importation of food, but they resented the application of the same principles to articles of industry—which were then equally protected—as freely as we have seen the Coventry ribbon weavers resent the French treaty in our own days. The Malthusian theory was unpopular from the beginning, never had the ghost of a chance of obtaining popularity, and in our days of extended commerce and wide-spread emigration has died a natural death. But the most unpopular topic of the day was to attack the old poor law. That law was regarded as the palladium of the labouring man's liberties; and as the daring speculations of the new school of philosophy had ventured to call in question its economy and wisdom, it was natural that the opponents of the law should be stigmatised as hardhearted, unfeeling men, sycophants of the rich, grinders of the faces of the poor, men whom it behoved every Englishman with a heart in his bosom to oppose, persecute, and put down. Those who remember with what an insane vehemence the alteration in the law was assailed by the 'Times,' under the inspiration of the late Mr. Walter, may imagine how fiercely the battle was fought at an earlier stage of the controversy; those who do not, will find some amusing specimens of it in the publications of William Cobbett. Cobbett was as ardent a friend of the people as either Black or Mill, but his friendship started from a different point, and led to a very different result. He cared little for their elevation in the moral scale; his advocacy was mainly directed to an increase in their material comforts: that the labourer should have his jug of beer and his hunch of bread and cheese, with a joint of meat now and then, and, over and above all things, that he should be saved from the miserable doom of eating potatoes—that was the labourer's paradise as it appeared to the eyes of William Cobbett; and we need not add, that such a vision readily commended itself to the bulk of the labourers themselves. With these views, it may easily be conceived how he would regard the more austere, but, as we now believe, the higher vision of the labourer's future, set forth in the columns of the 'Morning

Chronicle.' Cobbett's pen has rarely been matched in the power and passion of scolding. We believe passages might be picked out of his writings which would bear a comparison with Timon's celebrated curse of Athens; and the whole venom and vitriol of his style was concentrated on the head of the 'Scotch feelosopher,' Dr. John Black. He is never weary of holding him up to reproach and ridicule. 'The Register,' 'Twopenny Trash,' the 'Evening Post,' in fact, all the publications he started during this period, are filled with the same subject—abuse of the man's erroneous principles, and their exposition in the Whig organ. The image of Dr. Black, indeed, seems to have haunted him; for whatever topic he may have begun to write about, it is rare indeed but that in some way or other, he contrives to introduce a fling at the Scotch editor. This is amusingly illustrated in one of his best known and still popular works, his 'Rural Rides.' The work contains many a sweet bit of description, many a piece of vivid word-painting, setting bodily before the eye the rich English landscape of our southern and south-western counties. But the best of these descriptions are often disfigured by a sudden and savage attack upon the bugbear of his thoughts. Is he describing a state of comparative comfort in which he found the labouring population — 'Now, Dr. Black, this is the condition of the people that your hardhearted system would break up.' Or has he stumbled upon a village remarkable for its ignorance and wretchedness —'Now, Dr. Black, how would your "feelosophy" deal with a case of this kind? Refuse them all workhouse relief, I warrant, and give them instead lectures upon the good of education and the curse of marriage.' The object of all these rabid attacks, in the mean time, went calmly on his way, not deigning to reply to the showers of abuse that were weekly discharged upon him. His own style, it must be owned, was hardly of the kind which would commend itself to the public. It was modelled upon that of his friend Mill, than which it would be difficult to imagine anything more severely didactic, or less enlivened with the play of fancy or gleams of humour. Full of matter his leaders always were, grappling most fully with the subject on which they professed to treat; and what he gave himself in this way he scrupulously exacted from his coadjutors. His great complaint against those writers who sought for employment on his staff was, that they did not 'bite' on their subjects; and if this were often repeated, employment would not long be forthcoming for them on the staff of the 'Morning Chronicle.' The consequence was, that the paper was, even in its best days, rather admired than enjoyed; it was quoted as an authority rather than adopted as a companion. During his reign the paper once or twice changed hands; but each new purchaser respected the abilities and high-hearted principles of the editor, and he was undisturbed in his position. The first of these changes occurred soon after Black had become editor, when the paper was sold for 42,000*l.* Some years afterwards it again changed hands, Mr. Easthope—afterwards Sir John—being one of the principal proprietors. It must be noted, to Black's credit, that though there was no trace of sentiment or fancy in his own composition, he was not slow to discern or averse to honour it in others. Dickens was a reporter on the 'Chronicle' while Black was editor. The genius of the young gallery man was early discerned by the hard, dry editor; and Dickens's papers — the 'Sketches by Boz' —were first given to the world in the columns of the 'Evening Chronicle'—a late reprint of the morning edition. Most, if not all, of them were written in the sub-editor's room of that establishment: and to the latest hour of the existence of that ill-starred journal, the people employed upon it used to point with pride to the table — a plain, unwieldy machine, as all newspaper belongings are—at which Dickens was wont to sit, while his fancy revelled in the scenes portrayed in these sketches, and even his rapid pen—it is said he could transcribe

his notes of reports at the rate of a column an hour!—could scarcely keep pace with the outpourings of his vivid imagination. Another name, too early lost to literature, owed its first friendly help to Dr. Black. Angus Bethune Reach, a native of Inverness, and an alumnus of Edinburgh University, suddenly had his prospects clouded by domestic calamities, and came up to London, nearly penniless, to push his fortune. Other employment failing him, he bravely set to work in that lowest grade of literary employment—a penny-a-liner. In this way he earned for some time a precarious livelihood, till the great fire of the Tower took place. It was just the occasion which afforded room for the display of Reach's vividly-descriptive powers. His account of the conflagration was accepted at the 'Chronicle,' as at most of the other papers. But Black was not content with its insertion. He was struck with the powers displayed in the narrative, and was satisfied that the writer was capable of better things. He sent for him, offered him a regular engagement on the newspaper, which Reach retained through all future changes of management till his untimely death in 1853.

The termination of Black's own connection with the 'Chronicle' was curious and characteristic. We have already intimated that he had not the quick, versatile, ambidextrous power which more than any other man is essential to a newspaper editor; his mind ran in one groove, and from that groove the busy world appeared to be moving away. The proprietors were beginning to be dissatisfied with his management, admitting it to be excellent in itself, indeed, but no longer that which the temper of the new age required. It was said, however, that the catastrophe was precipitated by a curious incident. It was the proud custom of the proprietors of the great Whig journal to give an annual dinner to the gentlemen engaged on their establishment, and to invite some of the leading Whig parliamentary celebrities to attend the festival. On one occasion the feast was graced with some of the statesmen who had held office in the Cabinet before Sir Robert Peel cut short the thread of Whig official existence. When their hearts were merry with wine, one of these magnates proposed the health of the proprietors, making sundry graceful allusions to the important place they filled in society, and the importance of their property as an enlightener and guide of public opinion. One of the firm—not Sir John Easthope—acknowledged the toast, expressed himself duly grateful for the compliments which he evidently thought, however, were not undeserved, and then wound up by proposing the health of the editor. It is possible that Black was nettled at the order in which his health had been placed—possible, too, that he fancied the proprietor took more credit to himself for the influence of the paper than was properly his due; at all events, he astonished the company by following up the proprietor's remarks on the importance of newspaper property, by an *ad hominem* illustration, which was felt to be singularly out of place. 'Yes,' said the Doctor, 'there is no doubt of the importance of the newspaper press, or the advantage which a connection with it brings. For instance, there are you and I, Mr. ——' (turning to the proprietor who was panting with the effort of delivering his speech): 'we both came out of Scotland about the same time, with barely a sixpence in our pockets; the only difference between us was, that I had shoes on my feet, and you had none; and yet our connection with the newspaper press has helped us into the worshipful society of Lords and Cabinet Ministers.' It was about the only joke the man ever made—and the dearest. Very soon afterwards the world was informed that Dr. Black had ceased to be editor of the 'Morning Chronicle.' He lived in the enjoyment of learned and well-earned leisure for several years afterwards.

A minor newspaper writer, but one who made some noise in the earlier career of Black, and Sterling, and Barnes, was William Jerdan. He has taken care that the world,

or at least that portion of it which devours all the issue of the circulating libraries, should know a good deal about him, his character, and his adventures; for after the fashion of sundry other second and third class authors, after all other sources of literary interest failed, he coined his own life into money, and published his autobiography. Queer, rambling, gossiping, egotistical books the most of them are, in which a good story, or a curious bit of local history, or some half-forgotten incident of parliamentary warfare is found overlaid with heaps of rubbish. Jerdan's is no exception to the general class; but in the earlier volumes there is a good deal of information about newspaper men, and newspaper work, over which the reader skims pleasant enough, if only he can at the outset surrender himself to the illusion that of all the men there described, Jerdan was foremost—of all the scenes he was the hero.

William Jerdan was born at Kelso, in Roxburghshire, where his father, a local magnate, established a newspaper for the purpose of upholding the good old cause of Church and King. The journal still survives, and is, we believe, still the property of the family. William Jerdan may therefore be said to have been born in the midst of newspaper work; and after some abortive attempts to begin life, both as a merchant and as a lawyer, first in London and afterwards in Edinburgh, he finally found his way up to London again, and gravitated towards the press. One of his earliest engagements was upon the 'Aurora,' a daily newspaper that was started about the beginning of the century by the hotel-keepers of the West End. These gentlemen had observed the success which attended the establishment by the licensed victuallers of the 'Morning Advertiser,' and they aimed at the establishment of a journal which should be as much superior to the Radical paper, as their own showy and pretentious hotels were to the dingy public-houses in the City. But they must have had strange notions of newspaper management. Their first blunder was in the choice of an editor, whom they seemed to have selected more on account of his familiarity with their bar-parlour than his literary qualifications. He is thus described by Jerdan: 'Our editor was originally intended for the kirk, and was a well-informed person; but to see him at or after midnight in his official chair, when writing his leader, was a trial for a philosopher. With the slips of paper before him, a pot of porter close at hand, and a pipe of tobacco in his mouth, or newly laid down,' he proceeded *secundum artem*. The head hung with the chin on his collar-bone as in deep thought—a whiff—another—a tug at the beer—and a line and a half or two lines committed to the blotting-paper. By this process, repeated with singular rapidity, he would contrive, between the hours of twelve and three, to produce as decent a column as the ignorant public required.'

Perhaps it was to Mr. Jerdan a conclusive proof of the ignorance of the public, that when he became editor of the 'Aurora,' the public perversely refused to admit that that made any difference, and deserted the journal in such numbers that the proprietors dropped it altogether. Neither Mr. Jerdan nor any one else, however, could have made head against such insane management of the committee, as he describes in the following sketch:—

'Our Aurorian establishment went on very well for a while, but as the great morning paper recently observed, "If you want anything spoiled or ruined, you cannot do better than confide it to the management of a committee." The truth was exemplified in the present case, and proof afforded of what I have always seen since that period, namely, that there must be a despotic power at the head of a periodical publication, or it must fall to pieces. Now, our rulers of the hotel dynasties, though intelligent and sensible men, were neither literary nor conversant with journalism: thus, under any circumstances, their interference would have been injurious; but it was rendered still

more fatal by their differences in political opinion, and two or three of their number setting up to write "leaders" themselves. The clashing, and want of *ensemble*, was speedily obvious and detrimental; our readers became perfect weathercocks, and could not reconcile themselves to themselves from day to day. They wished, of course, to be led, as all well-informed citizens are, by their newspaper; and they would not blow hot and cold in the manner prescribed, for all the coffee-room politicians in London. In the interior, the hubbub and confusion of the republic of letters was meanwhile exceedingly amusing to the looker-on. We were of all parties and shades of opinion; the proprietor of the "King's Head" was an ultra-Tory, and swore by George III. as the best of sovereigns. The "Crown Hotel" was very loyal, but more moderate. The "Bell Inn" would give a strong pull for the Church, while the "Cross Keys" was infected with Romish predilections. The "Cockpit" was warlike —the "Olive Tree" pacific; the "Royal Oak" patriotic; the "Rummer" democratic; the "Hole in the Wall" seditious. Many a dolorous pull at the porter-pot, and sapientious declination of his head, had the perplexed and bemused editor, before he could effect any tolerable compromise of contradictions for the morning's issue; at the best, the sheet appeared full of signs and wonders.

'Public vacillation and internal discord soon produced their inevitable effects. "Aurora," "the pride of the day," passed her meridian and began to get low in the horizon. Her gold scattering turned out to be rather an artistic fancy in painting her than a substantial reality. I had succeeded to the uneasy post of editor on the exhaustion of the pot and pipe; but vain were my efforts, and the darkness of night overtook the bright divinity of the morning.'

Mr. Jerdan afterwards found his way to the 'Morning Post,' and was for some years employed on that establishment. It was while engaged as a reporter on this journal, we believe, that he witnessed the tragic fate of the Prime Minister, Mr. Spencer Perceval. At that time there was one entrance from the street for members and strangers, and Mr. Jerdan, who, of course, does not fail to communicate the fullest details of what he witnessed, relates how he was in the act of pushing open the swing door that opened into the lobby, when he observed the Prime Minister coming up the steps immediately behind him. To give precedence to the minister, holding open the door to allow him to pass, was a natural act of courtesy, repaid by a smile and a cheery nod from the man who was stepping forward to his doom. While in the act of turning round to close the door, Jerdan heard the report of a pistol, and turning sharply round, he saw the man who had passed him in high health the instant before, stagger into the arms of a bystander. He never spoke more. Jerdan, with another man, seized the assassin, and he secured the pistol, which he retained till it was given up at the coroner's inquest. But the newspaper work on the 'Morning Post,' on which Mr. Jerdan most prided himself, was the part he took in the trial of the Duke of York, at the instance of Colonel Wardle, for the illegal sale of army commissions. We need not revive the details of that scandal; it is enough to say, that the general impression on the public mind was that the duke was guilty. That impression the 'Morning Post,' as the court and fashionable paper, set itself to dispel; and they employed Mr. Jerdan as the most efficient writer for the purpose—with what success may best be told in his own words:—

'Of my writings in the "Morning Post," the most effective, in one sense, were a continuation of "leaders"—as editorial comments are designated—pending the memorable charges brought by Colonel Wardle against the Duke of York, and sustained by the evidence of Mary Ann Clarke. In these I made an abstract of the parliamentary proceedings, from night to night, and earnestly maintained the cause

of his royal highness against all comers; denouncing the conspiracy against him, and exposing the misdeeds of his enemies. I am not now going to revive the question, nor give my opinion of the measure of weakness on one side, or falsehood on the other. Sorely did the duke prove the truth of the poet that "Our pleasant vices make instruments to scourge us" — as certainly and more severely than our crimes; but the appeal has been made from Philip drunk to Philip sober; and I believe that history will clear the accused from all the grosser stains with which party and malicious revenge laboured so fiercely to blacken his character. But be that as it may, the tide of popular resentment ran far too strong at the time to allow of any resistance. The outcry was too loud to admit of any other voice being heard; and though I shouted as vehemently as I could, it would be inconsistent with truth to assert that I succeeded, to any extent, in arresting or modifying the overwhelming current of condemnation and censure. On the contrary, I do not believe there is an instance of any journal sinking so rapidly in its circulation as the "Post" did, in consequence of my able and spirited articles. In the course of a fortnight I reduced it by more hundreds per diem than it would be expedient even now to state; for I am persuaded that the effects of my lucubrations were not only so potent, but so permanent, that the paper has not yet recovered its former condition. That the work cost me great toil and trouble is not to be disguised. I remained in the House of Commons every night during the whole debates. Thence I went to the office and did my best and worst for the next morning's publication, and then, generally about three o'clock in the morning, I walked from the Strand to Old Brompton, a fair three miles. One way and another, I had my mind engaged, and my pen in hand about nineteen hours in the twenty-four, and, let me say, the exertion was extraordinary. Towards the conclusion it was so overpowering that I literally learnt to walk in my sleep, and could on my way home pick out the most convenient portions of the road to take a nap *en passant*. Thus, between sleeping and waking, a pint of mulled Madeira, and a bit of dry toast, reinvigorated me for the resumption of my task in three or four hours.'

From the 'Morning Post' Mr. Jerdan found his way to the establishment of the 'Sun' newspaper, where he continued for some time. Here for the first time, if we except the brief and disastrous period of his editorship of the 'Aurora,' he was intrusted with the sole management of the newspaper. With amusing frankness he tells us of the brilliant anticipations he had formed of his future career; and for a time it seemed as if these anticipations were about to be realized. We may see in his case that the period had arrived when editors and newspaper writers were enabled to associate with the statesmen whose conduct they undertook to defend, on terms of greater equality than in a former age.

Mr. Jerdan had attached himself, in his capacity of political writer, to the fortunes of Mr. Canning; and it will be seen from the following extract that the great man admitted him to a large amount of familiarity and confidence. He says, in the opening of his second volume—

'I had been slightly acquainted with Mr. Canning for some years previous to the date at which my first volume closed, but various circumstances, deeply gratifying to me, conspired about this time to advance this condition into an intimacy which has been the delight and pride of my life.

'My residence was close at hand, and every Sunday after church I was expected at Gloucester Lodge. If the weather was fine, we walked for an hour or two in the garden, if wet, we sat and conversed in the library.

'Under such circumstances, utter sincerity was a natural and certain result; and out of this grew our bond of union and friendship. It might be chance or position which

threw me in his way; but, however it happened, he entertained an idea that it was useful for a politician and a minister to learn as much as he could of the opinions of various classes of the community upon the measures of government and other subjects of interest to the country; and he was aware that I mixed much in the society of intelligent men of every description—literary, agricultural, mercantile, professional, busy, and idle.

'Founded on this was his desire to have such frank and candid colloquies with me; and which he nobly repaid me by equal unreserve and cordiality. Let any one imagine the happiness of this! I was flattered by the thought that I was rendering some service to the man I so dearly loved; and his communications to me in return exalted me into the consciousness of being one of the best-informed individuals in the empire. There were few things beyond the limits of cabinet secresy which were not freely confided to me.'

Trouble was in store for the editor nevertheless — trouble, not from without but from within. The 'Sun' was subject to that bane of newspaper property, a divided proprietary. One of the proprietors was Mr. John Taylor, a gentleman of some literary and strong theatrical tastes, the author of a once well-known, though, we fear, now more than half-forgotten farce, 'Monsieur Tonson.' Mr. Taylor kept his co-proprietors in such continual hot water that they at last agreed—so Jerdan represents it—to clothe him with despotic power as editor, and to give him a share in the property of the paper. This had hardly been accomplished, however, when the other proprietors sold their shares to Taylor, leaving Jerdan and him to fight out the battle between themselves. Under these circumstances Jerdan's conduct, even on his own showing, was about as unwise as could well be conceived. He says there was no conciliating his opponent—he certainly never tried. Taylor had from the first been opposed to Jordan's appointment; it seemed that he would afterwards have been content if he had been allowed to write in the newspaper now and then, and to have some voice in its management; but this Jerdan positively refused. Not content with making the printing office and the editor's room the scene of daily turmoil, they must needs call in the public as witness to these disputes. The battle was fought with great spirit both in verse and prose. On one day correspondents were informed that 'all communications for the "Sun," newspaper must in future be addressed to the sole editor and part proprietor, William Jerdan.' In a few days afterwards the bewildered correspondents were again informed that 'Mr. John Taylor, the chief and resident proprietor of the "Sun," requests that his friends will address all communications intended for insertion to him only at the office.'

These bickerings went on for some time, and they culminated at last on a worthy occasion—the marriage of Lord Byron. Taylor, who was an admirer of the bard, inserted in the 'Sun' the following sonnet:—

SONNET.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD BYRON.

'Byron, whose spells imagination bind,
And storm or smooth the ductile heart at will,
Ah! since the muse can paint with equal skill,
Each bold or softer trace of human kind,
Rapt in the glowing energy of mind,
Let not the scenes of woe and danger still,
'Whelm us with anguish, or with horror chill,
For sure thou now canst fairer prospects find.
And since benignant Heaven has joined thy fate
To worth and graces all who know admire,
Led by the virtues of thy honoured mate,
Devote to happier themes thy potent lyre,
So may ye share on earth a blissful state,
Till both, resigned in age, at once expire.

'(Signed) T.'

'I disliked,' says Jerdan, 'this indifferent composition, not only for its poetical demerits but for its bad taste, as I conceived, in meddling with private life, and its inconsistency in so highly eulogising, whilst pretending to advise an individual whose productions had been criticised in a different spirit in the same paper.

'That I did not act prudently in manifesting this sentiment, I am

ready to admit; but next day there appeared in a corresponding place at the head of a column, the subjoined

PARODY

On a Sonnet to Lord Byron in the 'Sun' of yesterday.

'Byron, whose spells imagination bind,
Strange spells which turn the silly head at will,
Ah! since thy muse can paint with equal skill,
Thy Prince a 'Vice' or father most unkind;
(Rapt in the glowing energy of mind,)
Let not the plans of rage and faction still
'Whelm us with falsehood, or with rancour chill,
For sure thou now may'st fitter subject find.
And since the parish priest has joined thy fate
To one thou must, since all who know admire,
Led by thy nose, pray moderate thy hate,
And tune to loyal themes thy shameful lyre;
So may ye share on earth a safe estate,
And not exalted in the air—expire.

'(Signed) W. J. Extempore,
'*Poet Laureate.*'

Taylor, who was out of town when the parody appeared, returned in a highly-excited state, and inserted another notice to correspondents, abusing the editor for the mean advantage he had taken of him when his back was turned. By this time it seemed to the friends of both parties that if the quarrel went much further, it would end in the total ruin of both, and the destruction of the property in which they had an interest. The Chancery suits to which they had had recourse were withdrawn, and Jerdan was persuaded to sell his share, as he says, at a great loss. He then withdrew finally from newspaper work, and started the 'Literary Gazette,' the first weekly literary journal that had been attempted in the country.

FOOTBALL AT RUGBY, ETON, AND HARROW.

www.libtool.com.cn

CHAPTER I.

A MATCH ON THE 'OLD BIGSIDE' AT RUGBY.

'COME down to-morrow,' wrote my friend Rugbiensis, who, like every other Rugbeian, is an enthusiastic football player; 'we are very strong this year, and the Old Boys are to bring a mighty team. It will be a regular Rugby *guerre des géants*. We *mean to win*. Come and see us, old fellow.'

I accepted the rather imperious invitation, and went to Rugby accordingly. Whether I did see the students win is another matter, which will appear hereafter.

When I called a cab in the Strand next morning, and directed the driver to Euston Terminus, the street lamps were all burning, though it wanted but an hour of noon, and behind the wet glass of the shop windows dull red lights were dimly discernible. London was enveloped in a dense fog. Daybreak had, as far as the metropolis was concerned, been the merest farce, and, as the morning advanced, the fog had thickened, and got yellower, and more opaque. It was thick enough and damp enough to choke me, I thought, as I applied a vesuvian to my meerschaum, and began to smoke, as a preventive measure and very commendable proceeding under the circumstances, though the time was morning, and the place the Strand. What a charming day for football! I said, communing with myself, and retreating as far as possible into the rear of the hansom; but I knew they would play. I really believe the football players of the public schools would continue their game if, in the middle of a match, the heavens opened and sent down the schoolboy-talked-of shower of 'cats and dogs.' The players would tuck up the sleeves of their bright-coloured jerseys, and proceed to declare, according to custom, that the *scrummages* were jollier than ever. Nothing in the way of weather short of a frost that makes the turf as hard as flagstones, and falls, resulting in broken bones, is heeded. Rugbiensis would never have ceased to laugh at my effeminacy if I had stayed at home on account of fog and rain.

I found the departure platform thronged with gentlemen whose destination was the same as my own. A large number of them held black bags in their hands, but no one would have suspected the bags of containing 'samples,' or their owners of representing houses in the City. They didn't look like 'commercials.' Not a bit. They were waiting for the train. Some were pacing up and down the platform; others congregated in little knots. All the talk was of football matches, past and to come. The black bags were stuffed with flannel garments, and their owners were members of that mighty team of 'Old Boys,' as my correspondent so unceremoniously designated the gentlemen who were to form one of the contending sides in the great match of Old *v.* Present Rugbeians.

Daylight broke upon the train as we emerged from the last of the London cuttings. Those 'eligible carcases' of houses, which, somehow, are always to be seen in the remote suburbs through which the first mile or two of the London and North Western line runs, and which always appear to be in the same forlorn, windowless, skeleton condition, became distinctly visible, and behind, like a huge black mantle resting on the steeple tops, lay the dense fog which was turning London day into night. The prospect forward was sufficiently disagreeable. We were not yet in the open country. Rain was falling, and there were endless heaps of rubbish, and blocks of unfinished houses, and the sky was of a dull leaden colour. It was, in short, just that kind of day which, according to foreign writers, has an

influence on the British mind that tends greatly to increase the returns of the Registrar-General, and add to the work of her Majesty's coroners. I put up the window, settled myself comfortably under my rug in the corner, and thought of—well, to be candid, I thought of a subject neither more nor less weighty and serious than the matter of this article.

Football is a very ancient English game, which was for many years a very popular pastime of the people. It is a charming one, admitting of great skill and dexterity, and requiring equal agility and promptness of action. It is peculiarly adapted to our national character. How, then, does it happen, especially as we have no substitute for it, that it has fallen from a national game into the pastime only of a few aristocratic colleges and schools? The answer is not difficult to find. There have never been any general rules established for regulating the play. The effect of this has been to do very effectually what Edward III. failed to do with the aid of a royal edict, when he thought football and some other games were interfering too much with the practice of archery. Every football club either played without laws, or made its own. Individual players took whatever latitude they chose. They carried the ball, they kicked each other, they fought, and did that which was considered so reprehensible on the part of Mr. Heenan on a recent occasion, and nearly strangled one another. There was, in short, no end to the violence of the players in many districts, and the results were often very disastrous.

Shrove Tuesday was the great football day in England. In some places the people who would not turn out to play were roughly treated, either in person or property. In others, before the game began the ball was carried from house to house, and money was demanded. There is no doubt that in many cases it was given because it was found to be cheaper and more convenient to give to the football players than pay to the glaziers. In travelling through rural districts on Shrove Tuesday, as late as the early part of the present century, it was quite a common thing to find doors and windows barricaded up. Women had to stay at home, and travellers to avoid any place where the ball was. The sides were generally parish against parish, or, in cities, the men engaged in rival trades would contend against each other. The goals were frequently the parish churches or alehouses. The scenes at these contests led, in many cases, to the interference of the law, which ultimately stopped them. In others, the players seem to have wearied of the disputes and fights.

It is thus that football has fallen into its present position. A great revival seems at hand now. It is still popular in some districts. The Sheffield 'grinders' are noted for their games at football; and it is practised in other localities. But wherever it exists, there is still the same want of unanimity in the laws, and there are such wide distinctions between the methods of play as render it quite impossible for a number of avowed football players from different schools, or different counties, to play together. Hence it is that the famous football players of Rugby, Eton, Harrow, Winchester, and other schools, never play against each other. They cannot do it. The Eton and Winchester games have something in common, and an attempt was made during the present season to arrange a match between the two colleges, but it was abandoned, on account of the differences. Wykehamists and Etonians, Rugbeians and Harrovians, cannot meet between the goal sticks in winter as they do upon the cricket ground in summer. The scholars are, nevertheless, much more enthusiastic partisans of football than of cricket.

The universities play football a great deal, and have many grounds for it. Some of these are appropriated to the Rugby system, which is now the most popular of all; others to the Eton and Harrow games. They have no common game and common ground. They play matches only with players from their own schools, parties of whom go to the

universities, and the universities, in return, visit the school ground. The players under the different systems cling to them tenaciously, and, of course, every one 'sticks up' for his own game, and, as is but natural, considers it the best.

www.libtool.com.cn

Everybody is supposed to know what football is, and any one asked would declare it was a very simple winter game, all there was to do in it being to kick the ball between two sticks. When put in practice, it is found more complex than cricket, and that as many as forty rules are not found too many for it. There is that number in the Rugby code. The great questions are, shall the game commence with a *kick off* or a *bully*, or *not*? Shall the ball be taken up and carried, or caught, when kicked in the air? What is *off side*? and what is *on side*? Shall there be a *cross bar* for the ball to be *kicked over*, as at Rugby, one for it to be *kicked under*, as at other places, or never an one at all, as at Harrow and Eton? Are *hacking*, *charging*, and *tripping* legitimate? Those are only a few of the leading questions which many players have tried to answer, but they continue to be differently interpreted at the different centres of the game.

The shrill whistle of the engine cut short my deliberations at this stage, and a minute later we entered the Rugby station. Rain was falling, but the fog was far away.

Rugby! It was a horse fair. Did anybody ever go to Rugby when it was not a horse fair, or a cow fair, or a cattle fair of some kind? when the doors of those old-fashioned houses were not blocked up, and animals with plaited tails, and manes tied up with straw, were not tethered to the blank walls, and chains not stretched from post to post to keep free about twelve inches of footway? I never was so fortunate. If I were a schoolboy again, and the question were put to me, For what is Rugby noted? I should, in all probability, answer, For sleek farmers, greasy butchers, graziers, and cattle; and I might add, as an afterthought, its school.

I picked my way as best I could. It was by no means an easy matter, and there was a great jumble of dialects and jingling of money in leathern bags. However, I reached Laurence Sheriff Street, and turned into it.

Good old Laurence Sheriff! Best of grocers! I was glad to see his name—albeit, the letters were tarnished, and the board somewhat rusty—at the corner of the lane. It keeps him in the memory of the boys, and prompts the new ones to ask who Laurence Sheriff was. His 'Free Grammar School, for the parishes of Rugby and Brownsover,' has developed itself, and grown to goodly proportions; and, thanks to the eight acres of land in what is now part of the W. C. postal district, but was only a portion of Lamb's Conduit Fields when he gave it, it has been found quite possible for his pious wish, that the master should, 'if convenient,' ever be a Master of Arts, to be observed. I should like to run down and see the old people in his almshouses too; but the little boys, with eager and expectant faces, who hurry past me, say, 'calling over' is finished. The clouds have lifted a little, and it is time I was in the school close.

The school close is the playground of the Rugby students, and a fine one it is too, studded with grand elm-trees, and covered with well-worn turf. A stranger might think the effect somewhat marred by the goals erected in every direction, and looking, as Tom Brown says, like so many places of execution. The Rugby goal-posts and cross-bars are something like a gallows; but the old Rugbeians, who are so plentiful in the close to-day, know better, for they have spent many an hour endeavouring to drive the ball over them. What pleasant reminiscences hang about the place! Walking round, before the match begins, you may observe many a graybeard looking up at the old elms, counting them once more, perhaps, and growing eloquent upon the subject of his school days and school exploits, pointing out to the fair girl, his daughter, who leans upon his arm, the tree where he sat in summer shade, and first read the 'Arabian Nights,' or the spot where

he fought a desperate battle with a schoolmate. A little sadness mingles with these memories of long ago, and the eyes are quick to detect alterations and changes. There are meetings and recognitions of men who were schoolboys here together, but who have been widely sundered in later days; divided by parties and pursuits, and some between whom have been for long years the wide seas. For among the visitors on the day of the 'Old *v.* Present Rugbeians' football match, you may see not a few of even famous men. Waterloo veterans, Indian heroes, travel-stained and worn to look upon, but green at heart still, have been known to revisit the school close on this day; and you hear constantly the names of the old masters, who have long ago gone to their rest, spoken with loving and reverential tongues, and the names of schoolfellows who have since become reverend dignitaries, great statesmen, men of fame in the world of letters, who were football-playing boys here in this close.

There is a little shouting, which announces that all is ready, and everybody turns to the 'Old Bigside,' which is that portion of the close where the great matches are played. At the school end are two perpendicular posts, 18 feet high, with a cross-bar at 10 feet from the ground. Opposite these, at about 130 yards, is a precisely similar erection. The ground is about 70 yards broad, and is defined on all four sides by the removal of a narrow strip of turf. The visitors keep outside these lines. Within them are eighty players in football costume. These are divided into two sides, easily distinguishable by the difference in their bright-coloured jerseys. A fine group of fellows they are. Among them are boys and young men, and not a few who have reached the meridian of life. The ball is brought in. Unlike the balls used by other schools, it is not round, but oval, and larger, made of stout leather on the outside, and inflated india-rubber within. The Present Rugbeians have won the toss for choice of goals, and have the wind in their favour. The old ones have the privilege of the *kick off* in consequence of this. The captains have sent four trusty men thirty yards to the rear, and still others are detached from the general body of 'up-players,' or 'forwards,' to act as *half backs*, and skirt the *scrummages*. Now the two sides divide, each facing the other's goal, it is easy to see that strength lies with the Past Rugbeians, whose colour is red. Popular sympathy, as usual, is on the weaker side, and everybody hopes the blues will win. The player deputed to make the kick off, which is from the centre of the ground, steps back a short distance. All the eighty players are perfectly still till the moment the ball has been touched by the toe. Then they leap into life, and the game has fairly begun.

The object is to kick the ball between the two goal-posts above the iron bar. The side winning two games out of three wins the match. A player who is nearer his opponent's goal than the ball, is *off* his side, and is not allowed to take part in the play until the other side has played the ball. Now let us follow the game. The kick off drove the ball over the heads of the forward players, who wheeled round to follow it, their opponents rushing forward at the same time. One of the half backs caught the ball as it bounded. This is allowable at Rugby, though not on other grounds. Immediately he had it in his hands, he started off at full speed towards his opponents' goal, but his adversaries ran full tilt at him. He evaded the earliest by skilful *dodging*, putting his toe in front of theirs, and tripping them up, but was eventually surrounded, and a general *scrummage* ensued. *Scrummage* is a Rugby definition that very adequately describes what followed. About thirty of the players on each side wedged themselves together, the player, who held the ball, being in the centre, his adversaries endeavouring to take it from him, his own side to get him free, and all the outsiders trying, with the aid of kicking the shins of their neighbours, and pushing, to get to the ball. After a time the struggle became hopeless, and the cry '*Have*

it down,' was uttered by the holder. Then the ball was loosed, but the circle was too compact for it to get to the ground, or for players to see where it was for some time. Vigorous kicking eventually cleared the legs away, and the ball burst out of the ranks of the 'forwards,' and was followed and kicked, now near one goal, now near the other. Again and again it was caught or taken up while bounding, the player in each case starting for his adversaries' goal, being leapt at, and pulled over, or, as the Rugbeians term it, *mauled*, the spectators crying 'Bravo!' 'Well kicked!' or 'Bravely charged!' *Scrummages* were of frequent occurrence, and always exciting. I marvelled to see the little boys leap up at running men and cling to their necks till both rolled over together, and others came up and kicked the ball on. The ingenuity in leaping, twisting, and stooping, the turning and turning and still going on, was wonderful to behold. The players were too breathless to talk, if they had been inclined, which they were not. There was no rest; from side to side, and from end to end, the ball went with astonishing rapidity, now being kicked, now carried, now struggled for, almost fought for, till a vigorous kick drove it out at the side bounds under the elm trees. Then there was a pause, and the players wiped the perspiration from their brows, while one player brought the ball back to the edge, where the two sides gathered, forming themselves into two lines, each with their faces towards their opponent's goal. The player who stood beyond the goal line tossed the ball between these two lines, and up went a forest of hands to catch it, and another *scrummage* ensued, from which the ball was driven down to the school goal, and taken up by a back player and carried across the line, and then touched down between the posts. Whereupon the excitement greatly increased, for a *try at goal* was to follow. Before this, though, the ball had to be placed on the ground, just *within* the goal line, and kicked gently up into the hands of a player standing ready to catch it just *without* the goal line. It was his duty to make a mark on the turf with his heel as soon as he had caught the ball, and before he had done this the other players might charge him, or set upon him, and take the ball from him, and thus prevent the *try at goal*. The head of the side took care of all this, and chose his man for the work, and the moment the ball was caught the heel was kicked into the turf, and behind that mark the defenders of the goal had to stand until the ball should again touch the ground. Then the head of the side commissioned one player to take it out, and another to make the 'try.' Even then the 'try' was not quite sure. If the player who had to carry it from the goal line to the spot where it was to be deposited for the kick had touched the ball with two hands, it would have been lost. It was carried a convenient distance from the goal by one player, and another went to kick it. Some of the players remained near the goal line to keep guard over their adversaries, the young Rugbeians, who, in their excitement, were considered likely to encroach a little, ready for the desperate charge they would make directly the ball touched the turf.

This taking the ball out for the try at goal was a very deliberate and solemn proceeding. Arrived at what was considered the best distance, and due calculation for the effect of the wind having been made, a little hole was knocked in the turf by the heel of the player who carried it. The one who was to make the kick then retired three or four paces beyond it. Every eye was upon him, and all was excitement, both among spectators and players. 'Now;' and the ball was deposited in the little hole. At the same instant the player deputed to the honourable post of making the 'try,' and who gave the signal for placing the ball, ran forward, and delivered a tremendous kick full on the ball. A moment's delay, and it would have been too late, for the players on the other side rushed forward, ready to fall upon him—all except a few who were near goal, in the hope of being able to touch the ball in its passage, which would render it null. But

the hope was a vain one, and it went flying full five feet above the cross-bar, clearly between the posts, an undisputed goal for the Old Rugbeians.

www.libtool.com

Then the sides changed goals, and a new game began, just as the old one had done. Several times victory seemed in the hands of the younger players, who were cheered on. But they could not get a goal, though they struggled bravely. The players appeared to have only just got their spirits into the game when a clever drop kick brought it to an end in favour of the 'Old Boys' without the ball having crossed the goal line, as in the previous game. It was just after a boldly-contested *scrummage*, close by the elm trees, which, in the words of Tom Brown, 'come into the play; that's a tremendous place when the ball strays there, for you get thrown against the trees, and that's worse than any kick.' No Rugbeian forgets those elm trees: the *scrummages* which take place near them are, for the very valid reason given by Tom Brown, among the most desperate. It was after one of these that an old Rugbeian caught up the ball and rushed away towards his opponents' goal, upsetting players who tried to stop him, and evading others, till he came to within an easy distance of the goal, when he dropped the ball, and, as it fell, delivered a kick that sent it spinning through the air over the cross-bar.

This is the Rugby game of football. All through the winter months for nearly two hours daily, vacations and frosts only being excepted, some hundreds may be seen playing it in the school close. At 'punt about,' which is very similar, a dozen balls may often be seen going at once: the bright colours, the rapid evolutions, and the dexterity of the players makes the scene a charming one. No player has, as cricket scouts have, occasion to stand still. The work provided for each is vigorous, and well adapted to the cold air of the season in which it is played. The detractors of this system as distinguished from others say it is too violent, that carrying the ball has no business to be permitted in *foot*ball, that kicking shins, and tripping up, and pulling over are too rough. The players do not think so, and they ought to be judges. There is, however, one rule in those printed and circulated at Rugby which is rather calculated to astonish those who do not know what the game is in practice. It says, 'Though it is lawful to hold a player in a *maul*, this holding does not include attempts to throttle or strangle, which are totally opposed to all the principles of the game.'

CHAPTER II.

IN THE 'FIELD' AT ETON.

Football in the 'Field' at Eton is a very different game to that played in the school close at Rugby. Two forms, or rather varieties, of football are played by the Eton collegians. The ground for one is at the 'wall,' and that for the other is 'The Field,' where all the great matches take place. In these matches there are but twenty-two players, instead of seventy or eighty, as in the Rugby game, and there is no cross-bar to the goal posts, and catching or holding the ball, and, consequently, running with it are not allowed.

Let us suppose the college clock has just announced a quarter past twelve; that it is a mild winter day; and that you, reader, and I have turned from the lane into the 'Field.' In the centre of the ground, on the green turf, are congregated the twenty-two players; other collegians are scattered about in groups, discussing the forthcoming athletic sports; one or two who are in training for the races at these sports are taking their midday *quantum* of exercise. Merry jokes are passing round; one is challenging another to an impromptu race; others are wrestling a little, or leaping; and the small boys are kicking some old footballs about at the edge of the ground. All this ceases as the four strokes denote the half-hour. The twenty-two players remove their coats, and rush down to the goal sticks to

hang them thereon; then back into the centre, where the ball is put down. It is a large ground, and posts mark the corners and sides, and the goals are only defined by two slight poles seven feet high and eleven feet apart. The football costume serves admirably the purpose of showing the muscular development, the broad, healthy chest, and the generally fine frame which denotes strength. We have a capital opportunity of observing these things as they come down to dispose of their coats; and the well-proportioned, symmetrical frames of some of the players remind us of the gladiators, they are so well set, and there is such an absence of superfluous flesh. Football contributes not a little to this. The training of the playground at these colleges and schools, the continual round of vigorous exercise, rowing, running, leaping, football, and cricket, is as valuable physically as the training which goes on within the college walls is mentally.

We have no time, however, for more than a passing thought on this, which is suggested to us as one after another reaches out his arm and leaves a coat on the goal post. Play is just about to begin. Each side has sent one of its fleetest runners and best kickers to keep the goal. He at our end has taken up his station only a yard in advance of the goal-posts. Two more are detached as *cornerers*. The remaining eight players on each side form themselves into two walls—living walls. The ball as yet lies some distance from them. The players on each side stand two deep; the strongest form the first rank. The others lean upon them, ready to impel them forward. Each side is facing the opponents' goal. Heads are bent down, and shoulder is placed to shoulder, so that they form a compact mass. One of the *cornerers* takes up the ball, and puts it between the legs of these two lines. Then the struggle begins, each side trying to bear the other down, and push the ball away toward goal. This is an Eton *bully*. There is rare work for the muscular frames we admired just now. See how they cling together, and butt at each other; how the second line of feet are planted far back to give the outsiders force in pushing. It is one of the finest tests of strength and skill combined that has ever been witnessed. The sixteen players all move as one. Where is the ball all this time? About in the spot where it was placed by the cornerer. The struggle is not with the feet, but the shoulders. The effects of the protracted efforts begin to grow visible. The side in the violet-coloured jerseys sway backward a little—only a very little—and their feet move uneasily. That is the moment for the triumph of the other side. A couple of feet removed from the ground, and all is over. Push! Thrust! There! The bully is broken: the ball comes into sight. Some players are on the ground; others are racing along, kicking the ball gently (*dribbling* is the technical term) before their toes. The fallen players leap from the ground; the cornerers run up. There is a cry of 'No sneaking.' A vigorous dash is made at the ball; but one of the opponents has at the moment come up, and is just in time to charge the player, who has made preparations for the kick. This charge is bravely made. The two are running side by side; one stoops, and in the act of rising again brings his shoulder into forcible contact with that of his adversary, who, having one foot in the air to kick the ball at the moment, is unable to withstand the shock, and goes over on to the turf.

By this time all the players have got together, and they sweep along the ground, heads all one way, for a minute as the ball is kicked forwards, and back again as an adversary's toe drives it in the contrary direction. The rapidity of the evolutions, the sharp and continual charges, and force of the collisions between the players, who, rushing from four or five different directions at the ball, meet together, and all kick at once, are interesting to watch. Legs, of necessity, receive heavy kicks that were intended for the ball, and falls while running at full speed are not light; but the players are

ordinarily upon their feet again ere one can say 'He's down.'

The Violets have brought the ball down to their adversaries' goal-line; but the goal-keeper receives it, and his well-directed toe sends it far out into the debateable land again. Then it is kicked away to the side, where it goes out at the bounds; and when it is brought in again a *bully* like that at the commencement is formed, and the struggle is repeated, till one side gives way, or goes down.

The object of each side is to get a *rouge*. A *rouge* is obtained when the ball is kicked over the goal-line, and touched down by a player who is on the opposing side. So as soon as the ball gets free from the bully at the side, the violets, who have it close to the goal-line, which is defended by the players in red, rush forward and kick it over. Then a race ensues; two players are abreast. At every second or third stride one tilts at the other in the hope of overturning, and thus outrunning him, and being first to *touch it down*. But the fleet-footed goal-keeper passes both while they are making these experiments, and having taken up the ball, brings it to the goal-line, and kicks it back into the middle of the field. All the players are after it again, and it is at the goal-line almost immediately. A fleet runner has all the play to himself this time, and keeps the ball continually before his own toe, making a circuitous path to the goal-line, where he kicks it over, and touches it down; but the umpire will not allow a rouge, as he was not *bullied* while kicking it; that is, he was not run at or interrupted by any of the opposing players whom he outran. So once more it has to be kicked by the goal-keeper out into the field; and this time it is got away to the goal-line at the opposite end, and after a sharp struggle it is driven across the line, and a *rouge* is obtained by the Reds; for while it was still bounding, a player on that side, who took care not to be behind the goal-line when the ball was kicked there, ran forward, and having charged the goal-keeper so successfully as to leave him on the grass, *touched it down*.

Upon this all the spectators come round to this goal, for the *bully* that follows a 'touch down' is always a protracted and interesting spectacle. The ball is brought by the umpire, and placed one yard in front of the centre of the space marked out by the goal-sticks, and which it is the province of the players in violet to defend. The players in red face their opponents' goal, from which they are only a yard distant. The strongest among them, with his toe against the ball, occupies the first place; the others form a semicircle, the entire eleven composing it, and the whole being wedged together as compactly as possible. The players on the other side form a similar semicircle between the ball and the goal. The two semicircles close up with the ball between. Each side tries its best to overthrow the other players, one to push the ball beyond the level of the goal-sticks, and thus win the game, the other to force the ball back into the field. The struggle is a mighty one, and long continued without advantage to either side. The beads of perspiration gather on the foreheads of the players, caps are thrown off, words are but seldom spoken. Every muscle is strained in the effort to heave the opponents over. The backs are bent down, and originally the players' hands are upon their knees; but as the contest goes on they, of necessity, get moved and intertwined. The shoulders of the foremost men of each party touch, and those behind on each side lend their weight and strength. The ball is firmly wedged in among the feet in the centre of this heaving, struggling mass. Spectators move round and round, and watch with bated breaths till one side shows signs of 'giving.' This is the signal to the other for a renewed effort—'a long push, and a strong push, and a push all together;' for, as in the opening *bully*, the power being nicely balanced, any accident or little loss of position, if taken advantage of, will be sure to turn the scale. Such a moment al-

ways comes; the extra vigour is always manifested. Sometimes the ball is borne through the goal space amid triumphant cheering, sometimes back into the field; but it more frequently happens that the weaker side giving way goes down *en masse*, the others falling with them. Then the struggle continues on the ground. Players endeavour to crawl in or out with the ball, according to their party. Some players creep out of the writhing heap utterly exhausted; but after a minute's rest they are down again, and the struggle goes on till one side gives way, and all the players rise, declare it was 'very jolly,' and look as if they thought so too.

Such was the end of the *rouge* obtained so suddenly by the Reds; but they will, if no goals and no other *rouges* are obtained, be the winners at the termination of the one hour for which the game at Eton lasts. It is a capital plan to count these 'touches down.' Goals are proverbially difficult to get, according to all the systems. Sometimes at Rugby play will last for two or three hours on as many consecutive days without either side obtaining a goal, and be drawn at last; but this would not be the case if touches down counted everywhere as they do at Eton.

A few minutes pass in inaction after one of these struggles at Eton, but the ball is soon rolling again, and another rouge is being fought for; or it is kicked over the heads of the spectators at the side, and brought just within the line where a new *bully* is formed, and the old fight is fought over again.

St. Andrew's is one of the grand football days at Eton, when there are matches at the 'Wall' and in the 'Field,' and when the collegians who have left Eton for Cambridge and Oxford return to their old playplace for a match at their favourite pastime.

CHAPTER III.

FOOTBALL AT HARROW.

Looking down the London side of the hill at Harrow on to the level meadows below, late in the autumn, while the leaves, yellow as buttercups in the soft sunlight, were still upon the elm trees, I saw a pretty semi-rural scene. Farm labourers were ploughing in adjacent fields, cattle and sheep were grazing in others. In the school grounds some two hundred boys were racing after the football, and beyond was London under a canopy of black smoke. Half hidden by the trees at my back was the church, and around me the schoolhouses. What charming memories attach to these schools, which have been the dwelling-places of men to whose words the world has since listened!

I cannot refuse the invitation to enter the Fourth Form School, to look again at the seat which Byron occupied when he first indulged his taste for poetic composition. How intimately his name is associated with the school! What Harrovian does not know the spot in the churchyard he loved so much, where, in his own words, he used 'to sit for hours and hours when a boy,' and where he once hoped to have been buried, as his daughter was? I never asked one who could not point out the spot, and was not ready to recite those four melancholy verses, 'On revisiting Harrow.' There, too, are to be seen, cut by their own hands, the poet's name, and 'R. Peel,' and 'H. Temple,' and many another since famous in the world's history. I am glad that the Harrovians honour these marks of men who have lived there, and that they have taken means to prevent their being erased to make room for others, as it is the customary fate of names written on school desks, famous trees, and ancient ruins to be.

How often Sir Robert Peel and Viscount Palmerston must have run up and down this steep hillside! Were they football players? I have never heard that the Prime Minister distinguished himself in kicking the ball; but we all know that it is narrated by an historian that a certain Archbishop of Canterbury was considered to have been highly complimented when it was stated that he was a learned prelate

and an excellent player at football. Is there at this moment among those boys intent only upon the way the ball goes a future laureate, a Palmerston, or a Peel? What are the destinies awaiting them? The disappointments through which they will have to struggle, the difficulties that will beset them, and how will they all die? These questions always intrude themselves upon my attention when I look from the hill at Harrow down upon the playground, and see the two or three hundred happy scholars, and hear their laughter and cheers. I have known many people who, at the sight of numbers of young people, could not avoid similar speculations.

They vanish when I get to the playground and mingle with the players. Who could look at their glowing faces, radiant with good-humoured excitement, and think of difficulties they would not surmount as they did those of the game, or of death, with such unlimited health and strength, youth, and manly beauty around?

The Harrow football is simpler than that of Eton, and much more so than the Rugby game. It has not half the diversity of either. There are neither *scrummages* nor *bullies*. What are called the goals at the other schools are here denominated 'Bases.' They are twelve feet wide. There is no cross-bar, and the ball may be kicked to any height, so that it is clearly within the space marked out. The ground is one hundred and fifty yards long and one hundred yards broad. The games begin at 2·15, and continue till 3·45. Only bases count, and the sides obtaining most of these win. The matches between the Harrovians and past members of the school from the universities are great contests.

Before the game begins each captain places one of his best men at the base; umpires are appointed on each side, and they follow the game, and have to see that every player keeps on his right side, and to prevent any one kicking the ball who has infringed the rule on this subject. The game begins by a player kicking the ball off from the centre. I have seen it driven with the aid of the wind nearly the whole of the seventy-six yards between that point and the base. All is running and kicking in the Harrow game. *Shinning* and tripping up are forbidden. When the ball is driven out at the side lines it is promptly kicked in again. When kicked into the air it may be caught; and if the player cries '*Three yards*,' all the others must clear away from him, and allow him to have a free kick at it. When near the bases this is very valuable; and a good player generally makes a base from it. The effect of the rule is to keep the ball as much as possible on the ground. If a catch is made so near to an opponent's base that the player who makes it can jump the distance, he is allowed to do so. But this is of very rare occurrence; and the game at Harrow is only to be won by a true kick, which sends the ball flying between the posts.

There is less violence and less variety in this than in either of the other games; but, played as the Harrovians play it, it is a charming game for the winter months, when cricket is out of the question, when rowing has not the charm it has in spring and summer, and when, in brief, almost all other English open-air pastimes are rendered impossible by our climate.

During the present season football has again become popular. It is becoming familiar to all our suburban common lands; and the clubs that make use of these have formed an association, and made a new set of rules for the game, which are very like those which regulate the play at Harrow; but under every form in which it is played the game is attractive. It is, in fact, a thoroughly English pastime, particularly adapted to the proclivities of our race, and precisely that kind of sport which will best counteract the effect of our sedentary desk and office work, as it does the bookwork of the students at the universities and schools.

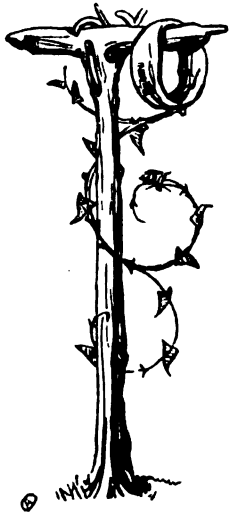
J. D. C.

THE MERCHANT PRINCES OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER II.

www.libtool.com.cn

THE DE LA POLES OF HULL.



GIVE a complete history of the De la Poles would require more than one bulky volume. Coming over with William the Conqueror, the family was one of the first to take firm root in our country, to shake off its Norman prejudices, and to become thoroughly English. Under the early Plantagenets it had sturdy branches in Middlesex, Oxford, and Devon; and some of its members, going with Edward I. into Wales, fought so well that they received a large grant of land in Montgomery by way of recompense. But it was not by fighting alone that they became rich and famous, or won honour for their country. In 1297—a year before Edward's accession to the throne—we find it recorded that William de la Pole, and some other merchants of Totnes, received a sum of *12l. 9s. 5½d.* for cloths sold by them to the Crown at the fair of St. Giles, at Winchester; and later in the same year it appears that the wools of one William de la Pole, a merchant of Rouen, were detained at Ipswich to prevent their being taken to Flanders; while in 1272 we have reference to a Nicholas de la Pole, as one of the authorized collectors and receivers of the goods of the Flemish merchants in England. Whatever his relation to this Nicholas, it can hardly be doubted that William, the merchant of Rouen, was also the merchant of Totnes, belonging to both places, because he travelled from one to the other, after the fashion of all the great dealers of his day, buying and selling goods. This same man, also, we may with safety assume to have been the William de la Pole who settled, a few years later, in the newly-founded town of Ravensrod, at the south-eastern extremity of Yorkshire.

Ravensrod has a curious history. Originally an island, formed by the gradual heaping-up of sand and stones, and separated from the mainland by more than a mile of sea, it was for a long time used only by the fishermen of those parts for drying their nets. By degrees, however, a narrow shingly road, the breadth of a bow-shot, was cast up through the joint action of the sea on the east and the Humber on the western side; and as soon as this road was completed, the inhabitants of the neighbouring towns, especially of Ravenser, an ancient port and manor on the Humber, determined to make use of it. In this way was founded the town of Odd, called Odd juxta Ravenser, and after a while, Ravenser-odd, or Ravensrod. Its convenience as a landing-place, and, at first, its freedom from civic interference, soon made it an important mart. In 1276, the people of Grimsby, on the other side of the river, complained to the king of the great damage it was doing to their trade, their loss in a year being more than *100l.* Of this complaint no notice appears to have been taken by the Crown. But the people of Ravensrod used it in an unlooked-for way. With unseemly zeal they made it a practice—so, at least, said their enemies—to go out in boats, intercept the trading ships and fishing-smacks, and urge them to stop at Ravensrod, asserting, for instance, that while trade was there so brisk, that *40s.* could easily be obtained for a last of herrings, the people of Grimsby would not be able to pay them half as much.

This persecution of the Grimsby-men, however, did not last long, if indeed it was every really practised. In 1361 a great flood came and compelled all the inhabitants to take refuge in the neighbouring villages. Spurn Head lighthouse now marks the site of Ravensrod, while of Ravenser there remains no trace at all.

At least fifty years before the time of the flood, William de la Pole had done with Ravensrod. Having lived and prospered in it for a little while, he died in or before 1311, leaving a widow, Elena, who soon married again—her second husband being John Rottenherring, a famous merchant of Hull — and three sons, Richard, William, and Thomas, who carried on their father's work with notable success. Of the youngest of these three we know very little indeed, and about the private history of the other two we also have but scanty information. But their public life and work are very clearly decipherable from the scattered records of the time. As far as commerce is concerned, they were the greatest men of the fourteenth century; if not the first of a long and noble line of merchant princes, at any rate the first whose history has come down to us, and whose deeds are known to have been rewarded with the public approval of their country.

Richard was born somewhere near the year 1280, William a few years later. They learnt to be adventurous of life and money amid the stirring incidents of Edward I.'s reign, often, doubtless, crossing with their father, in the largest and swiftest of his ships, to the coast towns of Flanders and France, there to meet the richest merchants in the world, and treat with them for the selling of English wool and leather, and the taking in exchange of foreign wine and timber. Those short journeys were full of peril. At any moment there was the risk of being met unawares by French or Scottish pirates, and then —unless they were strong enough to defeat their assailants, or fleet enough to be saved by flight—they could expect no pleasanter fate than that their goods should be seized, the common sailors left hanging to the mast-head, and the masters only kept alive on account of the money that would be paid for their release. These things were bad enough under the vigorous rule of Edward I. They were much worse during the disastrous period of Edward II.'s misgovernment. And it was, doubtless, for greater security that the brothers De la Pole, soon after their father's death, removed a distance of twenty miles, to the fortified and rapidly growing town of Hull. They could not have settled in a better place.

In the history of Hull, originally called Wyke-upon-Hull, are well illustrated the growth and character of an English commercial town during the middle ages. Owned by the monks of Meaux, who themselves made shrewd tradesmen, and who knew well how to encourage trade in others, it had been a thriving mart since 1198, and doubtless from a much earlier date. The Exchequer Rolls of the thirteenth century show that its exports, consisting chiefly of wool, rough sheepskins, and prepared leather, were in some years half as great as those of London. All through that time it was a favourite resort of the great wool merchants, about one-third of them being foreigners, especially Flemings and Florentines. Perhaps it was at the suggestion of these Italian merchants, great money-lenders, and therefore men very useful to the king, that Edward I. took it under his especial protection. Be that as it may, Edward bought it of the monks of Meaux in 1293, and conferred on it a civic charter in 1296. Henceforth, with the new name of Kingston-upon-Hull, it prospered more than ever. With John Rottenherring, stepfather of the brothers De la Pole, for its most influential citizen, it received each year some fresh benefit either from the Crown or from the enterprise of private individuals. The nave and chancel of the noble church of Holy Trinity had been set up in 1270, and its splendid tower was now in course of erection, to be completed in 1312. The Augustine

monastery was on the right, at the meeting of Munk-gate and Market-place, and not far from the junction of the Hull with the Humber; the Carmelite Friary was to the left, near the modern White Friars-gate, on the road to Beverley; while the Chapel of St. Mary, near the top of Market-place, was already built or building. The wall, now for the most part replaced by the western docks and basins, had been begun, and the harbour was finished, in 1299. In 1300 a mint was put up by royal ordinance, and in 1316 was established a ferry for conveying passengers, cattle, and goods across the Humber to Barton, a more ancient town than Hull, and now rapidly increasing in importance.

Under this year, 1316, we first hear of the De la Poles as living in Hull, although it is probable they had come thither five or six years before. It was a year of such famine that wheat rose in price from 6*s.* 8*d.* to 40*s.* a quarter, and salt was sold at the same rate. Richard de la Pole, therefore, serving both himself and his neighbours, obtained a safe-conduct from the king, empowering him to visit foreign parts and bring home corn and other things, security being given that he would not sell them to the Scots. How he fared in the business we are not told; but from this time he seems to have steadily gained influence at court. In 1320 he was made under-butler to the port of Hull, his duty being to aid the king's chief butler in making suitable provision for the royal household. In 1322 he obtained, jointly with another, the more important office of collector of customs for the town; and the appointment was renewed in 1325, and again in 1327. In April of the latter year, two months after the accession of Edward III., he was promoted to the honourable and lucrative post of chief butler to the king. From this time he can have lived little at his house in Hull Street. He travelled with the court, which for some time was moving about between York and Lincoln; but he was still a merchant by profession, the business being managed by his younger brother William. In July of this same year, 1327, we find William lending to the king 4000*l.* with which to fit out his first expedition against the Scots; and this was followed by a loan of 2000*l.* in August, and another of 1200*l.* in December, made in the names of both brothers. These debts, heavy even for a king to incur, were to be liquidated out of the duties on wools, woolfels, and leather, collected in Hull; and in the meanwhile, as security, William de la Pole was to have possession of that part of the royal seal known as the cocket. Under every subsequent year we find references to similar transactions. In the summer of 1325, for instance, the brothers engaged to pay 20*l.* a day for the expenses of the royal household, besides supplying as much wine as was needed, and received authority to pay themselves from the proceeds of the customs of London, Ipswich, Yarmouth, Boston, Hull, Hartlepool, and Newcastle. It became the rule for royalty to pawn its credit with such wealthy subjects as the De la Poles. For this, however, the young king was not responsible. 'Lady Isabel the queen, and Sir Roger Mortimer,' says a contemporary historian, 'assumed unto themselves royal power over many of the great men of England and of Wales, and retained the treasures of the land in their own hands, and kept the king wholly in subjection to themselves; so much so that Sir Henry, Earl of Lancaster, who was made chief guardian of the king at the beginning, by common consent of all the realm, could not approach him or counsel him. Wherefore Sir Henry was greatly moved against the queen and Sir Roger Mortimer, with a view of redressing this evil, that so the king might be able to live upon his own, without making extortionate levies to the impoverishment of the people.'

The De la Poles, at any rate, suffered no impoverishment from the levies of the Crown. Doing their business honestly, and taking no more from either king or people than was their due, as we have

every reason to believe, they were advancing every year in wealth and influence. The favour shown to them perforce by King Edward while he was in the hands of his wicked mother and her more wicked lover, was only augmented after he had taken the government upon himself. At the close of 1328, Richard received from him a Christmas present of 1000 marks, in consideration of the good services done by him; and in the following May he was made gauger of all the wine sold throughout the kingdom, his brother William being appointed his deputy. In 1330, Edward is recorded to have cancelled another appointment, that of valet of the king's bedchamber—'a situation always filled by gentlemen'—given to him against his will; but there were special reasons for this, and as next year William is referred to as the king's 'beloved valet and merchant,' we need not see in the transaction any disfavour to the De la Poles. There is everything to show their growing importance.

In 1331, Richard seems to have found it necessary to go and live in London, there to attend to his court duties. He therefore abandoned his connection with commerce, and left the whole business in his brother's hands. The document by which their partnership of twenty years' standing was dissolved, is almost worth quoting in full. It is dated July 12th, 1331. In it they first of all pardon one another for all manner of injuries done, said, or thought by one against the other, from the time of their coming into the world down to the writing of the deed; then they release one another from all contracts and mutual duties ever existing between them, save those arising out of their brotherhood, 'which lasts and will last as long as God permits;' and after that they proceed to parcel out the wealth accumulated by them. Unfortunately, we are not told the value of the whole property, or the proportion in which it was divided. It is likely that, as William had for some years had the whole of the responsibility of managing the business, a large proportion fell to him. The portion allotted to Richard amounted to 3874*l.* 17*s.*, certainly a smaller sum, even when account is taken of the relative value of money, than we might have looked for, considering the largeness of some of the transactions already referred to. Of this, 645*l.* was reckoned to be the value of his house, while 100*l.* was set down for the cattle and live-stock in his farms, 30*l.* for his horses, and 80*l.* for his silver goods; making a total of 855*l.* Besides this, he was to collect some outstanding debts to the extent of 148*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.*; 2205*l.* was to be paid to him in cash; and for his share in the rents and possessions held jointly by the two brothers in the counties of York and Lincoln, William was to pay him either 100 marks a year, as rent, or 2000 marks once for all.

Richard lived fourteen years after his retirement from business. He retained his butlership until 1338, going over to Ireland in 1334, there to deposit certain wines of the king's, until they were needed for use. In 1335 he was made a justice in eyre for Yorkshire, and in 1336 we read that he received a reward of 250 marks 'for the expensive labours he had maintained in expediting certain affairs of the king's.' He is described as a citizen of London in 1339; and in London he died on the last day of July, or the first day of August, 1345, leaving to his heirs, besides other property, houses in Gracechurch Street, Lombard Street, and Cornhill, and assigning a large sum of money to the clergy of St. Edmund's, Gracechurch Street, and St. Michael's, Cornhill, for distribution to the poor. At the time of his death he is said to have been debtor to the Crown to the extent of 2576*l.* 12*s.*, a third of which was obtained from the merchants of Prussia, being an outstanding debt of theirs to Richard de la Pole, and the remainder was remitted by the king in consideration of his long and faithful services to the state.

In the meanwhile, William was rising to the highest honours proper to a merchant prince. In the autumn of 1332, as King Edward was proceeding northwards to begin

his Scottish wars in earnest, 'he himself,' as we read in a manuscript history of Hull, 'with several of his nobles and attendants following after, came to this town to take a view and prospect thereof, and both he and they were most splendidly and nobly entertained by William de la Pole.' In token of his liking for the town and its citizens, he transferred the local government from the hands of a bailiff to those of a mayor, nominating William de la Pole as the first to fill the post. For eight years from this time the great merchant was repeatedly employed on duties, half commercial and half political. In April, 1333, he spent, on the king's account, 40*l.* in fitting out the good ship 'Trinity of Hull,' with men and munition, for going to fight against the Scots. In June, he was sent on a special mission to reprove the Earl of Flanders on account of the aid given to the Scots by his mariners; and in May, 1335, he was sent again on a like errand. In this year, moreover, besides being chosen mayor, he was appointed improvisor of all the collectors of customs on the east coast of England, from Hull as far down as Lynn. In July, we notice that he received from King Edward an acknowledgment for 330*l.* spent in buying sixty hogsheads of wine and six hundred quarters of salt; and in November, for services described in the king's warrant as 'agreeable and useful to us, in happily expediting certain affairs that specially concern us, yet not without undergoing great and extensive labours,' he received a gift of 500 marks. In the following May another present was made to him of half that value, and in August, we learn that he fitted out and sent to Gascony, Flanders, and other parts, two of his ships, the 'Bloom,' and the 'Saint Mary,' 'on the king's business as well as his own,' for which letters of safe conduct were issued. In the same month he received the king's acknowledgment for a debt of 3027*l.*; and in the following November a pardon was made out in his favour, releasing him from penalty for not having already taken arms against the Scots, according to the king's proclamation, and excusing him from service for the next three years. In this year's campaign, however, the most peaceful man might have joined with impunity. 'At that time,' says the chronicler, 'the king made another expedition into Scotland, because the people there would keep no peace, but would always be at war. And so the king passed through the land; but the Scots always took to flight, so that no encounter could then take place. Wherefore the king was very angry, and all his people returned into England.'

But Edward was not on this account less earnest in his preparations for war. In January, 1337, he commissioned William de la Pole to build a stout galley, for which forty picked oak-trees were to be sent to him from a priory in Nottinghamshire, and in May, the merchant was sent to scour the counties of York and Lincoln, in search of fit sailors to man the same. All over England, throughout this year, people were busy building new ships, and repairing old ones, in readiness for a work only half talked about as yet. This was the attempted subjugation of France to the crown of England, an enterprise which modern students of history are learning to see in its true light, but which no Englishman living at the time could be expected to regard with anything but favour.

William de la Pole, at any rate, was not tardy in supporting the scheme. On the 3rd of January, 1338, by which time the arrangements were tolerably complete, we find a special duty assigned to him. He was empowered to arrest and cause to be arrested in Hull and elsewhere as many ships as he thought needful for the carriage of corn, cloth, and other articles, which it was to be his business to purchase and provide for the king's use, and to convey them to Aquitaine, 'for the maintenance of the king's faithful people there;' in other words, he was to undertake the feeding and clothing of the army to be taken to France, and augmented there by Edward. It was doubtless in aid of this work that he was soon after

authorized to use certain houses in King Street, York; and, in reward for his doing of it, as well as in payment for some money which he had lent, that an important grant of land was made to him in the following November. Some time before this he had quitted England in pursuance of his commission. On the 4th of August he was appointed mayor of the staple at Antwerp, King Edward having gone thither a fortnight before; and in Antwerp and its neighbourhood he lived in state for at least a year and a half. During most of this time he was in the pay of the Crown. For the period between the 16th of August, 1338, and the 16th of November, 1339, with the exception of forty-seven days, during which he was absent on private business, he received a salary of 8*s.* a day from the Exchequer, while for the whole time were paid 4*s.* a day for one knight, and 2*s.* a day each for thirty-four men-at-arms in attendance upon him.

These eighteen months form the most memorable portion of his life. In February and March, 1339, we find him employed, with some other commissioners, in strange and delicate business. He had to treat with the Archbishop of Trèves for the repayment of 50,000 golden florins, which, with other moneys, had been lent to the king, and for which 'the hereditary and most beautiful crown of our lord the king and the realm of England,' had been pledged; which means, doubtless, that he had to pay the money himself. In a hundred other ways, as it seems, he was at this time serving his king, and Edward's appreciation of the service is shown in five notable documents, all issued from Antwerp, on the 15th of May, in this same year. In one, he and his brother Richard are released from all annual payment on account of the manor of Myton-upon-Hull, granted to them some years before, at a rental of 10*l.* 3*s.* a year; and in another, he and his other brother John, on account of their liberal dealing towards the state, are freed from all actions or demands of any sort that may be brought against them; whence it appears that his younger brother, at any rate, was with him at this time. The third document is very curious indeed, giving us one of the very few glimpses that we can get of our merchant's private life, and serving to show him a man of rare and far-seeing kindness in his domestic relations. 'In consideration,' it is written, in the king's name, 'of the great and reasonable supply which our beloved merchant, William de la Pole, has often made to us, and especially after our late passage over the sea, and also of the praiseworthy attendance bestowed by him upon us, we, at the earnest request of the same William, grant and give license, for ourself and our heirs, to Katherine, wife of the same William, that she, after his death, may marry whomsoever she wishes, so long as he be one of the king's subjects, without let or hindrance.' It is not every day that we find a husband filled with such unselfish love for his wife that he makes earnest request that she may have facilities for contracting a second marriage, in case of his early death. It is less strange that William de la Pole should have made provision for the suitable settlement of his daughters. That the children, however, of a merchant, and, as the phrase goes, an altogether self-made man, should have a king, and as proud a king as Edward III., for their ward, is as strange as anything else. Yet so it was. In the fourth of the documents issued on this 15th of May, Edward grants to his friend's eldest daughter, Katherine, 'the first suitable marriage of some heir male, whose lands and tenements did not exceed the value of 500*l.*;' a very large sum in those days; to Blanche, the second, the next chance of like value; and to Margaret, the youngest, the one after that; with a proviso that, 'if either of them should come to marriageable age before such marriages fell to the Crown, and had been accepted for themselves,' 1000 marks should be paid in lieu to each of the unmarried ones.

The last of the five papers refers to William de la Pole himself, and shows why all the others were written. 'Considering in what manner his beloved merchant, William de la

Pole, was worn out in his service, and fatigued with labours and various troubles, and therefore willing to have regard to his welfare and repose,' the king released him from attendance at assizes, juries, and the like, as well as from service in the capacity of mayor, sheriff, or other agent of the Crown, against his will. It was also promised 'that this our present expedition being ended, in which we have perceived the service of the said William to have been exceedingly advantageous to us, he be not against his will sent anywhere, on this or the other side of the sea, for the prosecution of our business, or that of our heirs, and that he be not burthened with any office or labours to be undertaken for us; but that henceforth he may thoroughly enjoy the comforts of his home, as shall be agreeable to himself, without molestation or any manner of annoyance being offered to him in any way by us or our heirs or our officers.'

These favours were great, greater perhaps than any merchant earlier than William de la Pole had ever received; but they were certainly not more than he deserved. On the 30th of June, 1339, the king acknowledged his debt to him to the extent of 76,180*l.*, in addition, as it seems, to 46,389*l.* 19*s.* 10½*d.*, supplied in instalments during this and the previous year. This was an immense sum, representing not much less than a million of money, according to its present value; but it was not more than was needed. King Edward, we read in the manuscript history of Hull already cited, 'was reduced to such a strait for want of timely supplies of money out of England, that he was forced to send for William de la Pole, who was then at Antwerp, managing and carrying on his merchandize and affairs, and to borrow many thousand pounds of gold of him; who did not only most freely supply him with all he had and could borrow and procure, but also mortgaged his own real estate to supply his further needs and necessities; which was a most noble, worthy, and glorious mark of his love, fidelity, and loyalty to his prince, and of the greatness of his generous soul.' Edward was not ungrateful. On the 27th of September he issued a charter, unique in the history of commerce. Kings have often been sorely troubled for want of money; but in no other instance, surely, have they so honestly and graciously proclaimed to all the world the greatness of their need and the greatness of their debt to the men who helped them through it. 'Know,' it is written, 'that when our faithful and well-beloved subject, William de la Pole, presently after our coming to the parts on this side of the sea, hearing and understanding that our affairs, for which we took our journey, were for want of money very dangerously deferred, and being sensible of our wants, came in person unto us, and to us and our followers hath made and procured to be made, such a supply of money that by his means our honour and the honour of our followers—thanks be to God!—hath been preserved, which otherwise had been exposed to great danger. And afterwards the said William, continuing our supply with exceeding bounty, hath undertaken the payment of great sums for us to divers persons, for which he hath engaged himself by bonds and obligations, and if he had not done so, and intrusted his bounty and goodwill thus, not only unto us but also unto our confederates and subjects with us in Brabant, we could not by any means have been supplied, but must necessarily, with a great deal of reproach, have ruined our journey and designs. And by his means being assisted and supplied, we got to Hainault, near the marches of France, but could go no further, our moneys there again failing us. And when it was held for certain that our journey was altogether in vain, and our affairs utterly ruined, the said William, having still a care to relieve our extreme necessity, engaged himself and his whole estate, procured for us a great sum of money, and delivered us again out of exceeding great danger.'

We have said that Edward was not ungrateful for these services. In the same day he made the merchant

both a knight banneret—'nominally so, not really, because he could not do that, Sir William having never done any great thing or achievement in war to have the banner for the same flourishing over his head, which was the old essential way of making one'—and Chief Baron of the Exchequer; and, to show that these honours were not conferred, as was not uncommon with the needy sovereigns of the middle ages, as a means of extortion, he excused him from payment of even the ordinary patent fees. He gave him some houses in Lombard Street, London; he authorized him to receive all the issues of the realm and all subsidies granted to the Crown, and apply them in relief of his own claims until the whole were paid off; and in the following February he sent him home to England with all show of favour. But it was certainly not, according to the king's pledge, 'to enjoy the comforts of his home without molestation or any manner of annoyance.' In his new capacity of Chief Baron of the Exchequer, he was expected, along with his fellow-officers, to furnish as much more money as was needed for the conduct of the war in France. He had mortgaged all his own property in Edward's behalf, but he could not mortgage the strength and honour of England. To the king's repeated requests for money, 'these false traitors,' as the courtier-historian terms Sir William de la Pole and his associates, 'sent him letters to the effect that the collection of the tenths of England, which had been granted to him, could not be made, nor could the number of the sacks of wool throughout all the realm be raised; and that they did not dare to act more rigorously through fear of war, and lest the people might choose rather to rise against them than give them any more; also, that the collection of such moneys as they had received did not suffice for the wages or for the fees of the servants and officers of the king, nor yet to clear off the debts which he himself owed for the expenses of his household, to the payment of which they had been assigned by command of the king himself.' Thereat King Edward was not a little angry. In November he came over to England, and, seizing the offenders, summarily put them under arrest. Sir William de la Pole was sent to the castle of Devizes, and the others to different similar places of confinement. How they were treated, or how long they were detained, is not recorded; but the circumstance at best affords a curious illustration of the lawlessness and injustice which the most chivalrous of kings could show with impunity towards the most honest and honourable of his subjects.

For many years there was a marked coldness and harshness in Edward's treatment of De la Pole. Many of the favours conferred upon him were withdrawn, and repayment of the money lent to him in his time of sorest need was tardily and grudgingly made. At last, however, the king came to a better mind. In 1346 we find him restoring to his 'faithful merchant' certain manors of his that had been appropriated to the royal use, and making restitution for the wrongful tenure; and under the year 1354 we meet with a singular document, to the effect that 'Sir William de la Pole, having, in the fullest possible manner, remitted and quitted claim to the king for all the debts on account of moneys lent to him,' was, in return, pardoned for all actions and demands of the Crown registered against him, as well as 'for all felonies, homicides, robberies, and the like, which he or his attorneys might have committed, contrary to the peace of the realm.' Moreover, 'because the aforesaid William was said to be impotent and of great age, and not able personally to labour in prosecuting and defending pleas,' he was allowed to appear, whenever it was necessary for him to present himself, by attorney.

At this time he was about seventy years old, and certainly he had done enough to make him wish for repose. For some years past he seems to have been living quietly, though not idly, in Hull. 'Being put into so great a capacity of doing good,' says the local historian, 'he did mightily encourage and improve

this town, by many new charters, privileges, immunities, and freedoms, that he got and obtained for it. And having lived in these great honours about twelve or fifteen years, feared and beloved of every one, and having with comfort and joy seen his two sons arising, and almost even risen, to the greatest honours in England, he then determined, out of thanks and gratitude to God for His so many and great favours bestowed upon him, to found, build, and endow a most stately monastery; but before that he had half finished the same, he died.' His original purpose, as we learn from his son's statement, had been to found a hospital, and with this intent he obtained a charter from Edward III.; then he resolved to make it a house for minoress nuns of the order of St. Clare; but this determination in turn gave place to another, which issued in the erection of the Carthusian Priory, still in part existing as the Charterhouse. The work, amply provided for in his will, was continued by his son and heir; while outside of it was also put up the building known as the Maison Dieu, for the housing and maintenance of thirteen poor old men and thirteen poor old women.

He died at Hull on the 22nd of June, 1366. His widow lived on until the 28th of January, 1382, without making use of her license to marry again. Both were buried in Trinity Church, Hull, where a monument, adorned with their effigies, still exists. 'He is bare-headed, reclining his head on two cushions, habited as a merchant, in an outer cloak or mantle, buttoned close at the neck, with a standing cape, and buttons down to the sides. His coat has six buttons on the breast, and the sleeves are buttoned and reach to his wrists. At his breast hangs a dagger or whittle. At his feet is a lion. She seems to wear the mitred head-dress, falling down in plaits at the side of her face; her close gown buttoned on the waist, and also the sleeves, which reach to the wrists. Under this is a petticoat, and over it falls a kind of veil. In her hands she holds a heart. Her head rests on two cushions, supported by angels. At her feet is a dog.'

We have thus told all that is most interesting in the stray records that have come down to us bearing on the life of Sir William de la Pole, the first of our great merchant princes. More famous, but less fameworthy, were some of his descendants. His eldest son, Michael, contemporary with Chaucer, began life as a courtier, and became an especial favourite with Richard II., who made him Chancellor of England in 1383, and Earl of Suffolk in 1384. Justly impeached before the Commons, however, for his evil deeds, he was in 1385 deprived of office, rank, and property, and forced to flee for safety into France, where he died in 1391. To his son Michael, a year or two before the deposition of Richard, were restored the peerage and the possessions of his father, and he held his honours with dignity until his death in 1415. His son, also named Michael, Earl of Suffolk for a month, was slain at Agincourt, in the same year, to be succeeded by a younger son, William, who, from being fourth Earl, became the first Duke of Suffolk, who conducted the siege of Orleans against Joan of Arc, and became the favourite of Margaret of Anjou, Lord Chancellor, Lord High Admiral, and virtually king of England, to be hunted down as a traitor and beheaded in 1450. John, his son, was reinstated by Edward IV., who gave him his sister in marriage, and died peacefully in 1491. His son and successor, Edmund, however, was beheaded by Henry VII. in 1513, for treasonable coveting of the crown of England; and Anne, his only child, with whom ended the direct line of succession from Sir William de la Pole, merchant of Hull, became a nun.

H. R. F. B.

www.libtool.com.cn

Engraved by W. J. Linton, from a Photograph of Eckter's Fresco.

THE RAILWAY: AN ALLEGORY.

See "Art in a Railway Station."

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

ART IN A RAILWAY STATION.

SOME years ago Mr. G. F. Watts, the painter of the great fresco of the School of Legislators in the Hall of Lincoln's Inn, offered the directors of the North-Western Railway to paint with frescoes the large hall (then approaching completion) of the terminus at Euston Square, if the directors would defray the cost of the scaffolding and colours. Mr. Watts is an artist of acknowledged ability, admired and esteemed by his fellow-painters, as well as by the public—though not a royal academician. His time is precious to him; but in his love of his art, and his desire to do what he might to assist in working out what he believes to be its high purpose, he was ready to give up without remuneration the years it might be necessary to devote to the undertaking. The reader knows well the Euston Terminus: it is needless to say, therefore, that Mr. Watts's offer was not accepted. He was thanked, of course; but it was whispered to him that 'in the state of railway property the directors did not consider themselves justified in going even to the expense which would be required merely for the scaffolding and the colours.' And 'the architect,' as Mr. Watts said in relating the circumstance to the Royal Academy Commission—'the architect expressed great alarm about it;' though why *he* should be alarmed one does not readily see.

Perhaps the directors were in the right; apart even from the consideration of the state of railway property—a consideration to which, when so minded, they give very little heed, but which furnishes a ready answer to an inconvenient projector. Perhaps they were in the right even on æsthetic considerations. At any rate, they have the support of a great authority in matters of art. Mr. Ruskin denounces with all his might—and he is mighty in denunciation—every kind of artistic decoration at a railway station. You don't go to a railway station, he says, to stay there and admire either the building or its ornaments. What you want is to get away from it as soon as you can. And that, as you see the moment the proposition is stated, is a mental condition not at all compatible with the patient, loving study of a work of art.

They think of these things differently, however, in France—and in Germany. In France they have gone some way in rendering railway stations ornamental. In Germany they have actually done what Mr. Watts proposed, and the bare suggestion of which made the North-Western directors shudder, and alarmed their architect.

We are about to introduce the reader to the first of two somewhat remarkable examples of German art which have been lately painted in the great hall of the Munich Railway Station. They are executed in water-glass, and are of large size. But, after a frequent German fashion, they are placed at a great height, and are badly lighted. The colouring, moreover, is said not to be satisfactory—of what German fresco *is* the colour satisfactory?—and the hall is *not* the waiting-room: so that altogether the impression they produce on railway passengers appears not to be very powerful. One may fairly doubt whether, if ever so well seen, their purpose would be very clearly understood in the passing glance they are likely to receive from the passenger hurrying to or from his train, unless, indeed, that passenger were a philosophic German.

To every nation its own forms of art, as well as literature. The Englishman must have realities: the German prefers abstractions. The English painter tries to imitate as clearly as he can something he has seen in the outer world. The German painter—at least, of 'high art'—seeks to represent the Idea which, like the metaphysician, he has evolved from his inner consciousness: or, rather, so it has been. The fathers of that lofty form of German art, which the German

critics fancied was to revolutionize the art of Europe, Schadow and Schnorr, Overbeck and Cornelius, and their associates and disciples, were all filled with a Schlegelian notion of the grandeur of the abstract and ascetic in art, the beauty of symbolism, the evil of dependence on the external world, and the necessity for imbuing the mind with that inner spirituality which distinguished the early Italian and German masters, and making these masters in all things their guide and model. It was hailed as a revelation in æsthetics. The young painters all adopted the new creed. German art became, to speak technically, representative rather than imitative. The direct study of nature was forsworn: the Idea was all in all. But that phase of art has pretty well passed away. The founders of the school have lived to witness its decline. You see by such pretty, smooth, tinted inanities as Mücke contributed to the International Exhibition, that the saintly ascetic school still has its devotees, and is patronized in high places; but it is no longer anywhere looked up to as the typical form of German art. Young Germany least of all recognizes in it the Art of the Future.

Young Germany is disposed to look for that in a more sensational style; but hardly trusts to itself in the matter. It turns now to France, now to Belgium, and is evidently expecting that between the two it shall at least learn how to move with a little more sprightliness, and then it hopes to move to good purpose. At present it is in a transition state.

But there is a modification of the former style which evidently has a strong hold on the German mind, and if not the Art of the (German) Future, is perhaps the typical art of the Present. Of this Kaulbach is at once the founder and the living representative. Kaulbach was the scholar of Cornelius. He is not so learned, perhaps not so great, a painter as his master; but he has stronger muscles, greater vigour, more self-reliance, consequently more originality, and a spirit of satire which he employs somewhat freely in his pictures, and which makes him feared as well as admired. Kaulbach has been employed to execute many large mural pictures; but, like his predecessors, he usually contents himself with making the designs, and preparing the cartoons, leaving the actual painting on the walls to his pupils and assistants. By this means a school of skilful painters is formed, ready to undertake any commission, however vast. For the most part they are mere imitators, clever copyists of the master's manner, nothing more. Now and then, however, one emerges from the crowd, and makes good his claim to be something better than his master's assistant.

Such an one is the painter whose work is before us. Herr Echter, the painter of the railway frescoes, is the pupil of Kaulbach, and has painted on several of his huge frescoes; but he has here shown that he can think for himself, and work after a manner of his own.

With what kind of subjects Mr. Watts would have covered the walls of the great hall of the Euston Terminus he has not stated. We may be sure it would not have been with such as Herr Echter has painted in the great hall of the Munich Terminus. He would hardly have symbolized the progress of civilization by allegories of the railway and the electric telegraph. Yet that is what Herr Echter has done, and done well. He has so far conformed to the German idea as to paint an allegory; but it is an allegory so clear and simple in its character that the most matter-of-fact Englishman will easily comprehend it—at least if supplied with a clue. He has not, as will be seen, taken the well-worn symbols, but has worked out a new and poetic conception.

The subject in the cut before us is the Railway. The Power of Steam is typified by a man of Titanic strength and energy, bound, however, in fetters of iron, and controlled and guided with the lightest touch by the calm majestic female whom he carries swiftly forward,

and whose bondsman he has become. With his broad wings he cleaves the air with the rapidity of an eagle. From his mouth he puffs forth steam and fire. His mighty limbs proclaim his power, and their abrupt, energetic, angular motion is strangely suggestive of the action of the driving-rods of a locomotive. As he rushes irresistibly onward the barriers and frontier boundaries which separate neighbouring peoples are split asunder; travellers' passports, gate tickets, the permissions to remove of the burgher, the wanderbuchs of the journeyman are scattered to the winds. The black eagle, the eagle with the double head, Bavaria's royal manual, are alike tumbled in the dust. Despite king and kaiser, as the railroad makes its way every one shall be free to trade as he likes, and to go whither he will. The overturned Philistine, the bewigged and spectacled pedant with the long queue, who lies prone on his back gazing at the fiery portent in helpless bewilderment, is the embodiment of the old bureaucratic formulas, the spirit of obstruction, restriction and red tape, his papers torn, his ink all spilled, his career ended. The sluggish old-worldism is pointed at by the obese snail in the left-hand corner, who is getting out of the way as fast as his nature will allow him.

Civilization is personified in the noble female figure holding as a sceptre the caduceus, teeming emblem of peace and commerce, who is borne along by the Genius of Steam. Commerce, Peace, Civilization, the allegory seems to proclaim, are carried on the wings of the railway, whilst every barrier which keeps neighbouring populations apart is or shall be burst asunder by its progress. And the winged genii who float before and behind the glorious woman — the one wielding vigorously an axe, the other, a sunny smiling child, carrying carelessly a cornucopia, from which fruit and flowers and golden coins are falling —show that if destruction precede, a bounteous and equable distribution of the fruits of the earth follows the course of the iron car.

We have briefly told what seems to us the purport of the design. We cannot now stay to examine its merits. That the design is very far from commonplace, the reader will probably agree with us. That it promises more than the railway has hitherto accomplished is perhaps a fault in the allegory. But the painter, like the poet, is in his higher moods a prophet. Here he points sternly at what has long been a heavy clog on German industry and civilization, and it says something for his courage that he should have ventured thus to hold up to public scorn what the ruling powers in Bavaria cherish as almost sacred institutions.

In our next number we hope to give the companion composition, which is more purely poetic in character. This will afford an opportunity to add a few additional remarks. Meanwhile we may mention that our engravings have been carefully reduced from photographs made from the original cartoons, which are much superior to the frescoes—at least for our purpose.

THE DUET.

THE light wind lifts the curtain white
With gentle motion from the wall,
And on the carpeting within
The scattered rose-leaves showering fall.

Two sweet young faces smiling show,
As half aside the muslin blows;
One fair as snowy jessamine,
The other bright as June's red rose.

And on our troublous 'working-world'
Those sunny faces seem to me
With double radiance to shine,
Like stars upon a stormy sea.

A charming pair for artist-eye!
Nor charming pair alone in *name*;
The jewels the rich casket grace,
The pictures doubly gild the frame.

The old piano open, sounds,
The two pure voices swelling rise,
'Seconda,' standing, archly smiles,
'La Prima' answers with her eyes.

Their burst of joyous melody
United, through the chamber rolls.
Oh, tell not *them* that there are those
Who have not music in their souls!

Ah! dream, sweet girls, that world-old dream!
'Love shall be lord of all,' as yet:
In thy blue eyes he shines, fair Blonde,
In thine arch glance he laughs, Brunette.

There is for each one secret-spring,
There is for each one dear-loved name;
Two stories differently told,
But 'finis,' maidens fair—the same!

A time shall come when ye who sing,
With joyous notes and laughing eyes,
The song of earth's true happiness,
Shall sing to other sympathies;

When deeper voices than your own
Shall sound for each the name of 'Wife,'
And their loved master-hands shall strike
The sweetest, purest chords of life.

A. H. B.

LITTLE GOLDEN-HAIR'S STORY.

'TELL me a story, or sing me a song,'
Said the curly-haired child on my knee;
'It must not be short, and it must not be long.'
Little Golden-hair, what shall it be?

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

"And on our troublous 'working-world'
Those sunny faces seem to me
With double radiance to shine,
Like stars upon a stormy sea."

Drawn by J. D. Watson.

See "The Dus

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by R. Barnes.

LITTLE GOLDEN-HAIR'S STORY.

See the Poem.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

'Tell me a story, or sing me a song
Of a princess, who dwelt by the sea,.
And what the waves sung to her, all the day long,
And what to the waves answered she.'

The waves, in calm weather, came trippingly, trippingly,
Ripplingly, up from the sea,—
'The flowers at thy casement are blooming and dying,
The smile on thy mouth, it has ended in sighing,
As thou sittest alone by the sea;
But the mast is of gold, and the ship is of pearl,
And its sails take the light, like this long amber curl
That droops from thy neck to thy knee.'

Cheer up, pretty princess! the white sails are flying,
At the ends of the world, they are shining and flying,
That bear a fond suitor to thee!
And she listens in fear, 'twixt a smile and a tear,
Half-pleased and half-pensive is she,
And she tosses her head, just as if she had said,
'He may tarry for ever, for me!'

But the waves, in rough weather, came roaringly, roaringly,
Pouringly, up from the sea,
And the land-echoes moan, 'Wilt thou go all alone,
To be tossed on the storm-driven sea?
Leaving father, and mother, and sister, and brother,
For a stranger thou never didst see?'

And loud winds arise, as she weepingly cries,
'He may come,—but he'll never have me!
The waters are cold—not for silver and gold
Would I trust to the treacherous sea,—
O say, only say, you won't take me away,
Ye wild-flowing waves of the sea!'

'Ah, what a sad song!' little Golden-hair said;
'But finish the story, I pray;
The prince he is coming quite soon, I'm afraid,
And then will he take her away?'

'Nay, now, little Golden-hair, how can I tell?
Run away, for a troublesome elf!'
But she clapped her small hands, crying out, 'Very well,
I can finish it all for myself!'

Ah, whisper, sweet Golden-hair, close to my ear,
Do tell me—I want so to know!
'The prince he is handsome—the prince he is dear,
And the princess will willingly go.

'The ship is all sparkling with gold and with pearl,
The white sails are fluttering free,
And there, on the deck, like a little bright speck,
The pretty princess I can see.

'The prince he leans over her all the day long,
Or plays his sweet lute at her side;
And when the waves roar, and the wind is too strong,
He soothes her with loverly pride.'

'But is she unhappy? or is she afraid?'
Little Golden-hair capered for glee;
'She's as merry again,' said this mischievous maid,
'As she was when she sat by the sea!'

GERDA FAY.

THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

By the Author of 'The Morals of Mayfair.'

www.libtool.com.cn

CHAPTER IX.

THE DISORDER CALLED LOVE.

MISS ENGLEHEART'S sweeping condemnation of men's hearts, brains, and principles was not entirely correct as regarded Oliver Carew. He was as little conceited as any handsome lad could be upon whom the prettiest faces of more than one London season had smiled not unfavourably. In matters pertaining to his own gratification he was hot-headed and impulsive as a schoolboy. He would not have stepped a line out of the path which he had been taught to consider honour had the crossing of that line been the one and only means that should rescue him from death.

But in saying that he was doubtless thinking vastly more of his own amusement than of falling seriously in love or marrying Miss Joan had approached very nearly to the truth. When Mr. Carew had thought of marriage at all, up to this period, it had been as of a necessary condition of existence that would doubtless come upon him some day, leaving his own happy selfish life very much as it was, but adding the companionship of a good-tempered, pretty, affectionate sort of young woman, whose tact and devotion to him should prevent his ever feeling bored when at home, but yet never stand the least in the way if he wanted to amuse himself elsewhere. The domestic lot of such of his more intimate friends as had married did not invariably serve as an illustration of these optimist opinions; but he was a great deal too easy a philosopher to trouble himself with any deeper views of life than those which his own favourably-placed circumstances suggested. If he did eventually get a wife like So-and-so's, who should bully him, or a wife like So-and-so's dearest friend's, who should insist upon going to balls without him every night of the week, why it would be a nuisance, and he must make the best of it—no difficult matter when one has all the pleasantest ingredients for material enjoyment so very ready to one's hand. In the mean time, he was duly thankful for having escaped the strong ankles and sandy hair of that wealthy young woman his relations had desired him to win, and had every intention of continuing in his present unfettered condition as long as possible.

But what are intentions when a well-favoured face looks up to yours in the loneliness of green-shaded woods? What are intentions when this face smiles at you, flushed and animated, amidst the golden glory of the moors at sunset? What are intentions, what are fixed and steadfast resolves, when this face turns from you blushing, as you whisper soft adieux at twilight amidst the perfumed, voluptuous silence of the summer lanes? In a fortnight from the time that Oliver first met Miss Fleming he believed her to be the loveliest and (which charmed him more) the most loving woman in the world; the only one he had ever admired; the only one who could by any possibility make him happy. He believed that he could not live very long if he were to be separated from her, or at least that life under such circumstances would be much too shattered and objectless to be worth holding. He did not care about her position or her lack of money, of these he had enough for them both: he wanted her. No man who married Esther Fleming could be said to marry beneath him-

self. He knew that he should be higher and better in every way from the very hour in which she promised to become his wife.

And to a certain degree he was right. Esther was not a woman to inspire any other than a worthy and an honest passion. Mr. Carew's mental condition was not visibly improved by his love; indeed, he became, if anything, more awkward and less agreeable in her society than he had been at first, but he was none the less bettered in his spirit—less selfish, less worldly, less self-seeking than he had ever been before since he was born (less so than he will ever be again while he lives). And on the evening when he finally determined to tell her his love he felt and knew that a richer stake was about to be won or lost by him than any upon which, during his two-and-twenty years of life, his hopes had ever before been staked.

This state of feeling had not, of course, all arisen out of that one meeting in the woods, or that one twilight parting on the moorside. Mr. Carew had, through a succession of happy accidents, met Esther every day during the fortnight of his stay at Lynmouth: had met her by the seaside, in the valleys, on the moors; once, by special invitation of Miss Joan, had spent a long evening with her in her own garden at Countisbury. Acquaintance is never slow of ripening between persons whose united ages scarce make forty years. A fortnight is quite enough to bring the deepest passion of a very young man to maturity. On this evening, when his confession was just trembling upon Oliver's lips, it seemed to him as though his love had already existed for years, as though no further knowledge of life or of Esther could be needed than that which these dozen of country walks, of lingering twilight partings, had accorded him.

It was a glorious summer night; the last night in June. From the heathy uplands around Countisbury they had watched the sun set until all its gold was merged in pale and fading azure above the sea; then, when the shadows deepened round the twilight moors, and the purple of the night began to fall, they turned away through one of the shaded field-paths towards the woods, and Mr. Carew's voice began to falter as he talked.

Now Esther Fleming, in spite of all the self-communings recorded at the end of the last chapter, was not in love with Mr. Carew one whit. She was flattered exceedingly by his evident regard for her; she thought frequently, 'If this is love, love is a very pleasant thing, and so is life.' She liked to put on her best muslin frock and a flower in her waist-belt, when she walked out to meet him on the hills; she liked to hear his voice sink as he spoke to her; she liked to feel, for the first time in her life, that inordinately strong sensation common to all women's hearts, namely, pleasure in possessing a young, and brave, and handsome man for her trembling slave. But she did not love him. No shade of real passion had crossed her heart, no deeper emotion than that of flattered vanity had made her cheek flush and her eyes sink beneath his. A girl very honestly, I was going to say icily, brought up, as she had been, does not, you know, warm into sudden emotion as quickly as do indwellers of towns or readers of romance, or frequenters of crowded assemblies (young women, in a word, whose stimulated imagination has acted out the drama of love a great number of times before the actual uprising of the curtain), although passion in such a nature as Esther's is, when once aroused, strong and obstinate in proportion to the very slowness of its growth. And so, not being at all in love, but only fancying she was, and knowing, instinctively, that Oliver's declaration was coming, Esther felt intensely happy and proud at the thought of accepting him, and knew none of the agony, the fear, the torturing doubts, the ague fits of suspense, which experience should one day tell her are the sure heralds of any scene of mature and earnest passion.

It was, as I said, a glorious summer night. In dark and wintry days to come, and when all the love-delusion had become hollowness and

vanity in her sight, how clearly Esther could recall every outward sound and sensation of that next half-hour! the faint swirr of the scythe from distant hayfields in the valley; the sonorous drone of wild bees on the wing; the hushed cry of the cuckoo from the woods; the elastic warmth of the thyme-laden air. One by one she could remember all the mass of summer foliage over which at the time her eyes unconsciously passed, as, with beating heart and flushing cheeks, she turned away from Oliver's pleading face, the pink and scarlet wreaths of honeysuckle bending low around the foam-like balls of elder, and tall red fox-gloves in the hedges, or meeting in close embrace with the delicate tendrils of the wax-like briony across the path; the dim and mellow light cast by the transparent leafage overhead—yes, the single briar-rose that stood out so clear in its half-blown crimson against the sky just at the moment when Oliver's voice no longer faltered, and she was forced to meet his pleading face and answer, she remembered all.

'You will not quite forget me, Miss Fleming? You will think, once or twice during the next year, of the hours we have spent together?'

'Yes, I shall think of them, Mr. Carew.'

'For a whole year?'

'Anything I could remember for a year I could remember for my life.'

'Anything? Your meeting with that old parson in the valley of Rocks last summer, or with me, or any other utterly unimportant circumstance. I understand; your memory is good; simply that.'

Mr. Carew's tone grew ironical. He wondered whether he was making a fool of himself; he reflected bitterly upon the levity and falseness of all women's natures.

'I should remember things I did not care for, but I should not think about them,' began Esther; then she stopped short.

'And you will think of our walks, and, sometimes, of me?' cried Oliver, eagerly, and flushing with hope again as he caught sight of her face. 'Oh, Esther—Miss Fleming, I mean—will you say that again?'

'I did not know I had said it;' but her cheeks were covered with blushes, her lips could scarce bring out the equivocation, the last instinctive effort at denial.

'Will you say it now?'

'Mr. Carew!'

'Miss Fleming, will you say it, and make me the happiest man in all England? Will you tell me that you won't forget me?—that I may think of you and write to you sometimes, when I am away? Oh, Esther!' cried the lad, passionately, 'will you let me love you? You can't prevent that, for I love you from my soul already. Will you let me hope that some day you will care a little for me?'

A subject could not have wooed a queen more humbly. He never tried to take her hand; he hardly dared to look into her face. He could have proposed to marry any London young lady at a ball, in the full presence of tall brothers and Argus-eyed duennas, with less diffidence than he felt towards this simple girl of eighteen amidst the lonely silence of the country lanes. 'Esther, will you give me no answer?'

'Oliver!'

All he sought, all he wanted (just then) upon earth was in that one word. 'Esther, you will let me hope?'

He looked into her eyes—her frank and girlish eyes—and thought he read there the very fruition of hope; thought that in their unabashed bright happiness there was the confession of real love.

'Esther, you will be my wife?'

'Some day, sir, perhaps. I am very young now.'

'Never say "sir," any more. I am only Oliver to you now.'

'Yes, Oliver.'

How the word thrilled through the lad's heart again, coming from her lips. 'You promise me. I am exacting, Esther; I must have more than a mere indifferent "yes" on such a subject. You promise me that you will be my wife?'

'As you wish, sir.'

Long afterwards, Esther Fleming

strove to assuage reproachful conscience with the thought that she did *not* give the verbal promise he required from her. I am afraid that when eyes and cheeks do not say nay 'tis but a spirit of Jesuitic casuistry that can seek refuge in the fact that the lips have not promised. What are mere bare words at such a time? Oliver, poor boy, never knew whether she said 'I promise,' or 'I do not;' he knew simply that she had accepted him, and so thinking, trod upon air for the remainder of the night. He was really intensely happy, as much in love as it was possible for him to be; too newly intoxicated to reflect upon the exceeding folly of the entanglement, too enamoured of himself to doubt for one instant the reality of Esther's love. With the passion of men and women there mixes some degree of bitterness, some recollection, some dread, from the first moment that the enchanted cup is raised to the lips. With boy-and-girl sentiment there is no bitterness at all; and, however mawkish older persons may consider the draught, they in their simplicity do, no doubt, regard it as nectar fresh from the hands of the gods. Only one thing, reader, don't let us older persons attempt to chronicle their first raptures. Some singularly rare love scenes may come within the limits of fiction that aspires to be sensible; but the earliest stage of a very immature engagement is not of these. Oliver and Miss Fleming lingered among the silent lanes till ten that night. They thought of the stars, they thought vaguely of their own delicious future. They were silent frequently for long spaces at a time; their conversation when they spoke consisted of monosyllables, at once disconnected and inane. Could the prince of realistic writers—could M. de Balzac himself—make much out of such innocuous raw materials? I think not very much. Love, to be amenable to art, must be misplaced, or darkened by impediments, or coming very near indeed to the end of the third volume; and as Oliver's and Esther's love is at present in no one of these conditions, we will leave the lovers, if you please, to their own ambrosial but infantine raptures, and turn to the remarkably prosaic people who awaited Esther's return beside the frugal supper table of the Countisbury farm.

'Esther is out late,' said Joan, ostensibly shouting in her mother's ear, but with her keen eyes fixed on David's face. 'We had better eat our supper, and not wait, mother. Mr. Carew will have met her again; and when young people like him and Esther meet, old ones like us are not likely to be remembered.'

'He is a well-looking lad,' remarked old Mrs. Engleheart, dreamily. 'I have seen him here sometimes, haven't I, Joan?'

'You saw him for one entire evening, a week ago, mother; don't you remember, we had tea under the thorn, and afterwards'—her eyes at this juncture pierced David clean through and through—'afterwards Mr. Carew and Esther walked for an hour or more up and down the terrace in the moonlight. Don't you remember I said to you 'twas a wonder they could find so much to say after such a short acquaintance?'

'Esther is a clever girl,' said Mrs. Engleheart, turning round to David to confirm her opinion; 'and perhaps this Mr.—Mr.—what is his name, Joan?—is serious in his attentions. Don't you think so, nephew?'

It was very possible David thought so; but he did not look up from his book.

'Unless *I* thought it a great deal more than possible, I should not countenance all these daily walks together,' broke out Joan, promptly. 'Mr. Carew, if he is a young man of common honour, must declare his intentions after all that has occurred.'

'All that has occurred!' repeated David, with a groan of the spirit that Joan's sharp senses divined rather than heard. 'What, in heaven's name, do you mean by that, Joan?'

'I mean,' said Miss Engleheart, very drily, and confronting David full, and looking, as he felt, poor creature, right into every weak part—every smallest cranny or inter-

stice of his heart,—'I mean that for a fortnight this young stranger has met Esther daily, and has walked with her for hours; and that the girl keeps the flowers he gives her in her room, and makes foolish excuses when I find them there, and cannot even mention Carew's name without blushing. You don't know anything about such matters, cousin,' she pursued, pitilessly; 'but when I was young I remember all this was called being in love; and if our Esther cares seriously for the young man Carew, I suppose it is desirable that his intentions towards her should be openly declared.'

Miss Joan was for sharp decisive treatment in all disorders, mental and bodily. She knew the extent of the malady under which poor David was suffering to the full as well as he did himself, and was for extirpating it, as one would a thorn out of the fleshly man, by sudden violence. The searing of a nerve with red-hot iron wire was a remedy Joan had successfully tried upon herself in toothache: could not a foolish passion be treated in like manner? a moment of sharp intolerable anguish, and then the pain gone for ever. I think there was some wisdom in her opinion—at least as regarded David. When the cutting, cruel truth fell on him thus suddenly from his cousin's lips he felt, as he had not felt during this entire fortnight, that he must rouse himself, not only to endure, but to conquer. All these dull suffering days of mechanical reading, these sleepless nights, these agonies of mute jealousy, must have an end. He would have to act, to give Esther to her lover, to listen to family discussions on her prospects, to see her married. Loving her as he did, should he not make the poor exertion of striving, at least, not to cloud her happiness? He had been gentle as ever with her since he knew the utter hopelessness of his own passion; but he had been moody and silent in his manner when she tried to rouse him—unsympathizing in the poor child's natural hearty spirits. This should be over now; he would rally his forces and conquer. The feeling which had been in secret the light of his life so long was at an end. He must return to the prosaic middle age out of which Esther's fond young face had for a few years cheated him: must go back from life to vegetation; must make such interest for his days as Joan did; must have Joan instead of Esther for a companion; succumb to Joan; marry Joan, very likely—it mattered little now whether he did or not. Well, let him swallow all this horrible bitterness like a man—not make his foolish passion any more ridiculous than it was already by moping and pining like a love-sick lad.

Joan noted the effect of her gentle tonic in a certain determination with which David flung aside his book and seized hold of his knife and fork; and during the whole of the meal continued to administer generous doses of the same wholesome draught to her unhappy victim.

'It wouldn't be ill in you, David, to ask Carew to dinner. I have not seen any one at my mother's table for fifteen years; but I think for Esther's sake this young man should be invited.'

'Yes, Joan.'

'If his attentions end as I intend them to do, it will be one of the most fortunate things that ever happened in our family. I have had a letter this evening from Aunt Tudor, and my own opinion is that she is breaking up. Her feet are swelling, David.'

'Are they indeed, Joan?'

'Mother,' emphatically, to the poor patient old lady at her side, 'did I tell you that Aunt Tudor's feet are swelling?'

'Dear, dear!' cried Mrs. Engleheart, in her deprecating way, 'now I call that very odd indeed of Thalia. She is two years younger than me, and when we were girls——'

'I know what it means, David,' proceeded Joan, who seldom troubled herself to hear anybody out. 'I remember Uncle Garratt and a dozen other people going off in the same way. She writes more than ever of her parties and her gaiety, and her excellent health and spirits, but she doesn't deceive me. She's breaking up fast.'

'I thought I heard you tell your mother she was going to Weymouth, and wanted Esther to stay with her on her return.'

'Oh, you *were* listening after all, then, cousin, when you never lifted your eyes up from your book. Yes, Mrs. Tudor is going to Weymouth, and has asked Esther to stay with her; and that confirms my belief. She wouldn't go to the seaside in the dog-days, unless she felt she was ill. Now, just look what the child's position will be at her death.'

'We have sometimes thought it would be better than it is now,' suggested David.

'I have never thought so,' answered Miss Engleheart. 'I have never built upon my Aunt Tudor's goodness of heart, or her sense of duty either. She helps to keep the child now because it would be a disgrace not to do so; but she wouldn't spare a farthing from her superfluities to save all belonging to her from starvation, if the starvation was to come when she could be no longer shamed by it.'

'You are severe, Joan.'

'I am just, David. Mrs. Tudor, while she lives, is not likely to be a hard or a miserly woman. She has too much of her brother Garratt in her nature not to wish to be liked. She is too thoroughly worldly not to spend money where the decencies of the world require it to be spent. But dead—that is quite another thing. Uncle Garratt was generous and affectionate to his son at the very time when he was squandering the last shilling of the lad's inheritance. Mrs. Tudor will be the same as ever to Esther till she dies—then——'

'Then her money will not be buried with her, I presume, Joan?' David hazarded.

'Her money will be left to some one who doesn't want it, or—which is much more likely—will be found to die with her. I took it into my head years ago that Aunt Tudor had sunk her money; and when I take up a fixed opinion, Cousin David, I generally find myself right. Then see what Esther's position will be. We could not support her upon our income, David.'

'We would try, Joan.'

'We should do nothing of the kind; nor is Esther one who would live in poverty without trying to help herself. Besides, our money, such as it is, dies out with my mother's life and my own; and what provision could be made for her even if we could manage to support her—which is doubtful? No; Esther, unless she marries, must work. When Aunt Tudor volunteered this fifty pounds' worth of accomplishments, I believe it was with the notion that a wretched smattering of accomplishments will be able some day or other to get the child a living as a governess.'

'A governess,' repeated old Mrs. Engleheart, who seldom caught up more than the last words of Joan's harangues. 'What is that you are saying? I hope you don't still keep to that dreadful idea of Esther's being a governess. Oh! if my poor dear brother, with his refined delicacy, had thought that a granddaughter of his would be brought to work for her own bread!' And the old lady glanced towards the picture of Garratt Fleming, which, with its imposing Hussar dress and medals, and handsome tranquil face, really looked awfully well-bred and condescending upon the bare oak panels of that humble room.

'Oh, if Garratt Fleming had had common honour, and had not wasted his sisters' portion and squandered the inheritance of his own descendants!' said Miss Joan, who was never bitterer than upon the subject of deceased relations. 'When I see what these sentiments of refined delicacy end in, I thank God for being as I am—honest at least. I should be glad to see Esther earning her own living to-morrow, if there was need; and I am proud to say the girl herself inherits none of the aristocratic feelings of honour of our family.'

'Family,' repeated Mrs. Engleheart, unconsciously; 'do I hear you right? The young man who brings his suit to my niece Esther is of family, you say?'

'Yes, mother; yes, of course,' answered Joan, sharply; 'he comes of honourable ancestors like our-

selves. I am thankful,' she went on, turning to David, 'thankful that the lad is but a farmer's son, and that Esther will have honest plenty instead of starving gentility for her portion.'

'If she marries him, Joan. We do take things so much for granted.'

'We take things as we wish them to be, very often,' answered Miss Engleheart. 'I wish to see Esther happily settled; and you, David, seem to have some unaccountable desire to——'

'Hush, hush, Joan!' interrupted the poor fellow, quickly, and jumping up from his chair to hide his confusion. 'Here is Esther herself, come home at last—and alone.'

'Carew having parted from her at the gate, Cousin David. Esther would not walk by herself alone on the moors at such an hour—would you, Esther?' to the girl, who, silent and shy, now stood at the door. 'You have not been walking abroad with no one with you between nine and ten o'clock at night.'

'Mr. Carew was with me, Joan,' she answered, resolutely, but still with a tremor in her voice; 'he met me far away on the moor and—and walked home with me.'

'Come in, child, and lay your hat down. You look tired,' said Joan, not unkindly. 'David, can't you move, and let her pass? She must want her supper.'

'I was going to move,' cried David, very confused and stupid. 'I was thinking—thinking Esther looked pale.'

'Which is an excellent reason for keeping her standing at the door. Mother, you are asleep in your chair. Come away to bed this moment. Mr. Engleheart'—and Joan turned to David with a smiling pleasantry that made him shudder—'I leave you to do the honours of the supper-table to Miss Fleming. She can entertain you with an account of her long ramble with Mr. Carew.' And, seizing Mrs. Engleheart in one hand and the candlestick in the other, Joan strode out of the room, and David and Miss Fleming were left alone.

I suppose there is not one of us but can remember the hideous firmness with which, in some great crisis of our life, our own right hand has probed the wound that lay all bare and quivering not an hour before. How we have felt a fierce kind of pleasure in each self-inflicted pang; have called that heroism to ourselves which was, in truth, but the last spasmodic struggle of some hope not utterly dead. Such firmness did David Engleheart, the least heroic of human creatures, feel when he was left alone with Esther, now. He knew, far better than Miss Joan, the state of the girl's heart. At this moment something, not of innocence, not, certainly, of beauty, yet *something* gone from out her face told him how irrevocably all that he had once so coveted to possess was robbed from him. The broad soft brow, the delicate scarlet lips that he had bowed down before as a poor priest bows down before his image of the Madonna, were his, even for worship, no longer: they were Mr. Carew's. He knew it from her cast-down eyes, her uncertain speech, the hurried way in which her hand trifled amidst some wild flowers that she had laid beside her on the table; all the alphabet out of which jealousy can so quickly spell the miserable truth of its own fears. Carew had spoken to her of love!

As I have said, the strength that comes to many a passion *in extremis* came to David Engleheart now. He found himself able to jest with Esther upon her late return. He asked what she and Mr. Carew could possibly find to say to each other during so many hours? Had the lad really anything in him on further acquaintance? He seemed not to have too much to say for himself on that evening that he spent at Countisbury. Esther parried these little thrusts as she best might, and with some latent surprise at the quarter from whence they came; for David had never before, of his own free-will, so much as mentioned Oliver's name before her. But the sense of her strange, newfound happiness made her in these early moments shy and embarrassed even with him; and she was conscious, for the first time in her life,

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

POOR DAVID!

See "The Ordeal for Wives."

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

of relief when Miss Joan's sharp knock upon the bedroom floor overhead summoned her away.

'I have something I wish to tell you, David;' but she said this without looking at him, and her hand shook a little as she took up her candle from the table.

'It must be told quickly then, Esther. Judging from our cousin's footstep she is in one of her little tempers already.'

'Not to-night; not to-night, David, dear. To-morrow is Barnstaple fair, you know; Joan will be away all day. I will tell you then. It's a secret that only you are to be told as yet—a secret that concerns me very nearly.' And then she threw her arms round his neck, as she had done every night these dozen years; and running lightly from the room and up the narrow stair, left him silently gazing after her in the darkness.

And Patty coming in to clear the supper a while later, found him standing there still, and—which roused Patty's softer feelings yet more—never a book in his hand. She remembered how *she* used to stand idling about in the dark at the cruel time when Joan had broken for her with William Tillyer. 'Am I to let Miss Esther's flowers bide, Master David? they be main withered already.'

'Let them stay so, Patty; let them stay so,' answered David, gently. 'I will put them in water for Miss Esther myself. And, Patty, don't wait up for me. I am going out to smoke my pipe, and I'll be sure to see that all the doors are locked before I go to bed.'

Long after midnight Miss Joan from her maiden-bower watched the glow of David's pipe, as he passed restlessly up and down the garden-path beneath her window. 'Smoke away, smoke away, David Engleheart,' she soliloquized, with many an emphatic nod of her gaunt head towards the unhappy object of her regard. 'Put all your loves and hopes and follies in that pipe, and burn them up for ever. So; one is not enough. Fill another, cousin, fill another. I have given you food enough for fifty pipes to-night!'

The sound of his hurried steps fell on her ears still, when, wearied out with watching him, she betook herself to bed. They lulled her pleasantly to sleep.

CHAPTER X.

POOR DAVID!

The next day dawned, sultry and glowing, as few days, even in July, ever dawn upon the misty moorland heights of North Devonshire. Quite early in the morning Miss Joan had started by the market-coach to Barnstaple, and, as was usual in her absence, a strange calm and peace seemed to hang over all the little household at Countisbury. Poor Patty sang over her unmolested work; old Mrs. Engleheart, untroubled either by book or knitting, basked in the warm sun at the parlour window; Farmer Vellicot's pigeons picked out the green currants and gooseberries as they listed; Miss Joan's own great Cochin China fowls walked with a reprobate air of perfect assurance and coolness about the garden-paths.

'I think we are rather unprincipled to encourage these revolutionary movements, David,' said Esther, as they paced slowly up and down the terrace in the early morning sun. 'What would Joan say if she saw all her creatures at this moment?'

'Poor wretches, let them have one happy day,' answered David. ''Tis only twice a year that any of us are free, and what a freedom it is! Why, the very air is more genial than at any other time. Esther, turn your face to the east, and feel if it is not.'

'It's a lovely morning, David; this promises to be the first really hot summer's day that we have had.'

'How much of it shall you spend at home, child? how many hours will Mr. Carew spare you to me, I wonder?'

'David,' said the girl, laying her hand quickly upon his arm, 'don't talk like that about—about Mr. Carew any more, please. It is a jest no longer.'

'Ah!'

'I should have spoken to you last night if I could; but somehow, David, it was too difficult then, and I always feel when Joan is in the house as though she can hear me even when she is in another room. But now I feel I can tell you all.'

'I am glad you receive me into your confidence, Esther.'

'Well, I ought to tell Joan first I believe, David; but it is so difficult to tell her anything one cares much about—isn't it?'

'Very.'

'She is so matter-of-fact and hard—so unlike you, Cousin David. David'—he felt her hand trembling on his arm—'can you guess my secret?'

'I am ill at guessing, Esther.'

'Mr. Carew has asked me to marry him, cousin,' and she looked up with her honest eyes straight into his. 'I am *so* happy.'

'You have known him a short time,' said David, and she was too deeply moved herself to note the tremor in his voice. 'Your acquaintance, I think, dates from one fortnight ago.'

'A fortnight and three days, David; but then I have seen him so often.'

'And must know so much of his character and worth—this stranger for whom you are willing to give us all up! We have loved you a dozen years, and he a dozen days, Esther. Well, it is natural.'

'David!'

He softened in a moment at the loving tone of that one word. 'I don't blame you, Esther. You are acting as every young woman has acted since the world began—rightly, no doubt, and as Providence meant you to do, only—only don't you see 'tis hard to part from you? I have but one thing on the earth to love, and it's hard to lose it.'

'And you will not lose me, David,' she cried, eagerly, 'not for years and years. We are both very young, and Oliver is only starting in his profession. It is not a question of losing me now—merely of letting me give him my promise, David.'

'You have waited to consult me before doing so, then?'

'No, cousin. Last evening, when Mr. Carew asked me if I could ever like him well enough to be his wife, I said yes. I was obliged to tell the truth, you know; and I am quite sure—I mean I think I am quite sure—that I shall never like any one but Mr. Carew while I live. But I could not feel happy in my promise, Cousin David, unless I had spoken of it to you, and unless you said that you really approved of my choice.'

'And you will abide by my decision?'

'David, that's not quite a fair thing to say. I should be very miserable if you refused to consent to my engagement; but I feel that I ought to be truer to Oliver Carew now than to any one—yes, even to you. Oh, Cousin David, be friends with him, and try to like him a little for my sake.'

The expression of her pleading face stabbed David to the heart.

'I am not at all a fitting person to consult, Esther; Joan and her mother are your guardians; I am nothing to you.'

He moved as though he would have turned away from her; but Esther's kindly hand caught his arm tight. 'David, dear David, nothing to me? I thought you cared for me—I thought——'

She could get no further; her voice choked, the great tears struggled to her eyes. For a moment David Engleheart stood irresolute; then he turned round quickly, stooped, and kissed her lips. 'You thought of me as of your good stupid brother, Esther; no, too old for that; your uncouth, ugly old bear of a playmate, old and grey and dull enough to be your grandfather, who has just had a dozen years or so of his life made bright by a child's loving face, and now will not hesitate to give his darling (though with some natural pangs) to the first young and handsome stranger who chances to have won her heart? That was it, Esther.'

'Oh, David! how can you speak so of yourself?' But she was pale no longer, and he could see a smile coming round her lips.

'And you were right, my darling;

that is what I have always been to you, what I am now. All this has come upon us rather suddenly, Esther, you see. You are only just eighteen. I thought I had a great many more years' safe possession of you yet. However, it has come, and I am glad of it, for your sake, my poor little fatherless Esther! May Carew love you, and be faithful to you as you deserve!'

David's vacant face glowed till he looked positively handsome; the thrill at his own heart went far to reward him for all the anguish of the last fortnight. Poor David! not Philip or Alexander ever gained a greater victory than was this to him.

'I have been quite afraid of you lately, cousin,' remarked Esther, presently, and when they had taken one or two turns upon the terrace in silence. 'You have been so constrained and odd with us all that I began really to think something was going on that displeased you, and so did Joan.'

'Oh!'

'She even hinted to me, occasionally, that you did not approve of Oliver's walking with me, and I was wondering this morning whether there could possibly be any truth in it, when—ah, you kind old David! —Patty told me of your putting my flowers in water for me last night, and then I knew you could not be really angry.'

'I have never been angry with you since the day you came to us, child.'

'Twelve years ago, isn't it, David?'

'Fourteen years this autumn. You were a little soft-eyed child, dressed in black, and with a slow melancholy way of speaking and looking straight up in one's face. Esther, you crept into my heart at once, and have forgotten to leave it since.'

'I have never forgotten the first night that I came, David. You took me on your knee and made shadows on the parlour wall for me all the evening, and then carried me up to bed, in spite of Joan's saying I mustn't be treated like a baby.'

'And you held me close (a vast deal closer than you would hold me now, Miss Fleming), and said you never meant to go away from me again. Do you remember *that*?'

'Yes, I remember,' said Esther, laughing, 'and as yet I have not broken my word. Very likely I shall stay at Countisbury till you have had quite enough of me, after all. Joan was talking to me very seriously the other evening of the lot that awaits me when I shall be an elderly woman of eight-and-thirty—twenty years hence. Oh, David!' she broke off abruptly, 'what sane human being would look for twenty years, or look forward at all, on such a morning as this? Even to feel the air blow on one's face is enough to make one in love with the present and with life.'

'Let us come away to the thorn tree and our books, Esther, and enjoy our one day of liberty thoroughly. The sun is too hot here—that is,'—he corrected himself quickly—'if Miss Fleming has no prior engagement elsewhere.'

'Miss Fleming has no engagement whatever until five o'clock this afternoon, cousin.'

'And then?'

'And then is to meet Mr. Carew upon the moor, and take her cousin with her, if he will condescend to come. You see everything is settled for you,' she added, turning to him with her fond smile as they walked slowly towards the house: 'even if you had wished to be a stern, implacable relation, we would not have let you carry out your own intentions. There is only one character in the world fitted for my cousin David—the one he filled on that first evening that I ever saw him, thirteen years ago.'

'When he held you in his arms, and had you for his own,' thought poor David, as his hungering eyes took in all the beauty of her upturned face. 'Ah, if shadows on the wall could make you happy now!'

But he had sense enough, poor wretch, not to put his thoughts into words; and with lingering steps, and Esther singing as she went, they passed along the shaded garden-path towards the house.

CHAPTER XI.

OLIVER AS A HERO.

Patty met them at the threshold of the house-place, and put a note into Esther's hand. Mr. Carew had given it her a minute ago as she was standing at the orchard gate. He had gone down along the path towards the Riven Oak very quick, and had waited for no answer.

Esther glanced over the three lines that the note contained, and her heart turned sick. 'I can't read with you as I promised—I can't stay with you to-day, David; I am going out at once.'

'Is there anything wrong, child? can I help you?' David asked, as he followed her back into the garden. 'Shall I take any answer from you to Mr. Carew?'

'There is no answer wanted. His regiment is ordered suddenly away. He is going to leave Lyn-mouth.'

'When?'

'To-day; in a few hours. Tell Aunt Engleheart not to wait for me, please. I don't know when I shall be back.'

'Mr. Carew going?—child, shall I walk any of the way with you?'

'No, no, no! Oh! David, I can't talk even to you. This is harder than I can bear.' And very quick and resolute, as had been her wont from a child when anything moved her strongly, she passed out through the wicket-gate into the orchard, and left David Engleheart standing, helplessly bewildered, and alone.

Oliver Carew going to-day—in a few hours! What was David's sympathy, what was David's existence to her now? What should she remember of the wistful, kindly face looking after her as she went, or of anything in the whole universe, save the one cruel fact of Oliver's leaving? Since last night all her world—never very wide before—had narrowed into one desire—Oliver's presence, the flattery of Oliver's eyes—and he was going. It was the first time in her life that anything approaching to a real blow had fallen upon her, and, as she had said to David, it was harder than she could bear. So she never tried to strengthen herself by reasoning on her misery, by thinking how many hundreds of lovers part and meet and part again without dying, or how likely it was that Mr. Carew might have got a summons to return to his regiment, and would yet be back with her again in a month or two. She just felt (as a good many of us have felt at Esther Fleming's age) that a crueller fate had come to her than she could by possibility live through; succumbed to her first trial much as she would have done if no Joan Engleheart had ever trained her to strength of mind and self-reliance; walked white and trembling and broken-hearted along the path where Oliver in his note had asked her to meet him; and when an abrupt turning in the woods brought him suddenly to her side, held both her hands out in all simplicity to meet him, and burst into tears.

'You are going! Oliver, you are going to leave me!'

Last night she had been shy and stately even after she had accepted his suit; but all restraint, all girlish pride, was swept away from her heart now. She dared be the first to speak; she dared let him see the full extent of her love—for she was to lose him.

'It is very sudden, Esther, but when you know what it is that calls me, you will see that I must go.'

'Not to-day?'

'Yes, to-day; in a few hours. Be strong for my sake, Esther. Don't look so white and piteous, or I can never bear to leave you.'

Mr. Carew, as I have before remarked, was accustomed to a very different walk of life to Esther's; a walk where sudden and startling emotions do not so much obtain as among the middle classes of humble country people. He had often seen young women faint in crowded assemblies, had witnessed, perhaps, some scenes of another class, in which tears had been called in as an effective auxiliary weapon. He had never seen anything at all like this stricken childish face, with its passion of sudden grief, and I think it frightened him a little. He was as

much in love with Esther as it was in his nature to be; but, really, if love at its onset entailed such dreadfully violent scenes as these, love must be a much less pleasant thing than he had taken it for.

'You will listen to reason, Esther, will you not? You won't look so miserable when you hear that it is absolutely, imperatively necessary for me to go?'

'No, Oliver' (the unerring tact of her sex telling her, not exactly what he had thought, but what he would best like her to do)—'no, Oliver, I will try all I can not to look miserable any more.' And then she did try hard to keep her lips from quivering, and stammered something about the note having been given to her too suddenly, and how she had run very fast through the heat, and she was a little sick and faint, she thought, and—and all this foolishness would be over directly.

'Sit down by me here, and recover yourself, you poor little silly Esther,' cried Oliver, drawing her kindly to his side. 'Why, your hands are as cold as ice! How will you ever do for a soldier's wife, if you are so sensitive, my foolish child?'

As the colour came back into her face he began to remember how wonderfully handsome she was, and how much she loved him, poor thing! After all, this sudden parting *was* very hard: it overcame him with quite a thrill of pain to think that months, that years might pass before his lips should touch that fair young cheek again; and so he told her, in language you and I, reader, would not think surpassingly eloquent, but which was to Esther the sweetest and finest music she had ever heard.

'I thought, for a minute, you did not feel it as much as I did,' she said, presently. 'When I came up first you looked as calm and indifferent as though nothing had happened.'

'Do you think so now?'

'Oh, no, no, no!' with all the bright blood in her face. 'I know now you would not go unless you were obliged.'

'And can you guess what it is that really forces me to leave—the only thing in the world that could make me go away from you like this?'

'You are going back to the army, I suppose.' Esther's ideas of military obligations were somewhat vague and superficial. 'Your colonel won't allow you to stay away any longer.'

'Esther, my regiment goes abroad the day after to-morrow, and I go with it.'

'Abroad? not, not'—the whiteness spread around her mouth again in an instant—'not to India, Oliver?' (This was at the time when the news of mutiny had just reached home.) 'Say only that you are not ordered to India.'

'We are ordered to Malta first, Esther,' Carew answered quietly.

'And then?'

'Then, of course, we shall wait for further orders.'

'Oliver'—and she caught hold of his hand in both of hers—'tell me the truth, please. I can bear that far better than any preparation. Shall you be sent to India?'

'I hope so, Esther.'

'Ah! I understand.'

'You promised to be strong,' he whispered, drawing her closer to his side; 'and you give way again already. I am not in India yet, remember. I may not go there at all if the rebellion is put down quicker than we think for.'

'But you hope to go! *That* is the cruellest to me.'

'Esther, should you love me better if I did not?'

She was silent. She only clasped his hands closer; looked up intently with her great imploring eyes into his face.

'Should you love me better if I had not the feelings of every other man in England? if I did not long for my own personal share in dealing out judgment upon those cowardly wretches who have betrayed us?'

'Oh, Oliver!'

'Esther'—and here Carew really spoke with emotion—'God knows that I love you truly—better far than I ever thought myself that I could love. Let me feel that my

engagement to you, instead of making me weaker, will strengthen and help me in my duty; that—that—I can't well express what I mean,' and, indeed, the lad's voice was choked with his own earnestness; 'but what I want to say is, that you should let me go away from you full of hope and spirit, and not thinking of your poor miserable face here at home.'

'Oliver, don't reason with me—I can't help feeling as I do!' And then, as a child checked from its sorrow for a moment, goes back, with sudden passion, to its first plaint, she burst almost wildly into tears, and hid her face down on his breast.

If she had never really loved him before; if she had mistaken emotions roused by a handsome face and pleading voice and sunset walks, and her own first girlish pleasure in being admired; if she had blindly received all this counterfeit for the true coin hitherto, in these moments of parting she was, at least, not mistaken. She loved him now. When women waved their handkerchiefs and wept over the Guards on that dull autumn day when they marched through the streets of London before they left for the Crimea; when women wept over the shattered few—the gaunt wan heroes' faces which another year brought back to them—they were under just the same influence which rent this poor little country girl's heart now; about the strongest emotion (save one) that women's hearts are capable of, and one simulating genuine passion so well that with the breast tightening under its direct influence, the hands clasped warmly in the parting hero's own, it would require a much cooler and more impartial analyst than poor Esther to determine the actual ingredients of which it is made up. She loved him; she was quite sure of that; and he was leaving her—he was going away to die for his country—and she was to remain here with half the world between them in this dull, silent old home of hers in Countisbury. The realities of the case; balls at Malta, flirtations in Bombay, probability, almost certainty, of the mutiny being over before Mr. Carew reached India; the necessity of putting their engagement upon some tangible and business-like footing; all these things, which to a Dashwood at seventeen would have occurred as a matter of course, never entered into Esther's brain. She had already done a great deal for Mr. Carew by the help of her own imagination; had put a great deal of purple and fine linen upon him out of the treasury of her own vivid fancy; now, chance effected the finishing stroke to the ideal she had all along been creating. She saw him as a hero. Yes, if she had not really loved him before she loved him now; and Oliver felt it. Perhaps, little as Esther could have believed it then, he was more in earnest than she was, when, clasping her in his arms, he swore to be true to her till death; that, as she was his first, she should be his last love; and that neither time, nor distance, nor any change, save in herself, should efface her from his heart.

'And I? Ah, Oliver! you will have plenty of things to think of and to do; but I—you will write to me very often, won't you?'

'Of course. I am a horrid letter-writer in general, but you'll not mind that, Esther.'

'As if your letters could be horrid to me!'

'And you must answer them regularly, not crossed, if you can help it, and tell me all that you are doing, you know.'

'I shall be doing nothing. I shall tell you all I feel.

'Oh, yes—' Mr. Carew had a vague feeling that such letters could not be very long, and I think he was relieved. Long letters required long answers; and, as an Eton boy should, he had dreadful misgivings as to his own spelling and general diction. This sort of thing, under the shade of a sycamore, was easy enough, or in a ball-room, or at archery fêtes, or even on lonely moonlit moors;—but letters! 'Whether I write or not, Esther, and whether my letters express it or not, remember that I love you, that I shall never love any one again as I

do you, and now—now Esther, my own dear love, I must leave you indeed.'

It was five minutes longer before they parted, and at the end of that time Esther had not spoken one word about their engagement and the footing on which it should be placed; neither had it entered Carew's mind to disclose the truth concerning his own future position, which, with a boy's foolishness, he had till now kept from her. I don't think a dozen words that could be reduced to typography had passed between them, at all, during these minutes. They held each other's hands; they looked, as eyes under twenty-two do look, when their possessors believe that they love and know that they must part; and then, then, Esther stood alone under the shadow of the sycamore and knew that the first act of her life was over for ever. Play such a part again in sober earnest! look back upon this as on a rehearsal—as Rachel or Talma might have looked back to the first crude awakening of their powers—as the maestro looks back from his glorious Mass in C to the first vague dream which foreshadowed it in his youth!—when did such heresy (such truth) ever enter a heart as honest, and as ignorant of itself, as was Esther Fleming's at scarce eighteen!

CHAPTER XII.

MISS JOAN EVINCES HER STRENGTH OF MIND.

Is love, in the majority of cases, strengthened or weakened by the absence of its object? A great authority, and one prone to terrible truth in such matters, tells us that for the malady of love there is one humiliating but almost specific cure—absence. Another, and a philosopher, lays down as an axiom that the sentiment is strongest, the passion weakest in the absence of the beloved object. Passing over all pretty little poetic platitudes about the purifying effect of time and distance upon the affections, I think we may conclude that not absence, but the application of other stimulus, cures: that not the mere fact of being left, but being left alone, fosters love and keeps it alive. 'L'homme a sa force et l'exercise de sa puissance: il agit, il va, il s'occupe, il pense, il embrasse l'avenir et y trouve des consolations. La femme demeure; elle reste face à face avec le chagrin dont rien ne la distrait; elle descend jusqu'au fond de l'abime qu'il a ouvert, le mesure et souvent le comble de ses vœux et des larmes.'

Mr. Carew in four-and-twenty hours was with his regiment on its way to the East; Esther, alone and unoccupied, was dreaming of him among the lonely silence of the Countisbury hills. Could absence under such opposing circumstances by any possibility bring about a precisely similar form of result?

One thing it undoubtedly did for Esther Fleming's love: it idealized it marvellously. It was not easy to be very poetic about Mr. Carew, however much you adored him, in his presence. His handsome, boyish, sunburnt face was one you could not be sentimental about if you would; his constant flow of animal spirits, his hearty ringing laugh, were all things that set romance at defiance. But away; gone to that far post of danger from whence she should possibly never see the brave young face return; Esther could dream him into a position much nearer her own ideal than he had ever come in reality. If the feeling had dimly struggled up in her mind at times, during their three weeks' friendship, that she was, in truth, Carew's superior; that there were thoughts of hers, girl though she was, to which he could never reach, feelings he could never share, she was too innately generous for such convictions to trouble her in his absence now. She remembered his tender words, his manly tender words of love for her, not those little occasional tokens of mental inferiority which had made the blood start with such a sense of uneasy shame into her face when they were together. 'What does intellect matter?' she questioned herself once, once only—and this was

after she had been made censorious by some rather curious grammar in Mr. Carew's first letter—'Should I prefer some conceited clever gentleman, who could write me pretty verses and think of nothing but his own ability, to the simple, manly heart that is mine so entirely?'

And then Mr. Carew's letter, of course, went through quite an ovation of remorseful tenderness. It would have been more truthful to say, 'Should I prefer a man who could be brave and handsome, and yet write grammatically, and possess at least as much brains as myself into the bargain?' But Esther did not want to be truthful; she wanted to make out the strongest possible case in favour of the man she had promised to love; and aided by her imagination, and still more, as I have said, by the happy chance of her lover's absence, she succeeded in doing so.

Indeed, this letter, after her first disappointment as to its ability had past, was a strong tie that bound her afresh to Oliver. A very young woman always believes she finds some new clue to the character of the man who loves her in the first letter she receives from his hand. Those words, 'my promised wife,' 'your attached till death,' and others of a like kind which occurred several times in it, appealed to all that was deepest in Esther's heart. Now that she saw these things written she felt how solemn the tie was that held her to Oliver, how sacred were the promises she had tacitly taken upon herself. She began to think, not so much of the handsome lad she had known for three weeks among the moors, as of the man who called her his promised wife, and who wrote himself hers until death. And it is always a gain for a commonplace lover when he begins to lose his individuality!

Esther had long held opinions of her own as to what should constitute the character of a man she could love; and as soon as Oliver, by dint of absence and imagination, was placed on the throne of this visionary ideal, the girl's memory clung to him with passion—passion of which she had not experienced the slightest, the most passing throb in his presence. She made pilgrimages to all the places where they had been together. She found, or thought she found, the exact spot where Oliver Carew first spoke to her of love, gathered up some withered petals of the wild roses on the bank, and wore them next her heart in a little locket—from whence she was first obliged to dispossess a lock of poor David Engleheart's grizzled hair. She liked more than ever to spend her evenings in the house place, the only room in the house that had known Oliver's presence, and to dream, sitting there in the spot she had sat by him, that she could still see his handsome face shining on her in the golden light. Even to walk down to the hotel where he had lodged and look up, shy and blushing, to the window where he used to stand, made her pulses thrill strangely. To walk alone and think of him among the odorous lanes at night took her into a world of passion more subtle and delicious than any to which word or look of Mr. Carew's had had power to transport her when she was with him.

'I thought you would have pined a little for the knight who loved and who rode away,' said Joan, spitefully, to her once; 'and instead of that you look better and happier than ever. I am glad to see you are so tough-hearted, Esther, after all the nonsense David has talked since you were four years old about your sensitiveness and your warm affections and your painful depths of feeling.'

'Why should I grieve for Mr. Carew?' said Esther, rather hypocritically. 'Surely, Joan, you would not have me break my heart for every well-looking stranger one chances to meet upon our moors? If Mr. Carew liked to ride away, I am sure it is much better that I shouldn't trouble my head any more about him.'

Partly because he had himself desired that their engagement should be secret, and partly influenced by her own vague terror of Joan's tender mercies towards all lovers,

Esther had told Oliver to send her letters under cover to poor David. Miss Engleheart's suspicions as to the existence of any positive engagement were, therefore, suspicions only. But she had sufficiently sharp intuitions, even in love matters, to tell her that Esther's placid face, after the terrible paleness of the first two days passed off, betokened confidence at least in Carew's good faith; and the extreme lowness of David's spirits, and the visible change in his demeanour towards Esther, strengthened her in her belief that not only was the girl's heart won, but that David himself was perfectly conscious of the desperate folly of his own long-cherished dreams.

This was precisely the state of things at which Miss Joan had desired to arrive; and for several weeks after Oliver's departure she was unusually lenient in her conduct to Esther, never questioning her as to her lonely musings on the garden terrace or the moors, or the absent and distracted way in which she went through the daily routine of her work at home. But when, gradually, David began, as of old, to be the girl's companion; when, instead of Esther sitting alone in the starlight on the terrace, David got back to her side as he had used to do before Carew ever came; when long conversations and lingering walks and evening readings became once more the staple of David Engleheart's life, Miss Joan's milder feelings underwent a sudden and sharp revulsion. Esther was making David her confidant; it was not for him but for Oliver that the girl's face flushed up as she talked to him. David, poor fool! was listening for another to all the tender nonsense he had coveted to hear at first-hand, and would end by becoming more hopelessly besotted by his ridiculous passion than ever: perhaps, if Carew did prove false, would end by winning Esther, not to love him—Joan never thought that—but to accept his honest love and ugly face in exchange for the false fair stranger she had failed to win.

With Joan to think was to act. She did not confine herself to acrimonious playfulness with Esther and scarcely-veiled contempt for the besotted fool David; she resolved to part them. Mrs. Tudor had already invited Esther to spend some months of the coming winter with her in Bath; and so, without any discussion of the matter even with her mother, Joan wrote and proposed to her aunt that Esther should join her at once at the seaside. 'Her visit will, of course, be for three months, as you proposed,' Miss Engleheart wrote; 'and if a month of it is spent at the seaside with you now she must return to us one month earlier in the spring. The change to a gay watering-place will be a treat to the girl after her life here, and I will pay her travelling expenses from Weymouth to Bath.'

Mrs. Tudor was not unfrequently amiable when it involved no difficulty of any kind to herself to be so. After all, she wanted the girl more in her seaside lodgings than at Bath. She could go to market instead of Wilson; she could carry her air-cushion to the beach; she could play piquet of an evening. The two first offices Mistress Wilson—Aunt Tudor's own maid—performed with exceeding sulkiness (and all demonstrations of nerves on the part of Wilson made Mrs. Tudor miserable; where should she find such an inestimable, faithful creature, one so versed in wigs and dyes and paint and scandals, at only twenty-five pounds a year again?): for cards—and cards in some shape, even without playing for money, were a necessary aliment to Aunt Tudor's life—she was reduced to the doctor's wife when, with professional kindness, that lady would come and sit with her an hour or two of an evening. Yes, Esther would be a decided relief. Mrs. Tudor wrote back quite an affectionate response to her niece's appeal; and Joan, without any note of warning or preparation, announced to Esther at once that she should pack up her things and start.

It was a moment of triumphant glory to Miss Engleheart when she

broke out with the sudden news to David. He was sitting in his little sanctum in the sinking autumn evening with Esther; the futile pretext of tying flies to occupy his hands, but his eyes—those great foolish eyes of his, as Joan would call them, under the evil influence that possessed her! those foolish, and not at all handsome eyes of his, fixed with their accustomed mute adoration upon his companion's face. Esther had not, as you know, one particle of a coquette in her nature; and of all living creatures she would least have led astray poor simple, trusting David. But it is difficult to speak of the thing nearest one's heart without some unconscious softening of the voice; to speak of love and of a distant lover without some of the incense originally meant for the object of supreme worship shedding its dangerous sweetness upon the senses of the unhappy neophyte who is humbly playing his little part of assisting at the altar. Esther was thinking wholly of Oliver, and not one whit of David, as, blushing and eager, she knelt by his side and repeated to him some solemn unimportant bit of intelligence out of Carew's last letter; but I must confess there was enough in the beauty of her flushed face, in the childish grace of her familiar attitude; enough in the unconscious charm of her perfect confidence and the guilty start of poor David on suddenly hearing Joan's vicious snap at the handle of the door, to justify all that lady's preconceived visions as to the peril of this prolonged and unchecked intimacy.

'Esther, you will go to Aunt Tudor to-morrow morning.'

'Cousin——?'

'She is at the seaside, and wants you. Shall Patty iron out your lilac muslin, or will you travel in one of your cottons?'

'Oh, Joan!'

'Make up your mind quick. I am going to pack your things.'

'But, Joan, it is very sudden.'

The wrench of parting from Countisbury, from all that remained to her of Oliver, made Esther's voice choke; as to David, he sat simply speechless and stupefied, unconscious what further vials of wrath Joan might be about to pour upon his head. Just when he was beginning to get a little happy again, to have at least two or three hours of daily confidences from Esther—you must remember there *are* human beings, even men, who would rather be the confidant of a passion than go for nothing in it, would rather be talked to about another lover than not hear any mention of love at all—for this woman's inexorable sharpness to have dragged his poor secrets to light again, and for her to be avenged upon him thus! He could scarce have felt more hopelessly miserable had she said, 'David Engleheart, you will marry me to-morrow morning.' Indeed, I almost think, of the two, it would have crushed him less: provided, always, that Esther might have been present at the wedding.

'You will start, by the coach, at five to-morrow morning, and get to Weymouth in time for a late tea,' Joan's voice sounded quite genial and good-humoured. 'Nothing pleases Aunt Thalia more than to find people don't want to eat, so I'll put you up some hard-boiled eggs and sandwiches for the journey. What are you looking so odd for, child? I thought it would be a treat for you to get away a month or two sooner from home, and see a little gaiety at a place like Weymouth.'

'I like home better than Aunt Tudor, Joan. I don't care about gaieties at all; and if you please I will write myself and tell her so!' Her voice broke again.

Miss Joan seated herself with that peculiar angular sharpness that always betokened the advent of a few forcible opinions, and looked straight into David Engleheart's face. 'David, shall I tell you what ails the girl?' she remarked with perfect callousness to her victim's nervous writhes and deprecating gestures. 'Shall I tell you what ails our little Esther?'

'Joan, if you please, I would rather——'

'Our little Esther fancies herself in love with Mr. Oliver Carew.'

There was an awfully-guilty silence. Esther turned her hot face away towards the window; David caught himself fast by the cuff of his sleeve in one of his own fish-hooks, and blushed like a girl.

'In love with Mr. Oliver Carew. I don't say that she has made any confidences on the subject to you, whatever I may *think*'—dire visions of lonely days to come rose before David at the emphasis of that one word—'but I am just going to tell you both the result of such dreams on a girl like Esther. You are not really in love with the man, child.' Esther turned round quickly, and with an indignant denial half bursting from her lips. 'If you were, I should speak differently. You think you care for him wonderfully because he's the first man you have ever spoken to; and if you were to go on dreaming and loitering away your life, and reading sentimental poetry, and making confidences with David here, you might become so in truth. What is the result? You will have to battle with life, will enter upon it weary-hearted, dull, spiritless—all that young women are who have gone through the disappointment of a first foolish passion.'

'But, Joan——'

'I know what you would say, Esther, that Carew may return and hold to whatever idle word now stands between you. I hope, he will do so, if he is a man of honourable feeling and has sufficient money to maintain you. But your remaining fooling away your time here at Countisbury can have no influence, that I know of, over the young man's fidelity. He has gone to Malta; you say he is to go to India. Well, India is a great way off, and a great many things may happen there.'

'Oh, cousin!'

'I am not thinking of death, my dear. Mr. Carew did not look to me at all like one of those whom the gods love. I am thinking of all the temptation to change which must beset a young, light-hearted, and, I should say, not over strong-headed lad like this abroad. A lad, moreover, who is only bound by the most flimsy and nominal engagement to any one at home.'

Esther's eyes glowed with a fire that Joan understood thoroughly; but the poor child was forced either to be silent or to betray her own secret; and so Miss Engleheart stood master of the field. David, paralyzed, as usual, by the suddenness of the onset, had never attempted to speak since Joan entered the room. As he listened to her opinion of the likely stability of Esther's love it did occur to him too that his cousin's decisions, harsh and unfeeling though they seemed, were not altogether irrational. If the girl's absence from Countisbury were, in truth, to uproot her fancy for Oliver, David felt that he could bring himself to bear it, even though he had, single-handed, to parry his cousin's attentions till her return.

Joan read something of what was passing through his mind upon his face. 'I really think you might try to open your lips, David,' she cried harshly. 'It does look so foolish for you, a man forty-two years of age, to sit blushing and fidgeting like a school-girl when these things are talked of. Do you, or do you not, think that Esther should waste her life among us old people, and dreaming dreams of folly, when she has a chance of mixing with the world and improving herself? Have the goodness, for once, to give a straightforward opinion.'

'I—I don't think Esther ought to offend Mrs. Tudor,' said David; but he felt the baseness of his own motives too keenly to look in Esther's eyes as he spoke. 'You might have planned her visit less suddenly, Joan, but I can't be so selfish as to wish her not to go.'

'Do you hear David's opinion, Esther?'

'Yes, Joan, I hear.'

'And what decision are you coming to, may I ask? If you are going to write to Aunt Tudor you must set about it at once.'

'I am not going to write to Aunt Tudor,' said Esther, deliberately. 'Your advice, both of you, is so exceedingly sensible that I have no choice but to abide by it.'

'And you will travel in your lilac muslin?'

'If you please.'

'Aunt Tudor would be sure to make some unpleasant remark if you arrived in cotton, and, as you've worn it already, you may as well travel in your muslin as in another. Lend me your watch, David, if you please. I must go and see to the hard-boiled eggs at once.'

'Poor David is fast bound,' said Esther, coming up kindly to his side. 'Cousin, what in the world have you been doing with your flies? All our beautiful green drakes and hackles wound up into a tight little ball, and two hooks imbedded fast in your sleeve! Oh, you absent old David!'

'I was not absent, child,' he whispered, when Miss Joan had left them. 'I was'—David did not tell stories well—'I was feeling for you, Esther. It must be a grief to you to leave all the places that remind you of your short happiness.'

'And yet you advised me to go.'

'I couldn't find it in my conscience to say that you should run any risk of offending Mrs. Tudor; besides, it is better for you to have change and occupation than remain here.'

'Yes, I know it. Oliver would say so too: that is why I have brought myself to go so suddenly. He may be away for years. I must do other things than dream and regret and look back during all that time. I must improve myself, and see more of life, and grow wiser and stronger for his sake.'

'Yes.'

'And, you know, David,' (she said this with exceeding deliberation and certainty,) 'it is childish in the extreme to care so much for places: no change of scene or people can really have any influence on one's feelings when they are very true and deep like mine. Oliver will be quite as much with me wherever I go as he is here at Countisbury.'

And quite late that night, when Miss Joan had released her from her packing, and when all the house was still, Esther stole away through the dim woods to the foot of that sycamore where she had parted from Carew, and cried beneath it, and apostrophized it, and, I think, pressed her lips upon its bark with warmth much more creditable to her eighteen years than to her philosophy.

'My love is only a foolish dream that time will wake me from! Change of scene will bring me to be untrue to one word that I have promised! Oh, Oliver! are you thinking of me now? Oliver, I never knew before how much I loved you!'

At that particular moment Mr. Carew was looking in the face of the prettiest girl in Valetta, and assuring her that he had never before danced with any one whose step, both in the waltz and the polka-mazurka, suited his own so exactly. To a superficial observer of human happiness it would sometimes seem rather a matter for rejoicing than regret that one half of the world can never know, with minute and circumstantial accuracy, what the other half does.

www.libtool.com.cn

LONDON SOCIETY.

APRIL, 1864.

SIGNORA FAUSTINA.

THE LONDON OPERA DIRECTORS:

A SERIES OF CURIOUS ANECDOTIC MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL MEN CONNECTED WITH THE DIRECTION OF THE OPERA;
THE INCIDENTS WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEIR MANAGEMENT;
WITH REMINISCENCES OF CELEBRATED COMPOSERS AND THE LEADING SINGERS WHO HAVE APPEARED BEFORE THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

By the Author of 'Queens of Song.'

CHAPTER I.

Old Vauxhall and Places of Fashion.

SHAKSPEARE AND MUSICAL SANDWICH—CAMBERT ARRIVES—LOCKE'S MUSICAL DRAMAS—THOMAS CLAYTON APPEARS—SIR JOHN VANBRUGH AND THE FINE THEATRE WHERE PEOPLE COULD NOT HEAR—OWEN M'SWINEY—AARON HILL—HEIDEGGER THE UGLY—HANDEL—THE SINGERS' COMPANY—THE STARS OF THE PERIOD, ANASTASIA ROBINSON, SENESINO, CUZZONI, AND FAUSTINA—A COLLAPSE—HANDEL'S TOUR IN ITALY—SUCCESS OF FARINELLI—FATAL RESULT OF HANDEL'S MANAGEMENT. [1705—1740.]

VAUXHALL, with its thousand lights, velvet lawns, and shady avenues; York Buildings, with its smart vocalists and admiring crowds; the Folly on the Thames, offering its smoking-rooms, elegant music-hall, and ceaseless round of pleasure; Marybone Gardens, with its bowling-green, bowers, and lamps; the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, with its exciting comedies, brilliant concerts, and pleasant musical interludes; Drury Lane, with its Shakspearian attractions;—all these places of fashionable resort were in their meridian glory when the Royal Italian Opera was but a struggling neophyte. Music, it is true, had not yet arrived at that degree of perfection which rendered it worthy of being discussed by patched and powdered Pretty Fellows, who confined their fastidious attention and artistic aspirations to sewing and knitting of garters, knotting of fringe, the artful disposition of China jars, and the nice conduct of a clouded cane. Young belles, spending their days lounging in India-houses, buying ivory fans and Japan cabinets, talking scandal and meditating fresh frolics, dreamt not of Opera boxes, Crystal Palace Opera Concerts, or of packets of illuminated songs from the last new opera. As yet unknown to fame were big lorgnettes, black or white; unknown were snowy cravats, 'bones,' neat broughams, white and gold bournouses, and Covent Garden bouquets. Unfamiliar in the mouths of the amateurs was the language of the cognoscenti; strange in their ears would have sounded the notes of those wonderful instruments, the invention of the very names whereof demands talent of no ordinary nature. The Opera was as yet a thing of the future; and Tatlers, Spectators, Commentators, and Guardians had not yet the opportunity of exercising their cutting wit and biting sarcasm on basso, tenor, and chorus: coffee-house wits and Hell-fire Clubbists had no prima donna or ballerina to criticise or to adore.

In the time of the First Charles, London Society, wanting opera, testified its longing by patronizing Shakspearian tragedies interspersed with tender melodies, and by applauding musical interludes of an exceedingly mild description. The singers, however, were deplorably bad; and there were no concerts or public places to give employment to even these vocalists. The companies at the theatres were small, and composed of inferior actors; and those who were foolish enough to depend upon their vocal abilities for a livelihood had little to rely on besides the royal household and chapel establishments, the liberality of the sovereign, and the patronage of the great. Nothing was known of opera but the name, which the dramatists sometimes used.

Charles II., albeit he starved his singers, liked music, and once wrote a song himself. He had a slight knowledge of music, understood the notes, and could sing 'a plump bass.' Admiring everything French, he brought with him a taste for French music, and was quite pleased when Cambert—organist of the church of St. Honoré, in Paris, and the first French musician who tried to set operas—quitted France in a huff at being displaced from the management of the Opera in favour of Lully, and came to London. His merry Majesty had his band of twenty-four violins in imitation of the band of King Louis, and he immediately installed Cambert at their head. The Frenchman made many efforts to persuade the English to like his operas, but at last he broke his heart at the indifference with which he and his works

were treated, and died nine years after his arrival. Yet attempts at operatic music were now becoming greatly the fashion. Pepys, in 1667—the year Cambert died—'went with my Lord Brouncke to his house, there to hear some Italian music,' with which the genial old gossip was 'mightily pleased.' The witty, dashing Tom Killigrew, King Charles's jester, who was present on that occasion, had already visited Rome eight or ten times for the sake of hearing good music, and was very anxious to bring forward Italian pieces.

When it was discovered that his newly-restored Majesty was fond of music, composers speedily started into being. Matthew Locke—most peevish of geniuses—brought out the 'Tempest' in 1673 at the theatre which had been opened in Lincoln's Inn Fields two years before by the son and the widow of Sir William D'Avenant. The expensive decorations of scenery and dresses, the singing and dancing, and the fine music, made this piece extraordinarily popular. The public were delighted. Everybody ran to see the new work, and its success induced D'Avenant to produce other musical dramas by Locke. The directors of Drury Lane were alarmed at the repeated successes achieved at the Duke's Theatre, and employed a miserable writer of bad farces to parody Locke's pieces; but the Duke's Theatre continued to be thronged. Two years later, Purcell, most original of composers and irregular of *bons vivants*, then a lad of nineteen, composed a musical drama, which created a great excitement in private circles. D'Avenant, hearing of its merits, proposed to bring it forward in public, to which young Purcell joyfully agreed. It succeeded; and D'Avenant brought out several pieces by Purcell, which were all received with the utmost approbation by the public.

Musical dramas, not always of the liveliest nature, became the rage, and the performers therein sought after celebrities. Moll Davies captivated King Charles by her bird-like notes; pleasant Miss Shore played to such good purpose on the harpsichord that she stole the heart of Colley Cibber, who enthusiastically threw his hand, heart, and seventy-five pounds a year at her feet. Miss Campion sang so enchantingly that the aged Duke of Devonshire took her off the stage.

However, musical dramas are not operas, and the world of fashion wanted real opera. A great crisis invariably brings forth a great man. The great man who undertook the task of supplying the fashionable world with grand opera was Thomas Clayton. He was a miserable pretender, though he was in King William's band; he was utterly devoid of genius, or even talent; but he had a great deal of tact, he was specious and plausible, and just the man to successfully impose on the unsuspecting. He went to Italy, to improve himself by study, and having there heard the opera, thought what a fine thing it would be to have the credit of introducing it into England, and that it might be a money-making speculation. He by some means possessed himself of a bundle of songs, and with these returned to London.

There were only two theatres open then—Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields'. Sir John Vanbrugh, with the aid of a subscription of thirty thousand pounds, given by 'persons of quality,' was building the Queen's Theatre, but it was not finished. Clayton commenced his campaign by taking Drury Lane, and engaging the best company in London, headed by the lovely Mrs. Tofts, and the 'tawny Tuscan,' Margarita de l'Epine, both prodigious favourites, and by Leveridge, a most popular singer. Then he produced his opera of 'Arsinoe, Queen of Cyprus.' The pit and boxes were reserved for the subscribers; the rest of the house was open, as usual at the subscription music.

The public were surprised, delighted, with this new species of amusement; though the critics who wrote of the music call it 'worthless,' 'execrable,' 'contemptible,' 'miserable,' 'trash.' Clayton had succeeded in inventing a novelty; and although his opera, both music and

words, were utter rubbish, yet it was the talk of the coffee-houses, India-houses, and drawing-rooms all over London.

Sir John Vanbrugh opened his theatre almost as soon as Clayton's opera began. He had proposed to Betterton's company to build a stately theatre in the Haymarket, and his offer was accepted. He obtained a grant from Queen Anne, and a subscription from the nobility, and in 1704 was laid the first stone, on one side of which was inscribed KIT CAT, and on the other THE LITTLE WHIG, the latter being in honour of the beautiful Lady Sunderland, second daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, a celebrated toast. The house was opened in 1705, Betterton and his co-partners dissolving their own agreement, and placing themselves under the joint management of Vanbrugh and Congreve. On the opening of this grand and superb structure, April 9, 1705, it was discovered that almost every qualification and convenience of a good theatre had been sacrificed to display a vast triumphal piece of architecture. Immense columns, gilded cornices, and an immoderately high roof did not compensate for the defect which caused nine words out of ten to be carried off. They had Signor Greber's 'Loves of Ergasto,' which was acted every evening till the end of June. Theatre, pastoral, and managers failed, while Clayton was taking the town by storm. Sir John, tired or frightened, disposed of the entire establishment to Owen M'Swiney, who rented the house at five pounds a day. The company returned to Lincoln's Inn Fields, grievously disappointed with the result of their speculation.

Clayton relinquished his management in 1707, and went to York Buildings. The companies of the Queen's Theatre and Drury Lane then united and went from Drury Lane to the Haymarket, under the command of Owen M'Swiney. Owen was an Irishman, and had a fair share of the quickness of his nation, though he is called by Dibden 'a shuttlecock.' He had written a farce, and two opera libretti, and was the kind of man to make a dash at anything, without suffering from an over-scrupulous conscience.

Italian singers, hearing that there was an opportunity of pocketing some bright English guineas, and being attracted 'by the report of our passion for opera,' had come to England. Among these was Nicolini, a Neapolitan. A magnificent actor and a superb-looking man, his voice was the admiration of all who heard him. Even Steele, so bitter against opera singers in general, dilates on the grace and propriety of the handsome Italian's action and gestures, which he declares did honour to the human figure. M'Swiney immediately engaged him at a salary of eight hundred guineas for the season—a sum considered enormous at the time. He retired in 1712, when he returned to Italy, and, building for himself a splendid villa, named it, as a testimony of his gratitude to the nation which had contributed the wealth amassed by him, THE ENGLISH FOLLY.

On the arrival of the Italians, operas were performed partly in English and partly in Italian, which drew down great laughter and derision from the wits of the day.

When M'Swiney withdrew from the management in 1710, there is every reason to suppose that he left the debts incurred during his theatrical reign unpaid; for the tradesmen who furnished dresses and other properties, advertised a general meeting to concert measures for petitioning the Lord Chamberlain, or commencing lawsuits against the manager, who peremptorily refused payment, although the articles were in constant use. As this advertisement was issued December 1711, and Aaron Hill was then manager, it is to be presumed that he declined paying the debts of his predecessor.

Aaron Hill, who became proprietor of the Haymarket (at a rental of six hundred pounds), and manager both of that theatre and Drury Lane, came into possession June 1710. He had travelled all over Europe in a strange, fitful way; had written several dramatic pieces;

he perfectly understood the secret of pleasing the public, and of attracting crowded audiences; and was endowed with a certain degree of cleverness. His tact particularly fitted him for undertaking the management of a large operatic establishment. His first great success was the opera of 'Thomyris,' put together and conducted by the newly-arrived 'Swiss Count,' John James Heidegger, who 'by that production alone was a gainer of five hundred pounds.' Heidegger, who afterwards became manager, created an extraordinary sensation in the fashionable world on his arrival. His speciality consisted in being 'the ugliest man of his time,' his portrait in that capacity being engraved at least ten or twelve times. Lord Chesterfield wagered that it would be an impossibility to find a second human being so horribly unfavoured by nature. Heidegger, who was as good-humoured as he was hideous, or as anxious to make money as he was unscrupulous regarding the means by which he acquired it, readily accepted the bet; and a search was instituted. After some time, a frightful old woman was discovered; and it was agreed that Heidegger had the day. Heidegger was about to triumph, when Chesterfield suddenly demanded that he should put on the old creature's bonnet. Thus equipped, Heidegger appeared so fearfully ugly (although he was robust, tall, and well made) that, amid an explosion of laughter, Chesterfield was at once declared victor. On another occasion, one Jolly, a well-known tailor, presenting himself with his bill before a noble duke, his Grace, to gain time, declared with an oath at his ugly visage, 'I will never pay you till you bring me an uglier fellow than yourself!' Jolly bowed; and retiring, sent a message to Heidegger, saying that 'his Grace wished to see him the next morning on particular business.' Heidegger attended, when Jolly was there to meet him. The result was, as soon as the Fleming's visit was over, 'Jolly received the cash.' Having lost all his credit abroad, Heidegger had sought England as a harbour of refuge, and enlisted in the Guards for protection from his duns. Such was his boundless impudence, and such his insinuation, that he gained access in the most familiar manner to the society of the young 'sprigs of fashion,' by whom he was denominated the Swiss Count. Another very ridiculous story is told of him, which happened some years subsequently to this. The facetious Duke of Montague, projector of the bottle conjuring affair, had a mask made exactly like Heidegger's face, and a dress similar to that which he was to wear at a masquerade, in which he disguised a person of something the same figure as Heidegger. The night the trick was to be played, the conspirators waited until Heidegger, on the arrival of the royal party, had given the band orders to perform 'God save the King,' and had retired. The moment he had quitted the orchestra, the mock Heidegger ordered the band to strike up 'Over the Water to Charley.' The assembly were aghast, and Heidegger ran back in horror, swearing that the band were drunk or mad, and ordered them furiously to recommence 'God save the King.' The instant he went away, the false Heidegger commanded 'Over the Water to Charley' again. The king and his courtiers were delighted, and the affair went on till the band were kicked out of the orchestra, and Heidegger became nearly insane. The mock Heidegger then stepped forward, and assured the king that *he* was the true Heidegger, and that the other was only the Devil in his likeness. The two Dromios were confronted, the false Heidegger having the advantage of being supported by the judges to whom the appeal was made. At last, the Duke of Montague, in pity to the poor man, who was now almost 'stark mad with distraction and vexation,' made the impostor unmask, and the joke was laughed off; not, however, till Heidegger had obtained a promise that the mask should be melted down in his presence, that there might be no further chance of being mistaken for the

Devil. Pope introduced this individual into his 'Dunciad,' thereby adding but little to his notoriety. Dr. Arbuthnot inscribed to him a poem called the 'Masquerade,' 'in which he seems more severe upon the Count's ugliness, which he could not help,' says Dr. Burney, 'than on his voluntary vices.'

Aaron Hill had just entered on his management when Handel arrived in England, on a special invitation from some noblemen who had heard his music in Hamburgh. The great maestro was then twenty-seven, and had acquired a splendid reputation all over Europe. Hill immediately called on him, and asked him to write a piece for the Haymarket Theatre, to which Handel readily agreed. The manager then wrote a libretto, selecting the romantic history of Rinaldo and Armida, from Tasso's 'Jerusalem Delivered,' which he gave to Giacomo Rossi, a poet of considerable merit, to translate into Italian. Rossi wrote as fast as he could, yet was quite unable to keep pace with Handel, who composed so rapidly that the music was completed in a fortnight.

Hill spared no expense in producing 'Rinaldo,' which was brought out in the February of 1711. It was his object, he declared, 'to give to two senses an equal pleasure,' and among other innovations, he filled the garden of Armida with living birds, which created a great sensation, though they would persist in flying at the lights, and were denominated 'sparrows,' by Addison. He had also a real fountain. The opera was mounted elaborately, and was performed fifteen times in succession, a rare occurrence in those days. The cavatina in the first act, 'Cara sposa,' was to be found upon all the harpsichords in the kingdom, as a model of pathetic grace; the march was adopted by the Life Guards, who played it every day upon parade for forty years, and was sung in the 'Beggar's Opera' twenty years after it was composed. Walsh, the publisher, was said to have gained fifteen hundred pounds from the publication of 'Rinaldo,' which caused Handel to write complainingly:—'My dear Sir,—As it is only right that we should be upon an equal footing, *you* shall compose the next opera, and *I* will sell it.'

Clayton, who was then at York Buildings, was in such a rage at the success of 'Rinaldo,' that he wrote angrily to the 'Spectator.' Steele also wrote against it; but the public would persist in going to the Opera to hear the new work. At that time the house was not open on Wednesdays and Saturdays, the hour of performance being six o'clock. In 1712, on the contrary, the performance took place on those very evenings.

Heidegger became Aaron Hill's partner in 1711; but immediately after this, Hill had a dispute with the Lord Chamberlain, and threw up his operatic sceptre, which he never resumed. He died in 1749, in his sixty-fourth year. The management was taken in 1712 by M'Swiney. In 1713, 'Teseo,' by Handel, was performed, with new and costly decorations. M'Swiney having vainly tried to obtain a subscription for six nights, gave out tickets for two nights only, throwing the boxes and pit into one. The house was full at each performance; but after the second night M'Swiney suddenly disappeared, without paying the singers' salaries, and leaving the dresses and the scenes unpaid for. M'Swiney ran away to Italy, where he stayed several years. On his return to England, he obtained a place in the Custom House, and was keeper of the King's Mews. He died in 1754, and left his fortune to his favourite, Mrs. Woffington.

On recovering from this confusion, the singers determined on going on with the opera, dividing the profits. They placed themselves under the immediate superintendence of Heidegger. At first the public went very regularly; but the house grew thinner every night. The next season, 1714, appeared the great star, Anastasia Robinson. During Lent, the opera was performed on Thursday, in consequence of the queen usually 'having a withdrawing-room and playing basset every Tuesday evening.' The

following season, the hour of performance was altered to five o'clock, and there was an advertisement issued by the manager: 'Whereas, by the frequent calling for the songs over again, the operas have been too tedious; therefore the singers are forbid to sing any song above once, and it is hoped nobody will call for 'em, or take it ill when not obeyed.' The public grew more indifferent every day, and at last even the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales was not sufficient to fill the house. They tried dancing, they allowed servants to keep places in the boxes, but all their exertions and concessions were unavailing. In 1717-18 there were no operas performed; but Heidegger, who was very zealous in providing amusement for his patrons, organized masquerades, ridottos, and balls, when there were invariably 'some files of musquetiers at hand, for the preventing any disturbance which might happen by quarrels, &c.'

In 1720, operas were resumed. In the May of this year, the opera of 'Numitor' was announced. In order to induce people to attend, it was advertised that 'those paying a guinea would be admitted on the stage.' A footman's gallery is mentioned in the papers of this date, with the addition that its frequenters were so insolent and noisy that threats of shutting it were circulated. A company of French comedians then occupied the theatre in the Haymarket, to the ire of the native actors. Aaron Hill wrote to the younger Rich, September 9, 1721, speaking thus: 'I suppose you know that the Duke of Montague and I have agreed that I am to have that house half the week, and the *French vermin* the other half.' This agreement was carried out; and Aaron Hill announced himself manager and director of a new company, formed by ladies and gentlemen who had never appeared on any stage, with the aid of scenery quite novel and upon an improved plan. He opened with his own play of 'Henry II.,' in December 1721.

The opera was then going to ruin, and a subscription was entered into by the nobility, to the extent of fifty thousand pounds, to establish a new opera. Handel was appointed director, and the committee consisted of noblemen—dukes, earls, lords, generals. Handel was commissioned to form a company: he went to Dresden, where the opera was conducted on a scale of the utmost magnificence, and brought back a select troupe of singers, with Signora Durastanti and Senesino at their head. Senesino became soon the great star of the opera. He was an exquisite singer, and had a majestic figure and a princely deportment; but he was far from being the hero he looked. One evening, when he was singing in 'Julius Cæsar,' part of the machinery fell from the roof, just as he had chanted forth the words, in Italian, 'Cæsar does not know what fear is!' The poor hero was so frightened, that 'he trembled, lost his voice, and fell crying.' He never spared any energy in his acting, and sometimes threw an amount of force into a part which led him into the most ludicrous situations. One night he was performing as Alexander, when, leading the way to attack the enemy's walls, he drove his sword through the scene, and carried off a pasteboard brick, with which he marched onwards, in triumph. Another night, when stepping into Armida's enchanted bark, he took a stride too long, 'as he was more attentive to the accompaniment of the orchestra than to the breadth of the shore,' when he fell prostrate, and lay for some time in great pain, 'with the end of a wave running into his side.' Another night, he insulted Mistress Anastasia Robinson during the public rehearsal of an opera, and was caned behind the scenes by Lord Peterborough, when he had to go down on his knees and beg pardon. He took a fancy, during the performance of 'Theseus,' to drubbing the Minotaur soundly; and that the man who represented the monster might not object to being thrashed, the lordly singer always gave him a crown in compensation. Being anxious to have the worth of his money, Senesino invariably beat the Minotaur so heartily as to lose breath most seriously, which was often inconvenient, as a

song of triumph had to be vocalized over the vanquished foe. Lord Bathurst, at the age of eighty-seven, used to sing this song, and with much humour imitated the catches of breath with which Senesino interlarded it from his extraordinary exertions. Senesino, in short, was one of the most insolent, swaggering bullies that ever strutted their brief hour before the footlights.

With the exception of Senesino, who was perpetually tormenting him, Handel ruled his operatic troupe with ease. Anastasia Robinson, his prima donna, was an exceedingly good singer, and a very amiable woman. But in an evil hour for himself, he brought over the famous Cuzzoni. No sooner did that 'little syren' appear, than London fairly went out of its senses. She sang so exquisitely, she was so deliciously saucy, she was so regally superb in her ways, she was so incomprehensible, that lords and ladies, courtiers and citizens, young and old, could talk of nothing else. Poor Handel, the haughty, the massive, the irascible, was forced to submit to her countless whims and extravagancies. She would sing how, when, and where she chose. She would sing his music just as she pleased, and he might think himself only too much honoured if she condescended to sing it at all. Handel one day seized her round the waist, and threatened to fling her out of the window. 'I know you are a devil,' he cried, 'but I am Beelzebub, the prince of devils!' She was ill-tempered, she was ugly and ill made, with a short, squat figure, and a doughy, cross face, only redeemed by a fine complexion; she was silly and fantastical, but she was the reigning queen of the opera, and that was enough. Cuzzoni entered into a coalition with Senesino to torment Handel, for, from the commencement of opera, managers and singers have always been at war. Senesino, who had not the best of tempers, and was excessively arrogant and conceited, treated Handel abominably, and ungratefully, for the great composer had given him fifteen hundred pounds for the season. The maestro threw back the insolence of Senesino with galling indifference, which added fuel to the fire of hatred, and the audacity of Cuzzoni, with alternate threats and wheedling. The singers cared very little for the indignation which their conduct might create in the breast of Handel, for they felt sure of their popularity with the patrons of the opera, who disliked Handel's sturdy independence.

Hoping to subdue Cuzzoni, Handel engaged the lovely, sylph-like Faustina Bordoni, who had a brilliant reputation and a beautiful voice. The unfortunate manager, however, found himself in a more uncomfortable position than ever when he had secured the services of Faustina. Not only did the two singers commence a dreadful war, and fling the whole establishment into confusion, but all musical and fashionable London divided into two bitter factions. One night, the two prima donnas fought on the stage, with the fury of two demons. It would be difficult to say whether the most absurdities were committed by the cantatrici or by their partisans. When one prima donna opened her mouth to sing, the friends of the other would begin to hiss. Ladies of fashion headed the antagonistic parties. The Countess of Pembroke was general of the Cuzzoni forces, the Countess of Burlington and Lady Delawarr led the Faustina battalions. The grace and beauty of the Venetian singer gained for her the favour of the beaux and wits, who were anxious to secure for her undisputed dominion, and did not spare the partisans of her rival. One critic or wit wrote this indignant epigram:

> 'Old poets sing that beasts did dance,
> Whenever Orpheus played;
> So to Faustina's charming voice
> Wise Pembroke's asses brayed.'

In seven years the fifty thousand pounds subscribed for the Royal Academy of Music was squandered, together with the annual subscription. Despite the admirable works produced by Handel, despite his really magnificent company, and the brilliant appointments of the theatre, the speculation was a complete, a lamentable failure.

When it was discovered that the entire affair had collapsed, the directors entered into an arrangement with Heidegger for opening the King's Theatre with Handel. The great composer went to Italy to engage new singers, but unfortunately did not make a very judicious selection. He was obliged to re-engage Senesino, who had quitted England in 1726 on account of his health. The feud between Senesino and Handel broke out afresh with intense acrimony. The aristocracy hated Handel, and were angry because he had raised the prices on oratorio nights. They therefore gave funds to organize an opposition, at Lincoln's Inn Fields, sending for Porpora to direct it. The moment Senesino heard of this rival establishment, he offered to join it. Cuzzoni, who returned to England in 1734, also joined Porpora's company, which was strengthened by several mutinous members of Handel's troupe.

Deserted by his best singers, Handel went off again to Italy in search of others. He heard Carestini and Farinelli, and had the singular bad taste to give the former the preference. Not only was Carestini inferior to his great rival, but he was insolent and overbearing. Scarcely had he arrived in London before he commenced a warfare against the unlucky maestro. When Handel sent him the beautiful air, 'Verdi prati,' in 'Alcina'—afterwards constantly encored—he returned it, with an impertinent message, as being too trifling for him to sing. Handel went in a towering rage to his lodgings, and, caring nothing for the likelihood of offending his leading vocalist, exclaimed, 'You tog! don't I know better as yourseluf vaat is pest for you to sing? If you will not sing te song vaat I give you, I vill not pay you ein stiver.' Carestini objected to Handel's accompaniments on the harpsichord, which diverted the attention of the audience from the singer; he swore that if Handel did not discontinue his elaborate performance, he would jump upon the instrument, and thus stop the interruption. 'Oh, oh!' cried Handel, 'so you will jump, will you? Very vell, sare; be so kind as tell me de night ven you vill jump, and I vill advertise in de bill, and I sall get grate dale more money by your jumping den I sall get by your singing.'

Porpora had the good fortune to engage Farinelli, and the whole metropolis went into such a state of excitement about this truly great singer, that the 'Nobility's Theatre' was raised to the pinnacle of popularity. There never was a more extraordinary sensation created by any vocalist than by Farinelli. Presents of the utmost value were showered upon him—diamond knee-buckles, diamond rings, banknotes enclosed in a rich gold case, gold snuff-boxes. All London ran crowding to hear him, and were either melted to tears or raised to enthusiasm by his voice. Even Senesino was obliged to admit that he was unapproachable as a singer. Soon after the arrival of Farinelli, however, Senesino left England, and returned to his native Tuscany.

After the expiration, in 1735, of Handel's contract with Heidegger, he removed to Covent Garden, Porpora going to the King's Theatre. George II. subscribed one thousand pounds towards the expenses of Handel's management, and it was the support of the king and the royal family that enabled him to hold his ground against the aristocracy and his Italian rival.

At last both Handel and Porpora failed, and in 1737 the latter quitted England. Handel joined Heidegger once more, in 1738, at the King's Theatre. In two years he wrote four operas. When he had produced 'Deidamia,' he abandoned dramatic music, and entered on a new and higher phase of his career. During his unfortunate struggle against Porpora and the world of fashion, he had lost his health, he had lost all the money he had made during twenty years of labour, and he had to start anew, at the age of fifty-six, having nothing left but his glorious reputation.

E. C. C.

www.libtool.com.cn

REFUSED!

'NOT yours the fault,' you say—not yours?—
You women keep some bitter cures
For our proud spirits. How I long
To think you have not done me wrong.
Believe me, this is half my pain
To feel I cannot give again
Respect and trust, which were your due
When I believed you wholly true!

The words of love you said one day,
'You meant the next day to unsay.
And if I thought of them—what then?
I must be fooled like other men:
Must learn to woo is not to win:
That women's falsehoods are not sin:
Must bear what other hearts have borne:'
—I give you, lady, scorn for scorn!

It was for *love* I vainly sued!
It was a *woman* that I wooed!
Not something in a woman's guise,
To make my trusting heart a prize—
Rejoice to feel me in her power—
Play with her new toy for an hour,
Then fling it down, with cruel jest,
And mocking scorn, at my request!

No! it was something kind and true
I fancied that I saw in you!
Before a high ideal shrine
I laid this honest love of mine.
I woke to find that shrine a dream—
That maidens are not what they seem.
Henceforth I, too, will share their mirth,
And take their *love* for what it's worth!

F. S. M.

ART IN THE AUCTION ROOM.

www.libtool.com.cn

CHRISTIE AND MANSON'S SALE ROOM.

EVERYBODY turns with curiosity to the paragraph in the 'Times' that chronicles the 'extraordinary prices' which the pictures of Mr. B——, the porcelain of Lord C——, or the enamels and bijouterie of the Duchess of D——, fetched the day before at Christie's, Phillips's, Foster's, or Sotheby's. But in most readers the curiosity ends with a passing exclamation of surprise. Few, comparatively, outside the regular art circles, ever think of dropping in at one of these sales. Yet, if you are strong enough, or poor enough, to withstand the temptation of bidding, or can keep your bidding propensities within bounds, one or other of the great auction-rooms—for a single visit (or for half a dozen) you will of course choose Christie's—will yield some pleasant pastime; and it will be your own fault if it do not furnish something to think over afterwards.

More than 'sixty years since'—almost a hundred, in fact—Christie's was, as it still is, the art auction-room, *par excellence*, of the metropolis—though its locale was Pall Mall then instead of King Street as now. Horace Walpole talked as familiarly of going to a sale of pictures or porcelain at Christie's, as Baron Rothschild or Lord Ward, or any more commonplace collector, might to-day. On the whole those must have been brave times for the cognoscenti. There was, for example, a sale of the Penshurst [pictures

(May, 1764), at which, writes Walpole, 'in general the pictures did not go high'—as will be readily supposed when he bought for George Montague 'two sweet children,' by Sir Peter Lely, 'for two pounds ten shillings,' and for himself 'much the best picture in the auction, a fine Vandyck of the famous Lady Carlisle and her sister Leicester in one piece: it cost me nine-and-twenty guineas,' and sold, we may add, at the Strawberry Hill sale for two hundred and twenty guineas.

In those good old times, when cotton lords, and railway kings, and merchant millionaires, and great capitalist picture-dealers, and directors and projectors, whether of limited or unlimited liability, had not spoiled the market, and given to the room in King Street something too much the aspect of one in Capel Court, Christie's was a pleasant place of meeting and easy intercourse for littérateurs and loiterers, artists and amateurs, statesmen and bishops, dilettanti lords and fashionable dames, as well as the resort of keen-eyed dealers, Hebrew bargain-hunters, and the lean and seedy pickers-up of unconsidered trifles. Fine gentlemen and gaily-dressed ladies made it their trysting-place. Sturdy Samuel Johnson (at times with his faithful Bozzy) might be seen there, as well as finical and supercilious Walpole. There, too, came Burke and Goldsmith, Wilson and Fuseli, Gainsborough and Garrick, now giving utterance to a criticism, now to a jest. And there, oracle of every visitor, was Sir Joshua himself, ear-trumpet and snuff-box in hand, paying courteous attention alike to modest scholar, simpering peer, and patronizing peeress:—

'To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,
When they judged without skill he was still hard of hearing;
When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.'

Gilray's caricature shows us that Christie's long continued to be a fashionable lounge, where ladies appeared in low dress and feathers, gentlemen as they might have come direct from the drawing-room, doctors in big wigs, and young bucks in cut-away coats and top-boots. Later again, Nollekens Smith records how he has 'often seen Mr. Cosway at the elder Christie's picture-sales, full-dressed in his sword and bag, with a small three-cornered hat on the top of his toupée, and a mulberry silk coat profusely embroidered with scarlet strawberries.' Surely such a visitant must have made radiant the dingy room! Our grandsires, as we very well know, did not always wrap themselves in broad-cloth and dull colours, but a coat like this must have been a rarity, one would fancy, even then. Poor Goldie's famous peach-blossom Filby—at which so many a witling has cast his little joke—would have looked dim alongside Cosway's mulberry silk. Mr. Cosway was a noticeable person in his day; and his presence, apart from his coat, would have brought sunshine any day into this shady place, for he was a lavish purchaser of bric-a-brac. Cosway was the fashionable 'macaroni miniature-painter,' of the Regency, prime favourite of the court and courtiers and of the Regent himself. Doubtless the reader saw and admired, and still remembers, his dainty miniatures—marvels of grace and delicate finish—of the 'first gentleman of Europe,' his fair left-handed bride, Mrs. Fitzherbert, and many others, fairer and better than either, which were in the rich and rare Loan Exhibition at South Kensington in 1862. Without setting up for a medium, Cosway, like his contemporary Blake, was wont to hold intercourse with the spirit-world, and was a good deal less startled when he saw, as he told his friends he often did, Pitt or Praxiteles, or it might be Michael Angelo or Charles I., walk into his painting-room, than an assembly at Christie's would now be at such an apparition as that of his dapper little 'monkey-faced figure' (for so the satirists described him) clad in that mulberry silk coat profusely powdered over with scarlet strawberries, sword by his side, and three-cornered hat on the top of his toupée.

But though no such sights, and

few such men, may now be looked for there, Christie's yet offers a phase of London society worth observing. In the thick of the season, on the day of a great picture-sale, or, better still, on the preceding days when the pictures are on view, there is a gathering of art notables of no common mark. You may not meet the young painter or sculptor who has made one of the small sensations of the season—they as yet generally know little and care less about those who have preceded them in the race—but you will most likely see some of their seniors who have come to examine some treasure often heard of, never till now beheld; to chat over some long-hidden and half-forgotten Reynolds or Gainsborough; to see once again works they remember seeing when first exhibited years ago, or perchance to look through the sketches and unfinished works of one who, after long struggling with them in friendly rivalry, only a month or two back succumbed to the inevitable fate. There, too, are kind-hearted though somewhat stately cognoscenti of the old school—a rapidly diminishing class—great in the traditional history of every cherished specimen of Sir Joshua's urbane pencil, and the more famous examples of Italy and the Netherlands; and by them are the brisker and more æsthetical, but not less positive, and much less civil, dictators who now rule supreme in the realms of taste. There, again, are men of patrician eminence and historic name, anxious to add some much-vaunted British or foreign masterwork as a new heirloom to their gallery: hardly less eager, if it be a sale of crockery that is coming on, to secure a pet piece of true old Sèvres, or Henri-deux ware, or choice majolica. There also are the directors and keepers of our national collections, and, watching them with envious eye, the agents of foreign monarchs and museums. And then there is also that new class of buyers—product of our own day, spawn of our wealth—the speculative dealers and print publishers, who, as caterers to the hurrying, money-making, picture-buying lords of the City and the north, have become an almost dominant power in the auction-room as well as in the studio, and who, by dint of never-ending newspaper canards of semi-fabulous prices given for pictures and copyrights, and ambulatory exhibitions with sensation placards and loquacious canvassers, have made their names as familiar in every country town, and almost every village, as in London itself, and who move about here, as elsewhere, under the ever-present consciousness that they are the observed of many observers. The lower strata of buyers and spectators—the Israelitish brokers (Hebrew of the Hebrews); knock-out conspirators (abhorred of amateurs, collectors, and executors); sharp-set agents and small dealers on the watch for 'speculative lots;' and those queer visaged, and more queerly costumed lookers-on of doubtful calling, and sometimes of doubtful nativity and domicile, who may be seen at every important, and almost every unimportant, art-auction, yet never buy or bid for anything—these are likewise in their way a noteworthy race—as our artist has pretty plainly indicated.

And the things to be sold are even better worth looking at than those who come to buy or assist at the buying of them. Pictures somehow always show to especial advantage in the plain business-like rooms in King Street. Our older English pictures seldom look as well elsewhere—as it may be worth remembering if you contemplate investing here an odd hundred or two. Several of the paintings which seemed almost commonplace in the huge galleries of the International Exhibition have since shone like bright particular stars at Christie's. I have heard some excellent judges declare that Christie's is the best art-exhibition of the London season. And with some allowance—and without disparagement to Trafalgar Square—we may admit that it is so. At any rate, it is in many respects the most interesting and suggestive; and certainly it is the most varied, for during the four months you have

not one collection but a constant succession, and of every quality, good, bad, and tolerable, as well as sometimes better and best.

The Christie who built the rooms in King Street, and who, as a Frenchman might say, created the place, died just sixty years ago. It is recorded of him in the contemporary obituary that 'with an easy and gentlemanlike flow of eloquence, he possessed, in a great degree, the power of persuasion.' The visitor will feel that the 'power of persuasion' has been inherited 'in a great degree' by the great man's descendants and successors, but he will witness little 'flow of eloquence' from the King Street rostrum now. That seems to have departed from our high-class auction-rooms with the late George Robins. One of the things in our art-auctions most noticed by our more demonstrative neighbours across the Channel is the quiet, orderly way in which the sale is conducted. As M. René Gersaint, an avowed admirer of our system, writes in the 'Gazette des Beaux-Arts,' 'The affair proceeds without gesticulation or outcry (but then those English abominate all unnecessary noise), every article being put up and sold strictly in the order of the catalogue.' Very true, retorts M. Ph. Burty, an opponent of M. Gersaint and his Anglomania—very true, but this wouldn't suit the latitude of Paris. Your cold and sensible English auctioneer addresses a public as sensible and as cold. Between the Parisian sales, so animated, noisy, and picturesque, and those silent, regular, and economic London ones, there is, I grant, as much difference as there is between French humour and British temperament. But I confess I prefer our excited, variable, Parisian sales to those frigid, orderly London ones, which follow an arrangement as precise and preordained as a railway time-table. Instead of having a picture sacrificed like a mere piece of merchandise, I am content to see the Parisian expert studying the gradations of enthusiasm in his public, and interrupting the puerile order of the catalogue in order to bring forward at the right moment a Raffaelle or a Prudhon. It is clear at any rate, M. Burty concludes, that this manner of procedure is most likely to have with us French a favourable influence upon the proceeds of the sale.

With us English also, it would seem, from stray allusions in old books and journals, that once upon a time some such management was almost as much the custom at London picture sales as it is now at those of the Hôtel Drouot. At the present day, however, we are content to leave to the auctioneers and their experts of the neighbourhood of St. Paul's or Leicester Square this study of the gradations of enthusiasm in their bidders, for whose behoof a Raffaelle or a Morland—a Prudhon, it is to be feared, would be a name unknown to them—is always available at the right moment. Elsewhere we are content as we are. However it may be in Paris, it is pretty clear, from the prices they fetch, that in London good pictures little need any *expert* jockeying.

The prices obtained for works of art in the auction-room during the last few years, have, indeed, been very remarkable and suggestive, whether regarded as tests of an actual advance in their value, or as an indication of the fluctuations of taste and the influence of fashion. Look, for example, at the Bicknell sale of the last season, where a hundred English pictures sold for 55,000*l.*, their cost to Mr. Bicknell having been less than half that sum: and it was not less remarkable as a sign of the times that the principal purchaser was a Manchester picture-dealer, who bought to the extent of upwards of 30,000*l.*, and that in the very height of the cotton famine!

Take another illustration. One morning—it was the 8th of June, 1774—whilst Sir Joshua Reynolds was painting the portrait of a young bride, Lady Carysfort, the husband, in sauntering round the painting-room, took a liking to a couple of pictures. They were both portraits: but then they were 'fancy portraits'—one being the likeness of a merry

little girl, in semi-rustic costume, holding in her hands a pottle of strawberries; the other, a portrait of Mrs. Hartley and her child, represented as a Bacchante carrying the infant Bacchus on her shoulder. They were painted in the president's best manner, graceful in style, charming in expression, and resplendent in colour, and so my lord thought they would make a very pretty present for his young wife. The painter asked fifty guineas apiece for them—which sum is duly entered as received in his cash-book of that day. Some people cried out that it was an extravagant price for mere portraits—but both painter and purchaser, let us hope, were satisfied. Both we may be sure would have been incredulous if some seer had told them that one of these days these pictures would be eagerly competed for at Mr. Christie's, till, amid ringing cheers which would have astonished our Parisian critics, the hammer fell consigning them to new owners at some forty times their original cost. So it has been, however. The 'Strawberry Girl' was purchased by the Marquis of Hertford at Samuel Rogers' sale in 1856 for 2,100 guineas; whilst Mr. Armstrong bought the 'Mrs. Hartley and Child,' at the sale of Mr. Tunno's pictures in June 1863, for 1,850 guineas.

It is not, however, always in one way that the current runs. My older readers will remember a line engraving that had some popularity in its day: the subject 'Calandrino and his Companions'—the unlucky wight of Boccaccio's story, who, fancying he has found the Eliotropia and become invisible, is receiving with rueful satisfaction the buffets of his wicked companions, who pretend they cannot see him: the painter, H. P. Briggs, R.A. The picture was a large one, almost gallery size, and when exhibited was thought very fine. What was paid for it I don't know. But it was engraved: it found a purchaser; and a prominent place in the drawing-room of a serjeant learned in the law. Well, the years rolled on. In the spring of 1859 it was submitted to Christie's relentless hammer, and was knocked down to a well-known dealer for some 12 guineas—perhaps about half the cost of the frame. Will there be for it any Resurgam? But pictures are not the only things in which there are these mutations. A few years ago the chief engraver to the Mint was Benedetto Pistrucci, the same who engraved the St. George on the old crown-piece—an Italian by birth, a gem-engraver by profession. He was a great favourite with the old Hamilton school of classic dilettanti, many of whom in good faith declared him to be the prince of modern gem-engravers, and attested their faith by the prices they paid for his works. His masterpiece in this line was a cameo of blue chalcedony of the heads of Augustus and Livia. It was a commission, and he received for it 800*l.*, being the largest sum ever given for such a work. This was about 1819: in 1859 it was sold at Sotheby's on the thirteenth day of the great Hertz sale for 30*l.*

If one could follow the fortunes or trace back the history of half the pictures, prints, gems, vases, whatnots, of which Mr. Christie determines the fate with that cold, impassive, matter-of-fact indifference which so offends M. Burty's sensitiveness, doubtless we should have an infinity of equally noteworthy sermons in stones and canvas. As it is, and lying ready on the surface, recent art-auction prices are so curious and suggestive in many ways that it is surprising no one has thought of bringing together the more remarkable of them. No one, however, having done so, suppose we jot down a few. An exhaustive list—even a moderately full list—is of course out of the question in a paper of this kind. But we may pick out here and there an example, say of the highest prices, in each of the several classes — sufficient for comparison and fairly comprehensive—and thus furnish as suitable, perhaps as agreeable, a conclusion, or at the least one that will be as little tedious, as any other to this desultory paper. But it must be in a second part: the last line of this is run out.]

OUR ENTERTAINMENT.

NOTHING would be more delightful. We should have pleasant occupation for our six weeks' holiday; we should be travelling every day, see a lovely country—'

'And have lots of adventures.'

'Pay our expenses as we went.'

'Perhaps have some trifling balance to the good.'

'Why trifling? Very likely make a couple of hundred each.'

'Couple of hundred—oh, come!'

'Why not? Giving it six times a week, and clearing only 10*l.* per night, that's 60*l.* a week. Six sixties three hundred and sixty. I put it at the lowest; supposing we take 20*l.*'

'True. It will be great fun!'

'Great fun!'

The speakers were my old friend and schoolmate, Jack Bradley and myself. We had been thinking how we should spend the vacation accorded by a grateful country and the chiefs of our department. Accidentally, we mentioned the name of the late Albert Smith, which led naturally to that of Mr. Woodin, which led to Charles Mathews's, which led to the German Reeds', John Parry's, the Howard Pauls', and Arthur Sketchley's.

'Why not?' I said, rapidly, as if under the influence of sudden inspiration. 'Why not go about and give an entertainment?'

And indeed, why not? We had

seen all the entertainments, and it seemed easy enough to do—from the stalls.

Both Jack and I were rather celebrities as amateur actors. The back drawing-rooms of Bayswater and Kensington had long been the theatres of our triumphs. In the neighbourhood of Pimlico I was the Fechter, or Alfred Wigan, of private life, as Jack was the Mario, Giuglini, or Sims Reeves of Westbourne Grove. We often regretted that our obscure lot was cast in a humdrum, horse-in-the-mill Government office, and longed for the brilliant triumphs of the theatre; its large emoluments, incessant excitement, and consequent peace of mind, comfort, and enjoyment.

I am sorry to have to force upon my reader a knowledge of the full extent of my accomplishments, but the conduct of my story compels me. I was not only a famous actor (amateur), I was also an author. Yes; on me had fallen the mantle of Molière, and of Shakspere, and I served the Tragic and the Comic Muses in the double capacity. No one who knows them will accuse amateur actors of egotism, and I think I may fearlessly assert that I was equally excellent as creator as executant; and for the correctness of my statement, I refer my readers to the numerous circle of friends who have so often partaken of my mother's hospitality previous to my private public performances.

I was to write the entertainment, and to speak it. It was to be 'illustrated' with about a dozen songs—English, Scotch, Irish, Italian, French, German, and Welsh. We were not to assume characters, or change our costume, but to act in our customary evening suits of solemn black. We arranged this as being not only an economical, but a gentlemanly thing. If we were asked out—say to the lord-lieutenant's—we could slip away after dinner, delight our audiences for a couple of hours, and return.

And apropos of the lord-lieutenant: we did not venture to start in England, where we were known, nor in Scotland, where we had re-

www.libtool.com.cn

lations; we therefore resolved to begin our campaign in Ireland—to commence in the provinces, gain confidence as we progressed to the cities, and finally bear down in triumph upon Dublin.

We often used to dispute as to who originated the idea of our tour. I need hardly say that the suggestion came from me.

'It was my notion,' Jack would say.

'No. It was mine.'

'Mine.'

Poor Bradley had but one fault, and that was an extraordinary and monstrous egotism.

We sneaked up a dirty lane that led to a printing-office, and ordered our posters. They were in two long strips, on one of which was printed

'MELODIES OF M

and on the other

'ANY LANDS, THIS EVENING.'

which with the words 'with Patter and Chatter on every Matter,' was the title of our entertainment—an alliterative jingle, which, printed in large capitals, would look proudly in the bills. I shall never forget our delight at the first proof of our posters, which were on green and yellow paper—a delicate compliment to the opinions of all classes of our prospective patrons.

I wrote and committed to memory. Jack selected music, practised, and in time we were perfect. And with light hearts, heavy boxes, a few pounds in our porte-monnaies—not forgetting the glorious green and yellow posters—we started for Dublin *viâ* Holyhead.

While walking down Dame Street, we met Desmond O'Sullivan, who had formerly been in our office. Desmond was a thorough Dublin man, with the Dublin man's hat, the Dublin man's back, and the Dublin man's look; half-benevolent, half-*blagueur*. To him we imparted our intentions.

'Is it to give an entertainment?' said he, highly amused with the idea.

We mentioned that we intended to 'throw off' at a town, which I will call here Shandranaghan.

Desmond started.

'Is it Shandranaghan?' he said.

We assured him that it was, and asked him to recommend us to a good pianist.

'Is it a pianist?' he said. It was his peculiarity that he conducted every conversation in questions, and that they always began with the words 'Is it?'

He introduced us to a pianist, as agreeable and hearty a fellow as himself; who enjoyed the thought of the trip amazingly, and laughed at every syllable that was uttered to him.

'Is Shandranaghan a good town for this sort of thing?' we inquired.

'Indeed,' replied Rourke, the pianist, 'and I've never been there; but I don't see why not.'

This, though negative, was consoling. We ordered our full bills, commenced our musical rehearsals, and our correspondence, Desmond and Rourke assisting us with their local knowledge. The hall of the Mechanics' Institute at Shandranaghan was hired for two nights, for the sum of *2l.* per night, payable beforehand. We chose a route, wrote letters, received answers, paid for assembly-rooms, and court-houses, and made every arrangement for our tour, suggested by our own discrimination, guide-books, O'Sullivan, and Rourke.

We had a most enjoyable ride from Dublin to Shandranaghan. With the exception of a priest and a lady, we were the only passengers left upon the platform.

The lady had a carriage waiting for her, the priest walked, and we hired a car for 'the hotel.' The station was a mile and a half from the town, and on the road I asked Rourke if the operatives—for Shandranaghan boasted a manufacture of its own—were the sort of people fond of amusement.

'Indeed,' he answered, 'and I don't know, but I don't see why not.'

A little further on we overtook a number of these aforesaid operatives, all busily engaged in pelting stones at a shabbily-dressed man who was running towards the town as if for life.

'Why are they pelting that poor fellow?' I asked.

'Indeed, and I don't know,' answered Rourke, unconcernedly; 'perhaps he's a souper.'

'A what?'

'A souper.'

'Yes, sir, he's that,' broke in the car-driver. 'It's Paddy Bryne, and he's a souper; the more shame for him, and comin' o' decent people!'

Jack and I were rather shocked; but we rallied when I said that I was glad I had hit upon the idea of charging only sixpence for the back seats in the Hall, as that small sum would doubtless meet the means of the working classes.

'It was my idea,' said Jack.

'No! mine.'

'My dear fellow——'

It was no use contending, so I gave it up.

The hotel was more a public-house than a hotel. The host, hostess, and servants were all civil, obliging, and evidently as unused to ablutions as to customers. The service was not divided into departments, but any servant answered your summons who might happen to be passing. Thus, your shaving-water would be brought in by the host himself. The barmaid would clean your boots, while the ostler officiated as barmaid. Arbitrary distinctions were unknown, and the various juvenile members of the landlord's family — children with uncombed heads and affectionate dispositions—wandered in and out, and played in the bedrooms with an absence of reserve that though touching was troublesome.

Our first care was to see Mr. Donnelly, the secretary of the Mechanics' Institute; the person to whom we had sent the money, and who had told us by letter that he thought that Shandranaghan was exactly the sort of town where a clever entertainment, well delivered, interspersed with good songs well sung, was likely to *take*. We were some time in finding Mr. Donnelly's residence, for Shandranaghan was an oddly-built town, in which the rows of houses left off here and there, and then began again in fresh and unexpected places. Another of its

peculiarities was, that it was all up-hill—there seemed to be no down hill—at least to Mr. Donnelly's. We had several times to ask our way, and were always directed with marked civility; sometimes, indeed, a man would retrace his steps to put us into the right road. We were evidently the objects of considerable curiosity, for everybody looked at us as if wondering why on earth we came there. We reached the Donnellian mansion as the sun was sinking behind a grand green hill, and the evening was purpling into night.

Mr. Donnelly *was* at home. Would we walk up into the drawing-room?

Jack and I put on our Pall-Mall manners. The drawing-room was very dark, but we saw that there were at least a dozen young ladies in it amply be-muslined. Mrs. Donnelly kept a finishing school.

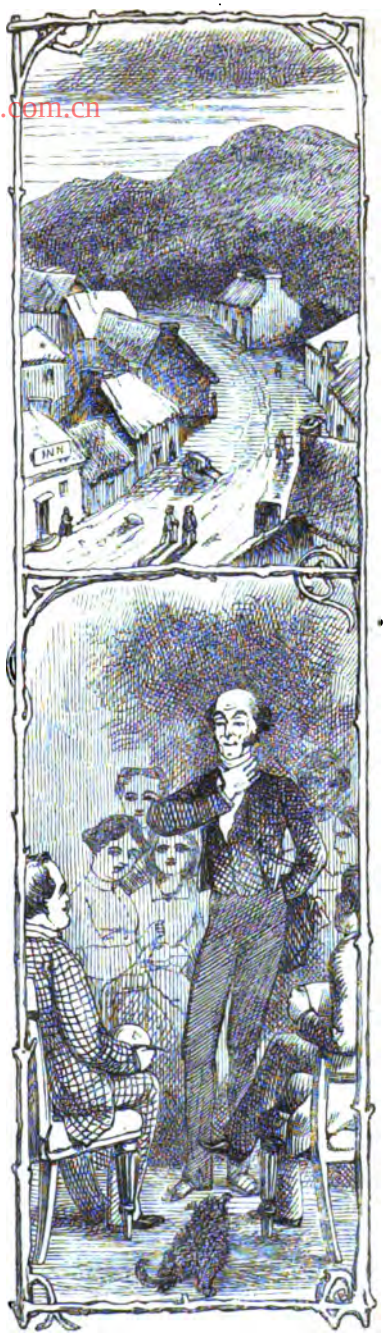
Mr. Donnelly was glad to see us. *Pray* sit down. *Mrs.* Donnelly was glad to see us. The young ladies rose and reseated themselves as gracefully as a flock of birds lighting upon the earth. And again I felt we were objects of considerable curiosity—not to say solicitude.

Had Mr. Donnelly received our letter? Mr. Donnelly had received our letter with great pleasure. Had he seen the bills? He had seen the bills. They were capital bills, excellent bills, admirable bills. Mrs. Donnelly said they were admirable bills, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! sure,' in a chorus.

Did Mr. Donnelly and Mrs. Donnelly think, from the tone and temper of the inhabitants of Shandranaghan and its vicinity, that we should have a full attendance on the first night?

Mr. Donnelly's reply was cautious—not to say evasive. Mrs. Donnelly said that the inhabitants of Shandranaghan and its vicinity, had no taste, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! no.'

Whether it was Mr. Donnelly, or the setting sun, or the young ladies, or Shandranaghan and its vicinity, I know not; but I began to feel depressed: I and the setting sun felt a mutual sympathy. Mr. Donnelly promised to meet us and



www.libtool.com.cn

show us the 'Hall' in the morning; and I asked Mrs. Donnelly if the young ladies would kindly favour us with their attendance—gratis of course. This liberal offer was not responded to with the cordiality I could have wished. The young ladies might be engaged in their studies, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! yes;' but they would be very much disappointed if they did not visit the Hall during our stay, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! sure,' indeed, they would not like to miss such an opportunity, and the young ladies said, 'Ah! no.'

Mr. Donnelly, Mrs. Donnelly, and their fair pupils all rose, resettled into their places, and we took our leave — every atom of our Pall-Mallian pretension vanished and gone. Out of the house it was quite dark, and we had to tumble back to the hotel cautiously and precipitously.

In the morning, Mr. Donnelly — who by daylight was a meek man, with the appearance of a lecturer on the blessings of temperance, the correct thing for the secretary of a Mechanics' Institute—led us to 'the Hall,' both the exterior and interior of which disappointed us. There were two high stone walls, and a gate, which when shut would not open, and when open would not shut, which led to a court-yard, in which grew the tallest grass, and the finest and largest dock-leaves and dandelions I ever saw—which led to a building that looked like an old and insolvent national school. There was a portico to the principal entrance, which would have been more imposing had not all the stucco dropped from it. The door was of the same obstinate and unyielding character as the gate. Time, perseverance, and Mr. Donnelly, however, conquered, and we were admitted to the interior. There was a raised platform at one end, raised seats divided into two partitions, and a gallery. Words cannot do justice to the amount of dust which had settled everywhere, and the date at which the windows were last cleaned was evidently the same as the budding of the docks and dandelions outside. As Jack said,

the whole place looked 'in Chancery.'

Our first care was to see our 'posters' up. One Peter Connolly was recommended by Mr. Donnelly, and we again started to climb after him. After a considerable search, we discovered the hut, cabin, or wigwam of Peter, whom we found to be a weazened little old man, over sixty years of age, who had recently taken to his arms a third wife a trifle over sixteen. Doubtless he was the accredited and appointed bill-poster of Shandranaghan, by divine right or hereditary succession, for he could not read, he was not young, nor tall, nor active. Perhaps he had chosen that walk of life because his name was Peter. He required no instructions. When we told him what we wanted, he said—

'I know! I know! Put 'em up! I'll do it! I'll do it! I did it for Mister Callaghan, years ago. I'll get mee paste and mee pot—mee wife shall make it. Biddy!—Biddy!—"Crashavaramaunagharad abarahoondi!—bolerothernash!"' I quote Peter phonetically.

Rourke, our pianist, said that he was sure Peter was a Connaught man, and advised us to look after him. We accompanied Peter to the outskirts to see him stick up his first poster. He had procured a pint-pot full of something that looked like weak gruel, a camel's-hair brush, and we carefully laid over one of his thin old arms the slips printed 'MELODIES OF M' and over the other 'ANY LANDS THIS EVENING.'

Peter made his first essay on a dead wall green with moss, and virgin of advertisements. He pasted the back of the bill with his little brush, but finding that implement too small, began to smear the paste on with his fingers. Rourke rolled with laughter.

'See to him!—see to him!' he said.

Peter then raised the poster about four feet from the ground, and the 'MELODIES OF M' bloomed from the wall in green and yellow glory. We expected to see the other half of the poster stuck on to follow, when, to our intense surprise, Peter took up his can and trotted off.

'Hi!—Stop!' I cried, when Rourke interposed.

'See to him!—See to him!' he said.

We did see to him. Peter halted at a gate about a quarter of a mile from the wall which he had just adorned, and there with much trouble, paste, and care, stuck on the top bar the magic words 'ANY LANDS THIS EVENING.'

Rourke, Jack, and I roared with laughter, as we explained his mistake to him.

Crowds of the operatives turned out at noon and watched our proceedings with considerable interest. They all knew Peter, and gave him kind words of encouragement and advice. As he was posting away, a woman said—

'Ah, Pether, dear! but ye're makin' the gate look purty.'

And a man advised him, as he was endeavouring to placard a wall—

'Ye should stick it up hoigher, Pether,' he said, '*con*spicuous to the sun!'

But Peter behaved with official reserve, and made no sigh of hearing. We heard afterwards that the work-folk carefully stripped the posters while wet from the walls, and carried them to their cabins, where they stuck them up as pictures, and admired them as works of foreign art illustrative of some remarkable event—the opening of the Dublin Exhibition, or the passing of Repeal.

Rourke had enormous difficulty in procuring a piano. Mr. Donnelly regretted that Mrs. Donnelly could not spare hers, as it was required for the use of the young ladies who were finishing. Nor love nor money could hire one. At last we were advised to apply to Mr. de Winter, the only music and singing-master in the place, who, the paternal Donnelly informed us, *had* a piano—though whether he would lend it was a matter of extreme improbability. Mr. de Winter, in common with the rest of the population, lived up a hill. We rapped, and Mr. de Winter himself, in his shirt-sleeves, opened the door. We explained our errand, and Mr. de Winter, a grave and solemn man,

disappeared and then reappeared putting on his coat.

'We'll go and have some whisky,' he said, and he led us into a grocer's shop, containing no articles of grocery, but whisky, bottled beer, and candles.

'You never were in Shandranaghan before, were you?' he asked.

'No.'

'No!' he replied; 'I 'spose not. D'ye think of stay'n here?'

'Not more than the two nights.'

'Not more. No! I'd not advise more. Here's my—best wishes,' he said, mournfully. 'Shandranaghan is a quare spot!'

'Is it?' we said.

'Oh! and it's a quare spot.'

'People fond of music?' we inquired.

'Fond of music!' he repeated, 'fond of it! Would it be them? Oh! an' it's a quare spot; but ye're not stay'n long, an' it's wantin' the loan of a piano, you are?'

'Yes, and if you could oblige us—'

'If you've a piano and wouldn't mind—'

'We'll take the greatest care of it,' we all said together.

'Oh! I've a piano—and small blame to me—I teach the children. I've eleven of 'em—children, not pianos. What would you be wanting to give for the hire of it?'

We said that in England it was usual for the vendor of an article to set his price upon it; but when informed that it was the custom in Shandranaghan for purchasers to be the first to mention terms we succumbed, and proposed a guinea.

'A guinea!' he echoed, 'ah, yes, a guinea 'll do; and ye'll have to pay the men for fetchin' it, and for carryin' of it back. Pether 'll do that.'

We objected to Peter.

'He's strong is Pether, though he's little,' said Mr. de Winter, 'and he does all those sort o' things here—music—and—and bill-sticking—it's his perquisite—Ye'll take some more punch?'

We declined, but Mr. de Winter was obstinate, and we left the 'grocery' slightly elated; the mu-

www.libtool.com.cn

sic-master wishing us luck, and telling us that Shandranaghan was a quare spot.

'Don't you think, Jack,' I said, 'that Mr. de Winter's manner and appearance are very like——'

'Vanderdecken! I catch the idea—quite so.'

The posters up, the bills distributed, the piano placed, tuned by Rourke, and the Hall dusted by Pether—another of his perquisites—and his bride, two days passed, during which we were regarded by all who saw us rather as Englishmen might be in Aleppo than in any portion of her Majesty's dominions. The eventful morning dawned on the evening of which we were to 'throw off.'

No places had been taken at the printer's. Mr. Donnelly told us that the aristocracy seldom came till the second night. We dined at four, as the landlord remarked, 'sumptuosity,' took a cup of tea, and at five began to dress. Despite the heat, I threw on a grey overcoat. Jack, however, walked out in all the funereal solemnity of extreme evening Belgravia. We were shaved in true professional style—each sporting a moustache, smooth cheeks and chin.

I need not say the institute stood upon a hill. As we strode up it gently, the inhabitants flocked to their windows and doorsteps to look at us. Little boys ran after us, and workmen and peasants accompanied us. Such is fame!

'We shall have a rare full house,' said Jack, 'all these people are coming. It's wonderful how fond folks are of a private view of professional people, a'nt it?'

The words were hardly uttered when a woman appeared in sight. She was dusty, dishevelled, had been drinking, and evidently mistook us for a popular demonstration, a national pageant, or political procession!

'Oh,' she cried, 'the darlens! the beauties! oh, the pretty men! Is it themselves? Oh, look at 'em! Ohoo!'

'It's Judy!' said the lookers-on. Ah, Judy—go home.'

'I'll not; it's themselves that are

the dandy!' replied Judy. 'I'll have a kiss o' both, the darlens!'

'Ah! go away and don't bother, Judy; it's strangers the gentlemen are, see ye,' said a bystander.

'She's a poor dark innocent,' said another to us; 'it's best not to cross her, as she's the gurrl that *can* fight. Give her a kiss and let her go.'

Both Jack and I saw that to refuse Miss or Mrs. Judy's demonstration of regard would be a proceeding fraught with danger. We therefore submitted to her salute in full sight of about a hundred persons, the market clock, which had only one hand, and that did not go, looking down upon us.

The ceremony over, Judy requested a penny with which to drink our health, and long life to it; and again we took the advice of disinterested bystanders and complied. The lady then removed the blockade, and we passed on, accompanied by the spectators, who by this time had mustered into a considerable crowd.

No sooner did we reach the open gate of the Hall than the foremost slank away, and the rest disappeared as if by magic.

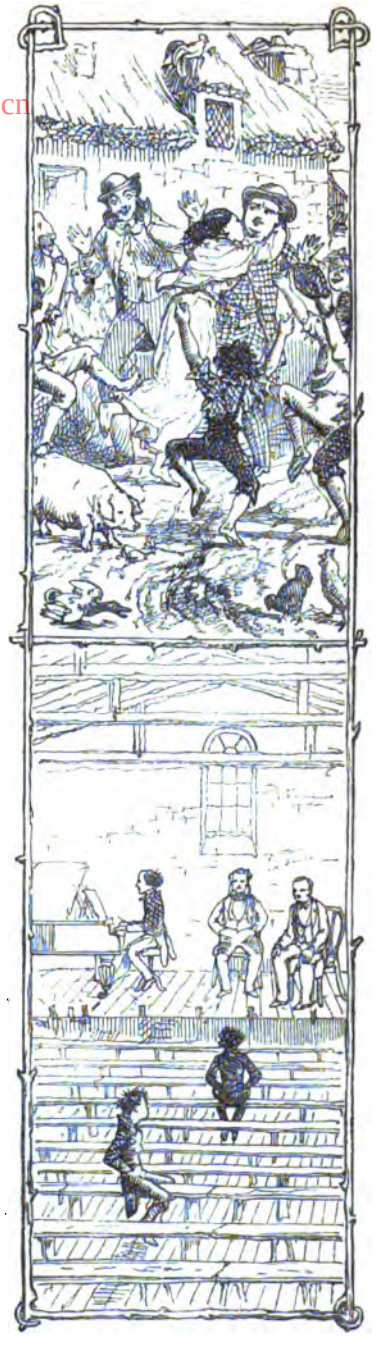
We found Mr. Donnelly in the courtyard, and could hear Rourke thundering away at Moore's Melodies in the Hall.

The doors were opened at half-past seven, of which fact not one solitary individual took the slightest notice. At eight the public of Shandranaghan remained in the same state of apathy.

'Is no one coming?' I asked.

Rourke laughed; and Mr. Donnelly tried to smile, and failed; then tried to look sympathetic and failed again.

At seven minutes past eight there was a rush of one. The eldest son of the landlord of the 'hotel,' to whom we had promised a free admission, claimed his privilege, and showed himself into the reserved seats, where he watched Rourke, who indulged him with variations from the Traviata for half an hour, after which the boy, thoroughly satisfied with the entertainment, went home. We continued to look on Mr. Donnelly, who, in his turn,



looked on the docks and dandelions, and when it was quite dark, sneaked back to the hotel. After supper, Mr. Donnelly was announced, and I thought was about to dilute his punch with tears, he was so moved at our failure, but he hoped for the best from the following night. For ourselves, the reaction from our annoyance came on us with full force, and we roared with laughter. Our ill-timed mirth drove Mr. Donnelly away, and we were just going to bed when Mr. de Winter showed his melancholy head at the door.

Mr. de Winter first inquired if we would take some whisky, and on our mentioning that we were in our own room, and could not permit him to pay for us, he reluctantly consented to make one glass of punch.

'It's a quare spot is Shandranaghan,' he said in his own mournful key. 'Ye didn't know it. 'Tis not the punch I came about, but the piano. Pether 'll bring it back. Ye've not played ye see, and so——'

And he laid our guinea on the table.

We protested—a bargain was a bargain, we were men of means, &c., but in vain; the music-master stuck to his point and carried it.

'Ye're young, ye're young,' he said, 'and Shandranaghan's a quare spot. I know what it is myself. I've eleven of 'em—all with a taste for music—more's the pity. Is it me take the guinea and you so young?'

It would have been a snobbish barbarity to refuse his kindness; and no sooner had we accepted it, than he changed from Vanderdecken to Mynheer von Dunck, and told stories and sang songs, the like of which were never heard save from the lips of an Irishman, or out of the pages of Sheridan, Moore, Lover, and Lever.

He kept us up till five o'clock. At nine we took a car, and steamed back to Dublin; we renounced the prospective profits of the rest of our route.

'We haven't quite cleared 200*l.*, Jack,' I said on the deck of the boat that was shaking us to Holyhead.

'N—o,' he returned. 'I thought

that calculation of yours would turn out to be bosh.'

'Mine! why it was yours!'

'Mine! why you might as well say that the idea of giving an entertainment at all was mine!'

'So it was!'

'What!'

We quarrelled during the voyage, and travelled to London in separate carriages. However, we have made it up since and are as good friends as ever.

We never again tried that or any other entertainment. The manuscript of 'Melodies of Many Lands' I enclose with this. If on perusal it should be found suitable to the pages of——

T. W. R.

AN APRIL FOOL.

AS Helen was the cause of Troy's destruction, so Miss Somerset was the cause of many heartburnings and much tribulation to our village. It may be necessary, for the proper understanding of this veritable history, that I should give a brief description of our village. The word is apt to give the idea of a collection of mean houses—to suggest humbleness and poverty. Ours is not a village of that sort. It is quite an aristocratic place, a suburban paradise of mansions standing in their own grounds, with great iron gates in front, and broad lawns behind, studded with ancestral trees. Almost every mansion has a coach-house and stable attached to it, and from one or two the family chariot rolls forth with a powdered coachman on the box, and two powdered footmen standing like statues of magnificence on stuffed pedestals behind. It is true there are some poor people in our village, but only just so many as are necessary for those acts of ministration which greatness, unhappily, cannot dispense with. We are obliged to tolerate a tinsmith, a saddler, a confectioner, a baker, a butcher, and one or two other people of that stamp; but, with these exceptions, the double line of mansions is unbroken by any edifice of less value than eighty pounds per annum. We are entirely an aristocratic community; and I trust you will not think the less of us when I confess that our patent of nobility is derived from that great Conqueror, Trade.¶

Miss Somerset, I say, was the cause of much heartburn to this community; for, like Helen, she was beautiful. And that was wonderful too, for her father was very ugly, a coarse, heavy-looking man, of whom you would have guessed that he had originally dug ditches, or killed pigs, or sold beer to be drunk on the premises. Something of that kind, indeed, was whispered; but now he was a retired gentleman, living on a handsome fortune derived from railways. Miss Snapper did say that he was a director of the company out of which he made his money, and that he made it by buying up any property which he thought might be wanted for an extension. But then, there were other persons who threw shoddy in the false teeth of Miss Snapper. No matter: Peter Somerset, Esquire, was the king of our village, and his daughter Julia was its belle. The lads began to run after her when she was barely sixteen; and no wonder. She was charming. At this age she was like a sylph. The most graceful form you ever saw. Tall for her years, her figure had yet all the development of maturity. She had the slimmest waist, the tiniest foot, and most delicate little hand that it is possible to conceive. She need not have shown her face at all to convince you of her beauty. The very sight of her back, as she sailed down the village, in her dainty, neatly-fitting garments, was enough to set all the bachelor-hearts beating like the clocks in a watchmaker's shop. Her face was so lovely, that every time you saw it you wondered if old Peter could really be her father. She was about as like him as Una is like the lion, in the picture; though, truth to say, there was more of the baboon than the lion about Peter. She had the most delicate complexion imaginable, which, as she became animated, mantled to the colour of the rose; a straight, finely-chiselled nose; large blue eyes, now sparkling with humour, now melting with tenderness; a mouth in the shape of Cupid's bow, with dimples on either side—not those silly dimples that we see in the middle of a red cheek, suggesting an apple that has had its stalk plucked out, but those that come and go with the humour, like a blush or a smile. Lips like the coral, teeth like the pearl, and locks like the ripe corn waving under the golden beams of the autumn sun. Bah! I can no more paint her picture than I can fly. Can you imagine her at all? Can you imagine Ophelia of a lively dis-

position, given to flirting, addicted to tapping Hamlet over the knuckles, with a pretty little rose-coloured parasol, and making eyes at Horatio, or Rosencrantz, or Guildenstern, or anybody else, just for the sake of exercising the artillery of her beauty? At seventeen, Miss Somerset had all the young men of our village at her feet; that is to say, she was surrounded and besieged by them wherever she went. When she drove out in the carriage, it was like a royal opening of Parliament; the young men lined the road to see her pass, and lifted their hats to her as if she had been a queen. At parties and balls they flocked round her and sought her for a partner, and fairly fought for the honour of taking her down to supper. Then they all wanted to sit next her; but, as only two could accomplish that, the others were obliged to be content with staring at her from a distance and talking to her across the table. Do you wonder that the matrons and maidens of the village did not like this? Miss Somerset was monopolizing all the eligible young men—literally, *all* of them. Imagine how painful it must have been to Jane and Emily and Edith, to have to sit at the supper-table beside unmarried gentlemen, who did not attend to them a bit, who did not talk to them, did not listen to them, forgot even to help them to tongue and chicken, being entirely absorbed, gazing at Miss Somerset, at the other end of the room. Imagine their feelings when Theodore and Adolphus got up from their side—which they were constantly in the habit of doing—and went over to pull a cracker with Miss Somerset. Conceive their heart wounds when they saw the eyes of Theodore and Adolphus glisten over the mottoes, and when they carefully put the tender sentences away in their pocket-books. Picture to yourself their contracted brows and quivering lips when the young men stood round her at the piano, like a body guard, all anxious to turn over the leaves of her music, all striving for the honour and glory of handing her to her seat. And, oh! the bitterness of standing at the window and seeing her canter past on horseback, her figure looking more charming than ever in the neatly-fitting habit, and her golden hair flowing out beneath a coquettish little hat, while all the young men galloped after her like mad. The maidens were wounded to the heart's core. Many and many a night they went to bed and bedewed their pillows with bitter tears because of that flighty flaxen-haired doll. The mothers were simply furious. It was really too bad: quite a dog-in-the-manger proceeding! Miss Somerset would neither marry herself nor let others marry. This was the great offence. No one grudged her a husband; not at all,—'only let her make her choice, and set the rest of the young men free to choose elsewhere.' This, however, Miss Somerset was in no hurry to do. She was most impartial in the distribution of her smiles and looks of encouragement, and the consequence was that all the young men held on, each one flattering himself that *he* would come in winner in the end. This state of things continued for two years, during which period not a single marriage of any consequence took place in the village, much to the displeasure and disgust, not only of the matrons and maidens, but also of the vicar, the vestry clerk, and Jobbins, the pastrycook. At length, however, the good news came that Miss Somerset was engaged. It was doubted at first, as being something much too good to be true; but Jobbins set the matter at rest by announcing that he had received orders for the wedding cake. It was now the turn of the young men to be injured. Miss Somerset had given her hand to none of the set that had so long flocked round her and paid her homage, but to a new comer in the neighbourhood, one Mr. Honiton, the son of a Manchester manufacturer, who, on the death of his father, had inherited considerable landed property, and set up as a squire. Four or five of the young men, when they heard from Miss Somerset's own lips that she had made her choice in this quarter, took to their beds and suffered for several days with severe

heart complaint. They accused Miss Somerset of being heartless and mercenary, for Mr. Honiton was a big, awkward, hulking fellow, who had nothing to recommend him but his money and his estate. But while the young men lay in bed and moaned and tore their hair, and cursed their fate, their mothers and sisters sat in their parlours and drawing-rooms, and rejoiced maliciously, devoutly hoping that Mr. Honiton might lead his wife a miserable existence, and thus avenge them of all their injuries. Mr. Honiton was married to Miss Somerset, and the bells rang a merry peal, and the little boys ran after the carriages and

Page 326.

shouted, and there was great joy everywhere, except in the breasts of certain young men, who felt that they had played the moth and fluttered about a candle, only to have their wings singed at last.

The marriage of Miss Somerset cleared the air. The blighted wallflowers looked up, the young men who at first thought their disease incurable, recovered wonderfully, and very shortly Emily gave her hand and heart to Theodore, and Edith consented to link her destiny with Adolphus. The matrimonial market had been thrown open and business became brisk. Miss Somerset, however, had spoilt the

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by Adelaide Claxton.

AN APRIL FOOL.

See the Story.

www.libtool.com.cn

matrimonial prospects of a few, past all redemption. When the flaxen idol first drew votaries to her feet, Miss Jane Morley and Miss Margaret Thompson were of the ripe age of twenty-six; when Miss Somerset left the field and slipped the leash in which she had so long held all the eligible lads of the village tied and bound, those two ladies were twenty-eight; and it is wonderful how the female flower begins to languish and lose the freshness of its bloom on the approach of the thirties. Miss Somerset did Jane and Margaret an irreparable injury. Those two years of distraction tided them into old maid-hood. In other respects, however, the village recovered itself, and I have no doubt that we should all have lived happily ever afterwards, had it not been for an event which occurred about a year and a half after Miss Somerset's marriage. That event was the death of Mr. Honiton. In the short space of eighteen months the flaxen idol had become a widow. The village received the news with astonishment, amazement, and perhaps some slight satisfaction. 'Mrs. Honiton must expect grief and sorrow like other folks; she had had her share of gaiety and pleasure, goodness knows, and perhaps it would do her good.' This is what the old maids and the sourest of the matrons whispered to one another coming home from church after a sermon on Christian charity. But the village was not prepared for one startling consequence of Mr. Honiton's death. A few weeks after that melancholy event his widow—the idol—came back to live among us, and took up her abode at the house of her papa, who, it should be stated, had been in the mean time gathered to his plebeian fathers, leaving his house and property to his daughter. Mrs. Honiton did not show herself for some days after her arrival, and during this period of suspense the village speculated upon the ravages which grief had made upon her beauty, upon the tears which had dimmed the lustre of her eye, and the nights of watching which had blanched her cheek and clouded her fair brow. The village—at least the female portion of it—was prepared for a walking monument of the profoundest sorrow, a widowed presentment of the true conventional type, with weeds hanging loosely about her figure, scorning all grace and showing neither shape nor make. Miss Jane Morley and Miss Margaret Thompson, who had taken refuge from the slights of the world in stern tea-meetings in connexion with clubs and a high persuasion, pictured her in a pair of flat-soled shoes, wearing a scanty black stuff gown, short, and without crinoline, and carrying on her head a coalscuttle swathed in crape.

It was a terrible shock to all these expectants when the widow made her first public appearance among them. Lady Godiva riding through the village in the original Coventry costume could not have caused a greater sensation. Mrs. Honiton was as beautiful, as radiant, as fashionably dressed and apparently as young as ever. It was evident that she had not been plunged into any violent grief; she had not cried her eyes out and spoilt her beauty; she had not been left destitute to give others the luxury of commiserating and helping her; and, worse than all, she wore so very natty and retiring a widow's cap, that you could scarcely detect that emblem of her bereavement. I don't exactly know what an invisible peruke is, but Mrs. Honiton's headgear was certainly an invisible widow's cap. It was considered quite scandalous that Mrs. Honiton should have got over her calamity so easily. In order, however, to acquit the lady of any charge of heartlessness which may be founded upon these facts, I may state that she gave her hand to Mr. Honiton at the stern command of her father, reserving her heart to herself, and that Mr. Honiton was little better than an idiot, a gentleman who spent nearly the whole of his time in the stable and the kennel, and who placed his wife in the scale of his affection after his horse, his dog, and his gun. Under these circumstances it would have been rank hypocrisy in Mrs. Honiton to show herself deeply grieved. But

what aggravated the female community most deeply was Mrs. Honiton's widow's cap. When she appeared in it for the first time in church she looked lovelier than ever. The merest suspicion of crimped white muslin peeping out between her black bonnet and her golden hair gave an additional piquancy to her beauty. And then her weeds were all so fashionably made and so elegantly worn that her figure really seemed to be improved by them. Her pink complexion stood out in charming contrast against her black crape bonnet; and this last-mentioned portion of her dress was a dainty cockle-shell article, so neat and natty that you might have imagined it to be a wedding bonnet dyed black. Her black bodice fitted to perfection, and the crape mantle which hung from her graceful shoulders was so contrived as to show that her waist was as slim as it had ever been. When she lifted up her crape flounces and exposed a tiny neatly-fitting kid boot with a graceful curve in the instep and military heels, Miss Nipper was heard to say that she had a great mind to go and slap her face. In fact, Mrs. Honiton in her widow's weeds was an infinitely more attractive person than she had ever been in all the dazzling splendour of white silk. Her first Sunday at church proved this most conclusively. The single young men never took their eyes off her, and indeed a good many of the married ones, including Theodore and Adolphus, could not help their glances straying in the direction of the beautiful relict.

Do you wonder that the women folks were indignant? They would have been more than women, more than mortal, if they had not. They had suffered already at the hands of this ensnaring syren; they had got rid of her, as they had fondly hoped, for ever, and here she was again troubling their waters as of yore. Her cap was assailed at once. It was a heartless mockery to put on a thing like that, and her husband only dead six weeks, and she ought to be ashamed of herself! But Mrs. Honiton did not appear at all ashamed She paid close attention to the service, and said all the responses, and sang all the psalms, and with her calm pale face and placid eyes turned upwards, looked like an angel—at least that is what young Parkinson thought—Parkinson who had never closed either his eyes or his mouth since the fair vision first burst upon him at the very commencement of the service. I suspect there were not many young men in the church that Sunday, who, if they had been questioned, could have given a very satisfactory account of the sermon, or even been able to say what the text was. The eloquence of the preacher was no match for the more attractive metal of Mrs. Honiton's piquant beauty. If there had been a sermon in that fair face the single young men might have been better for coming to church that morning; as it was, they dispersed to talk of nothing else for the rest of the day but the young widow's golden hair, and blue eyes, and coral lips that looked so fascinating by contrast with the crape veil and the glimpse of white muslin. The maids and matrons were justified in being indignant. It was very wrong. The clergyman himself felt the rivalry, as he felt it on many a subsequent Sunday. But what could he do? He could not go and scold the widow for looking pretty, and it was no part of his duty as a divine to determine the fashion and proportions of a widow's cap. Miss Nipper, if she could have had her way, would have settled the matter by tearing it into shreds and stamping upon it; though, as was remarked by Miss Margaret Thompson, there was not much to stamp upon. The old state of affairs was re-established as thoroughly and completely as though Mr. Honiton had never been. Mrs. Honiton was not only more attractive than ever, but she had learned many artful and coquettish ways. She combined the privileges of the widow with the fascinations of the girl to that extent that it really seemed a positive happiness to be left a widow at that age with all those attractions. As a maiden, she would have had no license to

practise the ensnaring arts which she now put in force in virtue of the fact that she had been married and lost her husband. I fancy that Mr. Weller's experience must have been among widows of this stamp —bouncing, fresh-faced widows at coaching houses, who set their caps —far back—at him, and regulated his liquor and generally superintended him. I don't wonder that the burden of his advice to his son was to beware of widows.

The female villagers witnessed with dismay their eligible young men once more falling down at the feet of the flaxen idol, following her wherever she went, sauntering behind her to admire her figure, walking on before to catch her smile, swarming round her at parties like flies round a sugar-cask, and from these out-door devotions returning to the smarting bosom of their families to rave of the bewitching widow. Had our village been ancient Athens, the widow's name would have been written on a shell; had it been Scotland in the sixteenth century the widow would have been burnt for a witch. It certainly was very provoking. She had spoilt the prospects of one generation, and now she was back again interfering with the prospects of another. A year or two makes a vast difference when the age of a boy or girl is verging towards the close of the teens. Fifteen a girl, sixteen a woman; twenty a boy, twenty-one a man. So in the course of two years schoolgirls had become women, schoolboys had become men. The 'idol' had come back to catch both in her net. Such are the privileges of being a widow, young, of course providing that you are pretty into the bargain. Sex makes all the difference. Widowers are not popular, however handsome they may be. You never see girls running after a bereaved male, unless, indeed, they are old girls, who are beginning to despair. Then, of course, as drowning men catch at straws, so aging maids, when they see the torch of Hymen flickering, will clutch at any hand that is held out to them.

Such was the state of affairs when Mr. Charles Bevington came to reside in our village. Mr. Charles Bevington was a rising young barrister — a handsome, dashing fellow, with black whiskers, and an easy, nonchalant address. Physically he was a sort of prize man, a specimen of humanity who would have carried off the gold medal at an exhibition of his species. He had a broad forehead and a broad chest; his frame was muscular and strongly knit; his hair curled all over his well-set head; and his eyes beamed with vigour and vivacity. With all this he had a ready tongue, a wonderful faculty for talking rattling nonsense; and he was a bachelor. He was the sort of person who, as soon as he is seen, provokes the emphatic commentary, 'What a handsome man!' His good looks were so strongly developed, and, as a whole, so complete and undeniable, that even married ladies, in the presence of their husbands, could not restrain their admiration; and husbands could hear their remarks with complacency, for it was a startling fact which nobody could deny. It was as natural to say that Mr. Charles Bevington was handsome, as it would have been to say that a man seven feet high was tall. Like all the others, Mr. Bevington became attracted by the beauty of the young widow, and very shortly after his arrival in the village he came to me raving about her.

'I wish you would marry her,' I said.

Mr. Bevington was startled at my coming down upon him plump at the first word with the expression of such a wish as this.

'Why—how—what do you mean?' he stammered out.

'I mean exactly what I say,' I repeated. 'I wish you would marry Mrs. Honiton, for thereby you would do the village a signal service.'

'I should have thought quite the contrary,' he replied, 'for all the young fellows are mad after her.'

'That's the mischief,' I said.

'Mischief! I really don't understand you.'

'Why, the fact is, Mrs. Honiton monopolizes the attentions of all the

young men, and the other young ladies in the village have nobody to make love to them. If Mrs. Honiton were married, five or six eligible parties would be let loose from her tail to go and court elsewhere. Our damsels are languishing for beaus, and all on account of this bewitching widow.'

'Well,' he said, 'I don't wonder at that.'

'No,' I said, 'but the young ladies wonder at it, and, what's more, they don't like it; and if you'll only go and marry Mrs. Honiton out of the way, I'm sure they'll subscribe for a testimonial to you.'

'Are you really serious?' he said.

'Perfectly so,' I replied; 'in fact, I would marry her myself out of pity for the poor girls, only for the trifling obstacle of which you are aware, that I am married already.'

'Has she money?' he asked.

'Lots,' I replied.

'Then,' he said, 'there is no need to ask more questions, for I don't require you or any one else to tell me that she is as beautiful as an angel. By Jove! I'll take your advice, and stick up to her.'

'Do,' I said; 'and if you only win the widow's heart, you will at the same time win the hearts of all the unmarried ladies of the village. Maidens and matrons will all be ready to praise you.'

'In that case,' he said, 'I shall step into a perfect mine of affection. Well, I'll go in for it at any rate.'

'Yes,' I said, 'do; go in and win.'

Mr. Bevington did go in for it. He laid siege to the widow immediately, much to the indignation and disgust of her train of admirers, who looked upon the encroachment of the tall, handsome barrister as something entirely disproportionate and unfair. When Mr. Bevington dashed into the midst of them, and carried the widow off in triumph, his rivals fell off timidly, and looked up at him as much as to say, 'Why don't you compete with one of your own size?' The widow, however, was by no means inclined to encourage a monopoly of herself, and still continued to distribute her smiles with impartiality. The consequence was, that her many admirers held on for some time, and did their best to dispute the ground with the handsome barrister; but it was very discouraging work. The barrister almost invariably got the best of it, and on such occasions the widow would look at her train, and shrug her pretty shoulders, as much as to say, 'It is really not my fault. I try to give you all a chance; and if you let this dashing, black-whiskered man cut you out, why, you have only yourselves to blame.'

Mrs. Honiton's followers began to drop off one by one, and the female villagers looked up. Mr. Webber, the cotton-broker, was the first to relax his hold, and sink into the waters of despair; then Captain Jarvis; then young Jenkins, the alderman's son, and two or three more, until the prize was disputed by only two—Mr. Bevington, the handsome barrister, and Mr. Joseph Perkins, a mild little gentleman, whose sticking up to Mrs. Honiton had always been regarded as like his impudence. As some half-dozen of Mrs. Honiton's admirers had now been detached for other service, the village was in a humour to be amused at the pretensions of 'little Perkins,' particularly as little Perkins had only four hundred a year, and was short, and by no means what the ladies call handsome. Little Perkins had another fault—or, at least, he exhibited certain traits of character which are a positive disadvantage when placed in competition with physical beauty and dash. Perkins was amiable, gentle, and unobtrusive in his manners, kind and generous of disposition, and, on all occasions, highly considerate of the feelings of others. And because he was all this, and wasn't six feet high, and hadn't black whiskers, and didn't bounce and talk loud, the girls called him a 'molly.' It is the same in the matrimonial market as in the shop or the bazaar. It is the showy article that takes. Women see a gaudy man, all dazzle and bright colour, and they say at once, 'I'll take this article, please,' without even stopping to inquire if he will

wash, if he will wear, and if his colours are fast. I believe that if it were the custom for women to propose, and if they were left to make their choice, they would all throw the handkerchief to the long-legged, black-whiskered, handsome fellows, perfectly irrespective of brains or character. Scholars, philosophers, and men of thought and mind would not get wives at all.

So the village laughed at the pretensions of little Mr. Perkins, and of course Mr. Bevington was in every respect *above* seriously regarding so insignificant a person as a rival. He treated him as a big mastiff treats a little puppy dog. He did not exhibit any impatience when Mr. Perkins joined the society of himself and the widow, but rather took delight in drawing him out and encouraging him to go on. Mr. Bevington, in fact, was amused with the little man, and liked to 'trot him out,' as he expressed it before the widow. And the widow seemed to enjoy the fun, and was for ever sending Perkins to fetch and carry for her. If, when she was sitting by the side of the dashing Mr. Bevington, she happened to drop her handkerchief, she would call to little Perkins to pick it up for her, and Bevington would quietly keep his seat and allow Perkins to perform the office. Everybody pitied little Perkins and wondered that he could be such a fool.

But Mr. Bevington was suddenly called away on business, and Mr. Perkins had the field all to himself. He seized the opportunity to make an offer to the widow. He fell upon his knees, vowed that he loved her to distraction, and swore that he could never be happy without her. Mrs. Honiton rejected him, and actually laughed at him. Poor little Perkins went home and took to his bed, and was ill for weeks.

In the mean time the handsome barrister returned, and hearing of Perkins's declaration, was immensely amused, and told the story everywhere with great gusto and delight.

One day, shortly after this, Bevington called upon me with an invitation to an evening party at Mrs. Honiton's house.

'Well,' I said, 'I presume you have done it: gone in and won, as I advised you.'

'Well,' he said, 'I think I may safely say I have.'

'And it's all settled,' I said.

'Well, not exactly,' he said; 'she has some scruples about giving her consent so soon after her—her bereavement, which is quite right and proper, you know, and I like her the better for it; but it's all right.'

'Ah! doesn't like the idea of serving up the funeral baked meats at the wedding tables,' I remarked.

'Precisely, and wants to wear out the black shoes; but you'll come to the party, won't you? I want you to be there particularly, for we are going to have a lark with little Perkins.'

'What!' I said, 'will he be there after what has occurred?'

'There's the lark,' he said; 'observe the date of the party, the first of April; we're going to make an April fool of him.'

I asked how they intended to proceed. He explained:

'Oh! the simplest thing in the world,' he said. 'I have written a letter to Perkins, as if from Mrs. Honiton, inviting him to the party and giving him to believe that she relents towards him and is anxious that he should renew his addresses.'

'Does Mrs. Honiton know of it?' I asked.

'Oh, yes; of course she does, and enters into the joke with an anticipation of rare fun. What a lark it will be to see little Perkins hoaxed!'

'It will indeed,' I said, 'and I shall certainly be there to see.'

I went to the party on the first of April, and arriving rather early, found Mr. Bevington and the widow concocting an elaboration of the plot for making an April fool of Perkins. It was arranged that Mrs. Honiton should give Perkins great encouragement, and lead him to a second declaration, and that the guests should all come in at the moment, and discover him on his knees at her feet. I thought this going rather too far, and was somewhat surprised that Mrs. Honiton should be so eager to join in so heartless a plot; but as all the guests who were in the secret

looked upon it as a great piece of fun, I said nothing, and let matters proceed.

Perkins arrived, was announced, and entered the drawing-room in a faultless evening suit, evidently ordered for the occasion. He went straight to Mrs. Honiton, shook her warmly by the hand, and looked his happiness and his thanks with an expression of honest earnestness, which made me feel ashamed of myself for having, in the remotest way, entered into the conspiracy against him. I could not have imagined Mrs. Honiton to be so consummate an actress. She returned his warm grasp in the most impressive manner, and put on an expression of delight and pleasure which it would have been impossible to suspect. Bevington was holding on by the mantelpiece, convulsed with suppressed laughter. Mrs. Honiton saw him and frowned gravely, sustaining her part to perfection. When Bevington had managed to control his laughter, he went up to Perkins and whispered words of encouragement in his ear; and all the evening he followed him about, muttering such things as 'Faint heart never won a fair lady,' 'Fortune favours the brave,' 'Go in and win,' 'She loves you, Perkins.'

The moment came. It was after supper, and after the first quadrille. Mrs. Honiton, who had been Perkins's partner, led him away out of the drawing-room into an adjoining apartment. Bevington gave the initiated the signal, and we followed. Mr. Perkins and Mrs. Honiton were walking up and down the room, arm-in-arm, talking softly. Every now and then we could hear Perkins making mention of his 'heart,' his 'devotion,' his 'long attachment,' his 'unalterable devotion.' Mrs. Honiton was silent, and looked down modestly, with admirable art. Perkins handed her to a chair. He sat down beside her; he whispered more words of love—he fell upon his knees at her feet!

'Now is the time,' cried Bevington, and he rushed into the room, and burst into a roar of laughter. Perkins rose in haste and confusion. Mrs. Honiton rose also, but looked calm and serious. She turned coldly to Bevington, and said:

'Pray, what are you laughing at, sir?'

'Capital! capital!' cried Bevington; 'how admirably she acts her part!'

'Mr. Bevington,' said Mrs. Honiton, in the same cold, earnest, manner, 'the part I am acting is one in which I am prompted by my heart and my inclination, and not by your cruel and unmanly designs. Mr. Perkins has made me an offer of his hand, and I accept it, confident that he also bestows upon me a heart capable of love, capable of feeling, and capable of kindness and generosity.'

Mr. Bevington was still trying to laugh, but it was a little on the wrong side of his mouth now. Mrs. Honiton's acting was too deep, too subtle, too profound for him. She continued:

'You must remember, Mr. Bevington, that I am a widow, and that I have been privileged, while very young, to acquire experience of your sex. That experience has not come too late for my happiness. I have thought it possible, sir, that a person who has acted with such deliberate and wanton cruelty towards the most kindhearted and inoffensive of men, might at some future time feel no scruple in practising that cruelty upon a defenceless woman; and I have thought it most probable that a man who has invariably, and under many trying circumstances, shown himself to possess all the qualities which make up the character of a true gentleman, will prove himself to be a kind and devoted husband. Sir, I have made my choice.'

And Mrs. Honiton gave her hand to Perkins, led him into the ball-room among the company, and there openly announced to her guests that she had made choice of a husband.

And so Mr. Perkins, instead of being made an April fool, was made the happiest man alive. And the village wondered, and refused to believe its eyes, until it saw Mr. and Mrs. Perkins roll away in the bridal chariot.

A. H.

www.libtool.com.cn

A BUNDLE OF CONTRADICTIONS.

TRUE TO A TITTLE.

I AM long, I am short, I am thin, I am stout;
I am often within, even when I'm without;
I am dark, I am fair, I am old, I am new;
On my face may be smiles, even while I look blue.
I've a foot without toes, and a head without hair;
I am light, I am heavy, and 'tis true, I declare,
Wherever I'm sent, without limbs I go there.
Without wings I can fly, going up to the skies,
Without voice I can tell all the traveller espies;
And this I accomplish, although without eyes.
Although I hear nothing, because without ears,
The lover confides me his hopes and his fears.
Without hand I can work, for you'll own it is true,
From that which I bear many blessings ensue,
Yet, though without malice, much mischief I do.
Though void of all feeling, of me you may borrow
What will move you to laughter, or melt you in sorrow;
Though I never could think, much reflection I show,
And I wisdom impart, although nothing I know.
Although I'm worth millions, contradiction complete,
Men trample me down in the dirt with their feet.
Nay, these wonders to crown, it with truth can be said,
Though some thousand years old, I remain to be made!

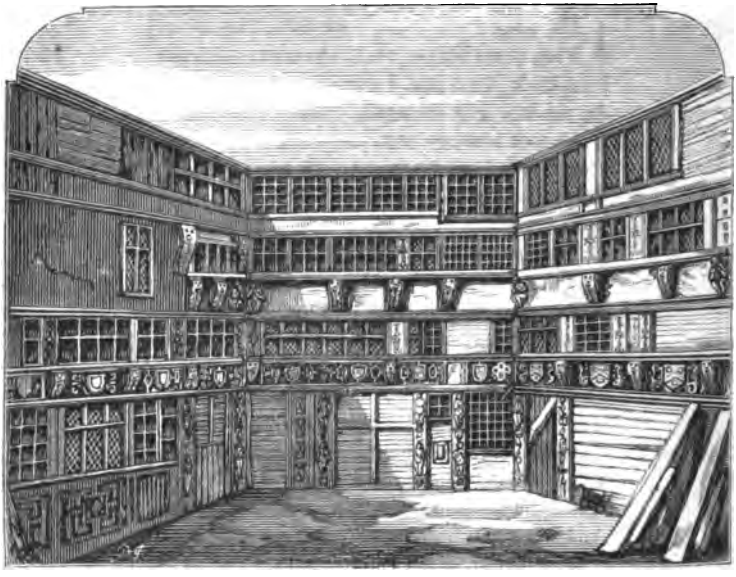
C. M.

THE MERCHANT PRINCES OF ENGLAND.

www.libtool.com.cn

CHAPTER III.

RICHARD WHITTINGTON OF LONDON.



WHITTINGTON'S HOUSE (LOOKING FROM THE COURT), HART STREET, CRUTCHED FRIARS.
[From an Old Print.]

EVERYBODY knows the story of Dick Whittington and his Cat;—how the little fellow, at the age of seven, ran away from a home where there was nothing to make him happy, was a beggar-boy for some years, and then, hearing that the streets of London were paved with gold and silver, worked his way thither to be saved from starvation by the good-nature of a merchant of Leadenhall Street, named Fitzwarren;—how he was for a long time scullion in the merchant's house, much favoured by Mistress Alice, the merchant's daughter, but much persecuted by the 'vile jade of a cook,' whose bidding he had to follow;—how at length his master, sending a shipfull of merchandize to Barbary, permitted each one of his servants to venture something, and poor Whittington had nothing to venture save a cat which he had bought for a penny, and set to destroy the rats and mice that infested his garret;—how, while the ship was on its voyage, the cook-maid's tyranny so troubled him that he ran away, and had gone as far as Bunhill Fields, when the bells of Bow Church seemed to call to him—

'Turn again, Whittington,
Thrice Lord Mayor of London;'

and how, when, in obedience to this warning, he went back to Leadenhall Street, it was to learn that his cat had been bought by the King of Barbary for treasures worth 100,000*l.*; so that he was all at once almost the richest commoner in England, fit to marry good Mistress Alice, his patron's daughter, to become a famous merchant and, as Bow bells had promised, thrice

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

SIR RICHARD WHITTINGTON.

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY REGINALD ELSTRACK, *circa* A.D. 1590.

www.libtool.com.cn

Lord Mayor of London, and to live in the City's history as one of its greatest benefactors. But that tale is too full of anachronisms and improbabilities for any part of it, not confirmed by authentic records, to be believed in; and the authentic records are so few that we can get but a slight knowledge of Whittington's real history.

That a cat had something to do with the making of his fortune is not easily to be denied. The legend is traced back to within a generation of his lifetime, and to authorities that could hardly have been either ignorant or untruthful. It is probable, moreover, that he owed something to the influence and assistance of Fitzwarren, whose daughter he did really marry. But that he began life as a beggar-boy and scullion is certainly a fable. He was the youngest son of Sir William Whittington, a descendant of an ancient Warwickshire family, and proprietor of the manors of Pauntley, in Gloucestershire, and Solers Hope, in Hereford, who died in 1360. The family possessions passed to William, the firstborn, and, on his early death, to Robert, the second son, High Sheriff of Gloucester in 1402, and again in 1407, and ancestor of the Whittingtons of Hamswell, existing to this day. This Robert must have been a wealthy man. On one occasion he was riding with his son Guy in the neighbourhood of Hereford, when about thirty followers of one Richard Oldcastle, who had doubtless been aggrieved at some of the High Sheriff's proceedings, waylaid and took them prisoners, only to be released on their entering into a bond to pay 600*l.* by way of ransom, and to take no procedings against Oldcastle for his lawless conduct. In 1416, however, Robert Whittington obtained authority from Parliament to consider this forced engagement as null and void; and it is likely that he got back his money and procured the punishment of his enemy.

Richard Whittington seems to have been only a few years old at the time of his father's death; and he was not yet a man in 1373, when he lost his mother. Being a younger son, he followed the common practice of younger sons in times when there were few other professions to choose from, and became a merchant. Of his early life nothing is recorded. We first hear of him in the year 1393, when he must have been nearly forty; but as he was then a member of the Mercers' Company, and alderman and sheriff of the City of London, we have good ground for assuming that he had been a prosperous merchant during many previous years. Perhaps, as the story-books assert, he ran away to London, and then became rich through the accidental value of his cat; but in that case the wealth thus derived can only have been a trifling sum, to be used well and greatly augmented by his own industry. It is more probable, however—and we do him the greater honour in making this assumption—that he rose solely through his own talent and application. He must have had some slight patrimony of his own, and much more must have come to him by his marriage with Alice, the daughter of Sir Hugh Fitzwarren of Torrington, owner of much property in Devonshire, Gloucestershire, and other counties. We have no solid ground for supposing that Fitzwarren himself ever meddled with trade, but his influence would be of use to young Whittington at his beginning of commercial life. That the beginning was comparatively humble may be inferred from the fact that the lad took to mercery instead of engaging in the wholesale wool or wine trades that were followed in the different ports by such men as the De la Poles of Hull. 'The mercers, as a metropolitan guild,' we are told, 'may be traced back to A.D. 1172; but it was not until the fifteenth century that they took their station among the merchants, and from being mere retailers became the first City company. Towards the close of the fourteenth century the mercers monopolized the silk trade, woollen stuffs having, prior to that period, constituted their staple business, and up to which time they had only partially been incorporated.' Whit-

tington, in his younger days, had to stand at the door of Westminster Hall, or in Cheapside, or Cornhill, offering coats, caps, and other articles of haberdashery, &c., to passers by, just as a generation later, old Dan Lidgate's hero, London Lackpenny, found the tradesmen doing when he came to try his luck in London. He went first to Westminster, but there, instead of getting any help, he was pushed about and robbed of his hood.

'Within this hall neither rich nor yet poor
Would do for me aught, although I should die;
Which ruing, I gat me out of the door,
Where Flemings began on me for to cry,
"Master, what will ye copen or buy?
Fine felt hats? or spectacles to read?
Lay down your silver, and here you may speed."

'Then into London I did me hie,—
Of all the land it beareth the prize.
"Hot peascods!" one began to cry;
"Strawberry ripe, and cherries in the rise!"
One bade me come near and buy some spice.
Pepper and saffron they gan me bede,
But for lack of money I might not speed.

'Then to the Cheap I gan me drawen,
Where there much people I saw for to stand.
One offered me velvet, silk, and lawn;
Another he taketh me by the hand,
"Here is Paris thread, the finest in the land!"
I never was used to such things indeed;
And wanting money, I might not speed.

'Then went I forth by London Stone,
And throughout all Candlewick Street;
Drapers much cloth me offered anon.
Then comes me one crying, "Hot sheep's feet!"
One cried "Mackerel!"—"Oyster green!"
another gan me greet.
One bade me buy a hood to cover my head;
But for want of money I might not be sped.

'Then into Cornhill anon I rode,
Where there was much stolen gear among.
I saw where hung mine owne hood,
That I had lost among the throng.
To buy my own hood I thought it wrong.
I knew it as well as I did my creed,
But for lack of money I could not speed.

'Then hied I me to Billingsgate;
And one cried, "Ho! now go we hence;"
I prayed a bargeman, for God's sake,
That he would spare me my expense.
"Thou goest not here," quoth he, "under
two pence;
I list not yet bestow any alms' deed."
Thus lacking money I could not speed.'

In that busy, money-making little world of London Whittington grew rich and influential. By 1393 he was a master mercer, with five apprentices under him, and in the same year, if not before, he was an alderman living at the house in Mark Lane, which we have pictured from a sketch taken before it was pulled down. On the 21st of September in this year, moreover, he was elected sheriff; and in 1397 a writ was issued in the name of Richard II. appointing him to act as mayor and escheator in the place of Adam Baune, 'who had gone the way of all flesh.' In the following year he was elected mayor—the title Lord Mayor seems not to have been introduced till a later period—in his own right; and he held the office again in 1406, and again in 1419, on which last occasion the Mercers' Company 'attended the cavalcade with eight new banners, eight trumpeters, four pipers, and seven nakerers,' nakers being wind instruments of some sort now forgotten, 'that in the battle,' according to Chaucer, 'blowen bloody sounds.'

The mercers of London had good reason to be proud of their representative. Just at this time, as we have seen, their calling was gaining much fresh dignity; and it cannot be doubted that Whittington's zeal and influence greatly conduced to this. In 1400 we find his name among the list of great merchants and others excused from attendance upon Henry IV. in his Scottish wars; and henceforth he seems to have been a special favourite with the king. In 1402 he received 215*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* for ten cloths of gold and other merchandize provided for the marriage of Blanche, Henry's eldest daughter, with the King of the Romans; and in 1406 he furnished pearls and cloth of gold worth 248*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.*, to be used at the wedding of the king's other daughter, Philippa. In the same year he lent 1,000*l.* to King Henry on the security of the subsidies on wool, hides, and woolfels, a transaction exactly similar to the many in which we saw Sir William de la Pole engaged two generations earlier. Two other London merchants, John Norbury and John Hende, appear at this time to have been richer even than Whittington, as on this occasion they each lent 2,000*l.* to the king. Hende was Mayor of

London in 1391, and again in 1404, and his name is several times met with in conjunction with Whittington. The king's debts were paid in 1410, and in 1411 we find that Whittington was employed to pay 100 marks for expenses incurred on account of the coming of French ambassadors to Dover, and their conveyance thence to the king's presence at Gloucester. In 1413 he lent another sum of 1,000*l.* to Henry IV., the money being returned in a fortnight; and it is certain that he often rendered similar service both to this monarch and to his son. For maintaining the siege of Harfleur in 1415 he lent 700*l.* to Henry V., to be repaid out of the customs on wool collected in London, Boston, and Hull; and another loan of 2,000 marks made in 1416 was discharged two years later. There is a tradition, hardly to be credited, that Whittington incurred much greater obligations on Henry's account, and volunteered an acquittance in the most chivalrous way possible. During his last mayoralty, in 1419, we are told, he invited the king and queen to a sumptuous entertainment at Guildhall, on the occasion of his receiving knighthood; and among the rarities prepared to give splendour to the festival was a marvellous fire of precious and sweet-smelling woods, mixed with cinnamon and other costly spices. While the king was praising the novelty, Whittington went to a closet and drew thence bonds to the extent of 60,000*l.*, which during the French wars had been issued by the sovereign, and which he had diligently bought up from the various merchants and money-lenders to whom they had been given; and this whole bundle he threw into the flames as the most expensive fuel of all. 'Never had prince such a subject!' Henry exclaimed, as soon as he understood the generosity of the act. 'And never had subject such a prince!' answered Whittington.

That story may or may not be true. But of other, wiser and more honourable acts of liberality done by Whittington we have ample proof. 'The fervent desire and busy intention of a prudent, wise, and devout man,' he is reported to have said not long before his death, 'shall be to cast before and make sure the state and the end of this short life with deeds of mercy and pity, and specially to provide for those miserable persons whom the penury of poverty insulteth, and to whom the power of seeking the necessaries of life by art or bodily labour is interdicted.' And this was certainly the rule of his own life. In the year 1400 he obtained leave to rebuild the Church of St. Michael Paternoster, and found there a college, 'consisting of four fellows, clerks, conducts, and choristers, who were governed by a master, on whom he bestowed the rights and profits of the church, in addition to his salary of ten marks. To the chaplains he gave eleven marks each, to the first clerk eight, to the second clerk seven and a half, and to the choristers five marks a year each.' Besides this he built the chapel annexed to Guildhall, made contributions to the adornment of Gloucester Cathedral, and endowed many other churches. Four hundred years before John Howard appeared as the prisoner's friend Whittington began to rebuild Newgate Prison, hitherto 'a most ugly and loathsome prison, so contagious of air that it caused the death of many men;' and, dying before the work was done, he left money that it might be duly completed. St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in Smithfield, was also repaired by his instructions; and Whittington's Almshouses, near Highgate, are to this day standing monuments of the generosity of this 'worthy and notable merchant, the which,' according to the testimony of his executors, 'while he lived, had right liberal and large hands to the needy and poor people.' In other ways he cared for the neediest among his fellow-men. 'One of the last acts of his life,' says a manuscript authority, 'indicating his honesty and public spirit, was his active prosecution of the London brewers for forestalling meat and selling dear ale; for which interference with their proceedings the brewers were very wroth.' And as a small

but significant illustration of his large-hearted charity, Stow tells us that 'there was a water conduit east of the Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, which came from Highbury, and that Whittington, the mayor, caused a bosse [or tap] of water to be made in the church-wall,'—the forerunner, by nearly half a millenium, of the drinking-fountains now so common among us.

Notable evidence of Whittington's ability in a province not much heeded by the majority of merchants, appears in the fact that Henry V., in 1413, a few months after his accession, appointed him chief supervisor of the rebuilding of the nave in Westminster Abbey. Two years later, moreover, in ordering certain alterations in the City of London, the king thought it well to direct that the mayor should do nothing either in building up or in pulling down without the advice of Whittington. But the merchant did more for the City than even King Henry could have expected. In his will he provided for the paving and glazing of Guildhall, luxuries at that time almost confined to palaces; and during the last years of his life he was busy about the foundation of the library of the Grey-friars monastery in Newgate Street. 'This noble building,' according to Stow, 'was 129 feet long, 31 feet in breadth, entirely ceiled with wainscot, with 28 wainscot desks, and 8 double settees. The cost of furnishing it with books was 556*l.* 10*s.*, of which 400*l.* was subscribed by Whittington.' Still more important than this was the Guildhall Library, built by Whittington's directions, for the preservation of the civic records. The most important of these, the 'Liber Albus,' printed for the first time a few years ago under the editorship of Mr. Riley, is thought to have been compiled, at Whittington's own suggestion, by his chief executor, John Carpenter.

Whittington died in 1423. 'His body was *three* times buried in his own church of St. Michael Paternoster—first by his executors under a fair monument; then in the reign of Edward VI., the parson of the church thinking some great riches, as he said, to be buried with him, caused his monument to be broken, his body to be spoilt of its leaden sheet, and again the second time to be buried; and in the reign of Queen Mary the parishioners were forced to take him up and lap him in lead as before, to bury him the third time, and to place his monument, or the like, over him again.' But both church and tombstone were destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666; and now his only monument is to be found in the records of the city which he so greatly helped by his noble charities, and, as far as we can judge, by his perfect showing of the way in which a merchant prince should live.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CANNINGS OF BRISTOL.

From very early times Bristol was one of the foremost marts of English commerce. In the twelfth century, according to William of Malmesbury, 'its haven was a receptacle for ships coming from Ireland, Norway, and other foreign lands, lest a region so blest with native riches should be deprived of the benefits of foreign merchandize;' and in later generations there was no diminution of the old seafaring zeal. 'Considering the many and notable services,' runs a charter granted by Henry IV. soon after the year 1400, 'which very many merchants, burgesses of our town of Bristol, have done for us and our famous progenitors in many ways with their ships and voyages, at their own great charges and expense, and also since many of the said burgesses and merchants have been grievously vexed and disturbed by the lieutenants and ministers of our Admiralty of England, to their great loss and burthen, we therefore of our own special grace have granted for us and our heirs to the mayor and commonalty and their heirs, that the said town shall be for ever free from the jurisdiction of the said Admiralty.'

But for a long time Bristol commerce ran in the old groove, with-

out receiving much influence from the cloth trade introduced in the twelfth century from Flanders. Hull, Boston, and other towns on the eastern coast of England, with Winchester, Totnes, and others in the south, had been growing rich through some generations by means of commerce in wool and cloth before Thomas Blanket, a merchant of Bristol, and some of his friends were in 1340 fined by the civic authorities 'for having caused various machines for weaving and making woollen cloths to be set up in their own houses, and having hired weavers and other workmen for this purpose.' The fine was remitted, however, by Edward III., and the Bristol people, seeing the value of the innovation, soon learnt to honour its introducers. In 1342 Blanket was made bailiff of Bristol, and in 1356 he, with some of his fellow-merchants, was summoned to Westminster to advise with the king on matters of importance in the interests of trade. From this time cloth played an important part in the commerce of Bristol. It provided a principal occupation both for the home manufacturers and for the traders with foreign countries until the discovery of America opened up new and yet more abundant sources of wealth.

The greatest name in Bristol history prior to the beginning of that American traffic is first met with in the lifetime of Blanket, the cloth-weaver and cloth-dealer. William Canning, or Canynges, the elder, was a man of mark and a famous merchant during the second half of the fourteenth century; but nearly all we know of him is summed up in a string of dates. In 1361, and again in 1369, he was elected to the office of bailiff of Bristol; he was six times mayor—in 1372, 1373, 1375, 1381, 1385, and 1389; and thrice—in 1364, in 1383, and in 1384—he represented the city in Parliament. He died in 1396, leaving a large amount of money to be divided between his children, and much more to be distributed in charity. His son John was also a merchant of repute. A ship belonging to him, trading to Calais and Flanders, was seized by some jealous seamen of the North in 1379, and detained at Hartlepool until the culprits had been brought to justice and restitution obtained. He also went the round of civic honours, being bailiff in 1380, sheriff in 1382, member of Parliament in 1384, and mayor in 1392 and 1398. He died in 1405, leaving a third of his goods to his wife, a third to his children, and a third to the poor. His eldest son Thomas settled in London as a grocer, and prospered well enough to become in due time master of his company and Lord Mayor of London; but in fame and wealth he was far outdone by his more famous brother.

This brother, known as William Canning the younger, to distinguish him from his grandfather, was born in 1399 or 1400. Of him, as of the other members of his family, very little indeed is recorded. That he was the greatest of Bristol's old merchant princes, however, is abundantly shown. He was about twenty-five when, as we are told in the contemporary 'Libel of English Policy,' the men of Bristol first, 'by rudder and stone,' went to Iceland,

> 'As men were wont of old
> Of Scarborough, unto the coastës cold;'

and it is pretty certain that he himself was one of the earliest and most energetic of the men who transferred the fish trade to Bristol.

Bristol was not long allowed without hindrance to enjoy this source of wealth. The shortsighted policy of the Danish Government, submitted to by the weak and mischievous counsellors of Henry VI., led to a treaty by which the merchants of London, Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincoln, York, Hull, Newcastle, and Bristol, were forbidden to trade to Iceland, Finmark, and other districts subject to the King of Denmark; and in 1450 the treaty was confirmed. To the rule, however, there was made in the latter year one notable exception. The Danish monarch allowed William Canning, 'in consideration of the great debt due to the said merchant from his subjects of Iceland and Finmark, to lade

certain English ships with merchandize for those prohibited places, and there to take fish and other goods in return.' And Canning's ships were about the largest hitherto known in England. Under date 1460, we read that during eight years he employed on an average eight hundred mariners in the navigation of ten vessels, with an aggregate burthen of 2,930 tons. The names of these ships were the 'Mary and John,' of 900 tons, the 'Mary Redcliffe,' of 500, and the 'Mary Canning,' of 400, which cost him in all 4,000 marks, worth considerably more than 25,000*l.* in our money; the 'Mary Bat,' and the 'Katherine of Boston,' of 220 tons burthen apiece; the 'Margaret of Tylney,' of 200 tons; the 'Katherine,' and the 'Little Nicholas,' of 140 each; and the 'Galiot,' of 50; besides one of about 160 tons burthen, which was lost in Iceland.

It was not alone to Iceland that Canning sent his great ships. In 1449 Henry VI. addressed letters of commendation to the master-general of Prussia and the magistrates of Dantzic, inviting their favour towards his factors established within their jurisdictions, and especially towards William Canning, 'his beloved and eminent merchant of Bristol.' In going to these parts, Canning was opening up a branch of commerce almost new to Englishmen, and treading ground hitherto all but monopolized by the Flemish merchants. In 'The Libel of English Policy,' written in 1436, we read:—

'Now beer and bacon are from Prussia brought
Into Flaunders, as loved and dearly sought;
Iron, copper, bow-staves, steel, and wax,
Boars' hides and badgers', pitch, tar, wood, and flax,
And Cologne thread, and fustian, and canvas,
And card and buckram,—of old time thus it was.
Also the Prussians make their adventure
Of silver plate, of wedges good and sure
In great8 plenty, which they bring and buy
Out of Bohemia and of Hungary;
Which is increase full great unto their land,
And they be laden, as I understand,
With woollen cloths, all manner of colours,
By dyers' crafts full diverse, that be ours;'

That is, with dyed cloths exported from England by the Flemings.

The favours shown to Canning by Henry VI. were not altogether unselfish. The last and worst of the Lancastrian kings, more extravagant and not less needy than his predecessors, followed their fashion of exacting aid from wealthy subjects and paying them by conferring special privileges connected with trade. There is no record of payments made by Canning to Henry, but that they were made is hardly to be doubted. We know that he was a zealous Lancastrian, and served his king by all the means in his power, having been made bailiff of Bristol in 1431, sheriff in 1438, and mayor in 1441 and 1449. In the latter year—the same year in which he was recommended to the Prussian and Dantzic authorities—he used his influence with the Common Council towards putting the town in a proper state of defence against the threatened attacks of the Yorkist party, rapidly gaining ground in the west of England. In 1450, 15*l.* were spent in repairing the walls of Bristol, and 40*l.* in the purchase of 'certyn gonnes and other stuffe necessarie for the defence of the said town,' being '20 botefull of warpestones, all the saltpetre that may be founde in the towne, and a dozen brasyn gonnes, to be made shetying (shooting) peletts as grate as a Parys ball or less, and every gonne with 4 chambers.'

In 1451, Canning was sent to Westminster as M.P. for Bristol, two shillings a day being allowed by the city authorities for his expenses; and while there he took part in some memorable business. The business most concerning us at present was the voting of 1,000*l.* to be levied from the more important seaport towns, and used in equipping a fleet 'for the protection of trade.' The money was to be made up of subsidies on all wine imported at 3*s.* a ton from native merchants, and 6*s.* a ton from foreigners, and of 1*s.* in the pound on the value of all other merchandize, with the exception of cloth, imported or exported during three years from April, 1454. The proportions in which the 1,000*l.* was to be levied give us some clue to

the relative importance of English trading towns in the middle of the fifteenth century. London was to contribute 300*l.*, and Bristol, next in importance, had to furnish 150*l.* Southampton was assessed at 100*l.*, York and Hull at 100*l.* between them, while another 100*l.* was to be collected at Norwich and Yarmouth, and another at Ipswich, Colchester, and Maldon. The contribution of Lynn was reckoned at 50*l.*, while 50*l.* more was to come from Salisbury, Poole, and Weymouth, 30*l.* from Boston, and 20*l.* from Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Parliament dissolved in 1455, and on the summons for a new one, Canning was at once re-elected by the Bristol men. In 1456 he served as mayor for the third time; and in this year we find him entertaining Margaret of Anjou, coming to Bristol to try and quicken the interest of the western people in the dying cause of her husband. He himself was not slack in his allegiance. 'A stately vessel, only for the war,' we read under date of 1457, 'is made new at Bristol, and the said town, with the west coasts, will do their part.'

These efforts, however, were not successful. Having been again made mayor in the autumn of 1460, Canning had in the following spring to entertain the new king, Edward IV., when he came on a visit to those parts. The entertainment was in princely style, and a quaint pageant, illustrating Edward's many virtues and great generosity, was prepared for his amusement. But the king did not come to be amused. His chief business in Bristol was to inquire into the wealth of its various merchants and see what benevolences could be obtained from them. Canning, the richest of the number, and doubtless the most zealous supporter of the Lancastrian party, was found to possess the nine ships already named, and had, in consequence, to pay no less a sum than 3,000 marks, representing about 20,000*l.* of money at its present value, 'for the making of his peace.'

Unfortunately, we are not told what was the estimated wealth of the other Bristol men, or what were the benevolences exacted from them. But the royal purse must have been tolerably full before Edward left the town. Canning was only the foremost of a crowd of merchant princes then living in Bristol. One of the chief was Robert Sturmy, mayor in 1450, and some years older than Canning. He lived in princely style, we are told, keeping open house for the traders of all lands. His principal dealings were with the Levant. In his younger days he had gone to Jerusalem, taking a hundred and sixty pilgrims thither in his good ship 'Anne,' and finding room also for some rare articles of commerce which would more than pay the cost of the journey. But on his return, he was shipwrecked near Navarino, on the Greek coast, and thirty-seven of his companions were drowned. He himself lived to run other risks. In 1458, we read, 'as the fame ran that he had gotten some green pepper and other spices to have set and sown in England, therefore the Genoese waited him upon the sea and spoiled his ship and another;' but for this offence the Genoese merchants resident in London were arrested and imprisoned until they consented to make good the value of the lost property, estimated at 9,000 marks. Other merchants contemporary with Canning were the Jays, a large and influential family, famous in two generations. One of them was bailiff of Bristol in 1456, another was sheriff in 1472. In 1480, we read in a contemporary narrative which it is hard to disbelieve, although there is evidently some mistake in the record, 'A ship of John Jay the younger, of 800 tons, and another, began their voyage from King's-road to the Island of Brazil, to the coast of Ireland, ploughing their way through the sea. And Thlyde was the pilot of the ships, the most scientific mariner in all England; and news came to Bristol that the said ships sailed about the sea during nine months, and did not find the island, but, driven by tempests, they returned to a port on the coast of Ireland for the repose

of themselves and their mariners,' and there, for aught we know, they repose to this day.

Other merchants mustered round Canning and worked with him in making Bristol rich and famous during the disastrous period of the Wars of the Roses. The most important act of his last mayoralty, in 1466, was the forming them into a sort of guild, for mutual protection in regulating the prices of various articles of trade and mutual help in misfortune. Such an association would ill agree with the free-trade principles of modern times; but by this means Bristol was doubtless saved from much misery under the later Plantagenets, and enabled to prosper beyond all precedent under the earlier Tudors.

But Canning, now sixty-seven years old, did not seek for winning any of the benefits to be obtained by the guild. After many years of married life, he had become a widower in 1460, and it is probable that all his children, if indeed any of them passed out of infancy, were dead before this time. He had grown rich, and had now no further need for riches. Much of his wealth he spent in the restoration of the noble church of St. Mary Redcliff, and tradition makes him the founder of many charities. But he was not willing to let it go into the purse of the king, to whose cause he was opposed. The story goes that a project of Edward IV.'s for finding him a second wife, and of course exacting a large sum of money in honour of the marriage, forced him to retire suddenly from the business of this life. At any rate, for some reason or other, in 1467 'he gave up the world, and in all haste took orders upon him, and in the year following was made priest and rang his first mass at our Lady of Redcliff.' He was made Dean of Westbury in or near 1468, and died in November, 1475.

With William Canning ends the short series of men who must serve to us as representatives of the great body of English merchant princes under the Plantagenets. Other men there were and must have been worth singling out from the great mass of traders in the middle ages, either for their special virtues or for their special skill in commerce; but we do not know them. We can learn nothing of the merchants who made such towns as Winchester and Yarmouth, Boston and Lincoln, Beverley and Newcastle famous marts and centres of industry. A few names besides those that we have already mentioned have come down to us, but it is impossible to gather round them even the slenderest materials for orderly sketches of their lives. Concerning John Taverner of Hull, doubtless a worthy successor to the De la Poles, for instance, nearly all we know is contained in a single statement to the effect that in 1449 he, 'by the help of God and some of the king's subjects,' had built a great ship, the largest ever seen in English waters, which, because of its greatness, Taverner was allowed to call the 'Henry Grace à Dieu,' and to use in conveying wools, woolfels, tin, and all other merchandize, regardless of the rule of the staple, from London, Hull, Sandwich, or Southampton, to Italy, and in bringing thence bow-staves, wax, and any other produce of the country. Of Taverner's great Scotch contemporary, William Elphinstone, father of the bishop who built the university of Aberdeen, we learn only that, by carrying on a large export trade in pickled salmon, he laid the foundation of the commerce of Glasgow; and about two other most famous Scottish merchants of the fifteenth century, George Faulau and John Dalrymple, all we can discover is that they were frequently employed by James II. on embassies and other public business.

Though the men who did the work are almost forgotten, however, there is abundant evidence of the ever-increasing commercial prosperity of our country. The miserable civil wars which brought the Plantagenet rule to a close offered a serious hindrance to the progress of trade, and doubtless drove many men, as they drove William Canning, to abandon it altogether. But ten years after Canning's death, Henry VII. became king of England,

and before another ten years were over, America had been discovered by Christopher Columbus. These two events mark the commencement of a new era in the history of our commerce. The form and dignified rule of the Tudors gave far greater facilities than had ever yet been known to the exercise of trade with European nations, and the finding of a new world opened up a fresh and boundless field of enterprise. In speaking hereafter of the men who made the best use of these advantages we shall hope to have material for giving more interesting narratives than the bare records of isolated facts, skeletons dug out of the grave of the past to which it is not possible to restore much flesh and blood, that our readers have hitherto had to content themselves with.

H. R. F. B.

THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

By the Author of 'The Morals of Mayfair.'

www.libtool.com.cn

CHAPTER XIII.

A PHARISEE, *comme il faut*.

Joan Englehart was right when she said that Mrs. Tudor did not like seeing people eat. But Mrs. Tudor, in spite of this little peculiarity, and several others of a like nature, was not a mean woman. She was too intensely selfish, too avid of the good opinion of others, to be essentially mean. In what she could be stingy, unseen, she was stingy; in liberality that showed she was liberal, liberal, occasionally, to excess.

'I have too much feeling for my own happiness,' Mrs. Tudor would say, when a handsome parson or fashionable physician pleaded some case of misery to her. 'I have always been led away by my heart—too much for my own good, perhaps.' And then, notwithstanding her threescore years and ten, the recollection of so much self-sacrifice and vicarious suffering would make Mrs. Tudor weep—veritable tears, but promptly dried—with the delicacy of a woman who, though she feels, does not mean to parade that feeling to the world; and who remembers whereof the bloom of her cheeks is made!

She never subscribed to public charities even with the seductions of standing in print among lords and marchionesses. 'The widow's mite should be given in secret' was one of Mrs. Tudor's axioms. 'Let the great and rich give away in high places. Enough for me to cast my poor offering into the treasury unseen;' with only the handsome parson or fashionable doctor to act as recording angel.

What will you have? Twenty pounds a year among printed donations of twice, thrice, four times that amount go for nothing in the charitable city where Mrs. Tudor lived. But twenty pounds a year divided into widows' mites in private life keep up a handsome reputation for unostentatious almsgiving. Mrs. Tudor knew her generation, and was wise with its wisdom. Every one said Mrs. Tudor was a charming old woman: I think every one, except her family and dependents, really liked her. When she stabbed your absent friends she did it with a delicacy that belongs only to long and refined experience. The coarse blow of a common assassin for ever reminds you that if you, too, have a purse, and take your eye from him, you shall fall. Mrs. Tudor always performed her cruel office out of the depth of her regard for her immediate listener. 'With your dear girls visiting at her house, should I do right to conceal it from you?' 'As the pastor and guardian of your flock, ought you not to be told?' 'With your back garden close upon their area, should I—*should I* be a friend if I remained silent?' And all the slaughtered characters forthwith rose up in the light of necessary victims offered up by Mrs. Tudor at the altar of Spartan principle and friendship.

Her flattery was as good as her scandal. The same delicate flavour of well-bred discrimination made it palatable, even in inordinately large doses. To tell a woman of forty that she is young and charming would be simply gross; but to say, 'My dear friend, I have something I really grieve to talk to you about: I don't know how you will take it, but as an old woman who had done with life before you began it, I feel that I must speak. All the world is talking of that poor fellow's evident infatuation for you. He is but a boy—spare him! tell his mother to send him to London—anything. You are not offended, now, are you? No; I knew you could not be!'

To say this is to possess a charming, refined nature, even when saying disagreeable things. This was Mrs. Tudor's style of flattery.

She called herself old; and she was very old, even for the city of *sempiternelles* where she lived; but she held old age at bay more stoutly, I really believe, than any other woman of her age extant. She was a model of good making-up. I can never see the justice of condemning, wholesale, all women who paint. Condemn them utterly if they paint badly; but give homage due to all successful works of real art. Mrs. Tudor was extraordinarily well done. Her hair was a dark iron-grey, not any of those blacks and chesnuts that every shifting light can convert into prisms of red, green, and purple; her eyebrows were marked by one dark yet perfectly delicate line; her cheeks bore the faintest roseate tinge that the genius of Paris (assisted by after processes of her own) could supply; her teeth, her figure, were all triumphs of imitative art. The most difficult part of the picture, and one in which so many inferior artists fail, the old, wrinkled, sapless hands were never shown without gloves. I repeat it, Mrs. Tudor was well done; and whether she, or Wilson, or the mere artificers from whence her charms came in gross, possessed the greater genius, I hold that the result of so much thought, and choice, and patient, unfaltering every-day labour, was a thing to be respected.

But cultivation is required for all high taste in art. When Esther Fleming first found herself again in Mrs. Tudor's presence, the vision of a painted and galvanized corpse tottering forward to meet her with deathly sprightliness came upon her with even more awful clearness than it had used to do when she was a child. All the painful processes by which Mrs. Tudor's rejuvenescence had been won—the dentistry, the dyeing, the daily paddings and powderings and paintings for well-nigh half a century, were mysteries too occult for Esther's mind to unravel, or even marvel over. She liked her Aunt Engleheart's face, white and still as death itself: all passion and unrest quenched out of it by long years of poverty and Miss Joan. She liked to see that old face, with the venerable white hair and little close-frilled cap, as the evening light fell on it through the branches of the thorn-tree by the porch; to see the folded withered hands lying peacefully at rest; the whole little, worn, bent form just as though waiting, patient and quiescent, for death to come. This was the poetry of extreme, helpless old age; and Esther often at such times had spoken under her breath, half in awe of the frail, still life so barely withheld from the final stillness of death itself. But Mrs. Tudor! Mrs. Tudor, sprightly and roseate and alert! All the girl's old childish horror of 'something coming off' rushed across her mind as she remembered she would have to kiss Mrs. Tudor's cheek; and every one of the little affectionate speeches she had been preparing on her journey forsook her memory.

Aunt Thalia's warmth of heart was equal, however, to all occasions —even domestic ones. 'Esther, my dear, *dear* child!' and then, much to Esther's relief, the greatest difficulty of meeting was got over by Mrs. Tudor herself depositing a very long but circumspect kiss upon her cheek. 'So grown I should scarce have recognized you! Wilson, has not Miss Fleming grown? Two shillings for bringing you from the railway? Certainly not. Esther, love, I insist upon your not paying more than eighteen-pence; and let him carry up Miss Fleming's luggage to her apartment before he's paid. Wilson, the small upper room that faces the sea. I knew my dear niece would not mind mounting a little high,' she whispered to Esther, as Wilson, very rustling and dignified, marched out of the room. 'You princess in black silk would have been sour to me for a month if I had dared dispossess her of hers; and my dear Esther's little feet are too young to know whether they run up one or two flights of stairs at a time.'

Mrs. Tudor embraced her again, but without more kisses: these risks were only incurred under the

indispensable press of affection at coming and going: and then Esther remarked that she did not care at all where she slept, and would be very sorry indeed to put Wilson out in any way.

www.libtool.com.cn

'And how is my dear sister? Sit down, my love, and unloose your bonnet-strings. How is my dear sister Cecilia? You wouldn't have a glass of wine, Esther, after your journey, now—would you?'

'Oh, no! Aunt Thalia. I never take wine.'

'Dear child! so natural! You are very little altered, love, except in height. I take an early dinner, you must know, Esther; my doctor here desires it, and so I obey, but it breaks in upon my habits sadly; then about seven I drink tea. Now *what* will you have?' Mrs. Tudor looked extraordinarily genial and hospitable. 'What will you have? They can get you a chop in a minute.' And she stretched her hand out, figuratively, towards the bell.

'I would much rather have nothing but tea,' said Esther. 'I am not hungry—I mean not very—I had my dinner on the road.'

'Now, do you mean it, my love? do you positively mean it? I will never forgive you if you don't make yourself perfectly at home while you are with me. Well, then, we will have tea at once. And, Wilson,' to that potentate, who had now re-entered the room, 'bid Mrs. Sims send up the cold duck, if you please; it will be just the thing for my niece after her long journey. Wilson will take you to your room, Esther. I would go myself, only that my good doctor tells me I must refrain as much as possible from walking upstairs.'

And then Mrs. Wilson, condescendingly bland, but still with the kind of manner which she, as a servant, naturally felt to Esther as a poor relation, conducted her to her room on the third floor—a three-cornered apartment with a sloping roof, a bed the size of a coffin, and a window from whence you had a very nice side-view of the sea if you sat upon the floor.

'You find your aunt a good deal changed, no doubt, Miss Fleming?' remarked the lady's-maid, fidgeting about the strings of one of Esther's cases, but obviously only giving herself a pretext to stop and talk. 'Even I, that am with her constant, can see it only too plain. She's pitched away extraordinary the last three months, miss.'

Esther could see no particular change, she answered. She thought, perhaps, that her Aunt Thalia's was not a face to show illness much.

'Perhaps so,' said Wilson, drily. 'Appearances are deceitful; but then you must remember *I* see missus at all times, Miss Fleming. Thinner! Why, bless you, she's gone away to half what she were before her last attack. I've took in all her dresses without her knowing it; and she thinks, sometimes, she's getting stout again, and tells the doctors so; but I know better. I wish some of them, or some one belonging to her, would tell her a little truth about her health, Miss Fleming, and then, perhaps, she wouldn't kill herself—dressing and racketing and sitting up late at night as she do—kill herself, and I may truly say, kill all those who have to wait upon her too!'

Mrs. Wilson pressed her hand with much feeling upon the region of her left lung, and laid her head on one side with a sigh. It was evident that to her own mind her twenty-five pounds a year were no equivalent whatever to the disadvantages of being in Mrs. Tudor's intimate employ and favour.

'What sort of illness has she had?' she proceeded, when Esther had inquired into the nature of her mistress's last attack; 'why, you don't mean to say your aunt never wrote you word that she'd had a stroke?'

'A stroke!' interrupted Esther, looking grave and shocked. 'Oh, Wilson! you surely can't mean——?'

'Yes, I do, miss. I mean a stroke of paralysis. I lived with the old Countess of Davenport up to her death, and I knew directly I saw your aunt's face she was going to be taken like her ladyship. She *was* a mistress, if you like, Miss Fleming. Thirty-six pounds a year

and the best of perquisites, and a under maid kept on purpose to set up and unlace the dresses at night; because her ladyship said from the first, "Mrs. Wilson," her ladyship says to me, "I see that your 'ealth's delicate, and——"'

'And Aunt Thalia, Wilson? Please tell me about Aunt Thalia's illness.'

'Well, Miss Fleming, it was after an At Home at our own house; and missus and me was putting away some of the ornaments, when she cried out, suddent, "Wilson!" and tottered back a step or two, and fell on the sofa—so!' And Mrs. Wilson went through a little impromptu rehearsal, with great gusto, upon the coffin bed. 'I knew what it was in a minute, miss—the thick way of speaking, and dull eyes, and stiff hands, and all the rest of it—and I got her undressed; and Miss Whitty, the—the person who lodges underneath us, you know—sent for the doctor. And *he* knew what it was, Miss Fleming, just as well as I did; and Mrs. Tudor, she knew what it was, too; but we made light of the whole matter; and none of us ever called the attack by its right name, and we don't now. When missus speaks about it, she says, "That time I was a little faint and giddy, you know, Wilson." And I say the same; and so must you, of course, if your aunt should happen to mention it.'

'And Aunt Thalia goes out to parties as much as ever?' cried Esther. 'How can she care about them after such a fearful warning?'

'Ah!' ejaculated Mrs. Wilson, piously, and suddenly remembering the pain above her heart. 'Ah! there's no saying what those that belongs to this world wouldn't do to escape out of themselves and their own tempers and fancies! I agreed to accept your aunt's situation on the highest of recommendations, Miss Fleming. The Dean of Sarum's lady (who has known me since I was *that* high, and all my family, too) begged me herself to take it; and though I had never lived out of the first of establishments before, I was willing to do so because of all your aunt said about my having my time to myself. Time! why, I'd sooner live with the Countess of Davenport again on half the wages, and wait on the three young ladies besides, than be where I am, Miss Fleming. Morning, noon, and night, I haven't a moment to myself: your aunt wants a nurse, miss, as well as a maid. And though I'd do as much as my strength allowed for a fellow-creature'—Mrs. Wilson assumed the air of a trampled but forgiving martyr—'a fellow-creature in real illness, I don't consider myself called upon to set up o' nights for people that are out at routs and card-parties, and then to have to make their sick-messes, and carry their air-cushion, and put up with their humours by day! Not without extra wages, Miss Fleming! I read my Bible, and I hope I perform my 'umble duties as a Christian, but I know what service is.'

'And this is the woman we have been told is such a treasure,' thought Esther, when Mrs. Wilson, after this little exposition of her opinions respecting her own worth, had left her alone. 'Her great, lonely, fine-furnished rooms, and this woman, with her heartlessness and discontent, are the nearest approach to a home that Aunt Thalia has. I am glad to think Mrs. Engleheart will die poor and quiet and unpretending at Countisbury, and have Joan, with all her faults, to wait upon her to the last.'

She felt her heart almost warm towards Mrs. Tudor when she joined her again down stairs. There was something within her that instinctively recognized and respected the courage of this old woman of the world in neither shrinking from, nor seeking sympathy under, the dark shadow that had fallen upon her. If it was courage wrongly shown (cards, rouge, parties, instead of calm meditation and solemn retrospect), it was courage still; the same stout nerve that had upheld Joan Engleheart during so many years of unpitied, unassisted poverty; the same strong, enduring power that, simple and youthful though she was, lay dormant in Esther's own breast. Yes, she looked at the old bland face that

had met the forerunner of a fearful death just with the same well-bred *insouciance* it would have shown to any other disagreeable but unavoidable visitor, and, for the first time in her life, felt that she and Mrs. Tudor were of one kin.

'You distress me, my love, by eating so little. Really you ought to have something more substantial after your long journey—a poached egg, now? You are quite sure? I meant you to have some cold duck, and, oh, my dear Esther! what do you think?'

Esther, of course, expressed her inability to have any idea whatever.

'I asked the woman of the house to send it up, and she informed me my maid had eaten it for her own early tea—the whole of one wing, and some delicious slices on the back. And she knows that if there's one thing more than another that is likely to tempt me it's a morsel of cold duck.'

Esther laughed. 'Wilson knows what is likely to tempt herself, no doubt,' she remarked. 'Most servants do.'

'She is,' Mrs. Tudor lowered her voice, and looked with meaning (as confidential persons upon the stage invariably look round, but fail to see the infernal villain crouched under the pasteboard portico, at least two yards and a half from their side) towards the door: 'she is the greediest, the falsest, the most rapacious, odious woman that I verily believe ever drew breath, even amidst servants. I keep her because the Dean of Sarum's wife recommended her, and because she understands her business, and does not rob me very outrageously; but her appetite! Oh, my dear child! I often think what I have to go through at the hands of all my maids is my punishment, in the flesh, for caring about worldly vanities in my old age. And, speaking of vanities, where did you have that dress made you have on?—not in the wilds of Devonshire, I am sure.'

'Yes, Aunt Thalia, in the wilds of Devonshire. Joan and I made it from the pattern of the white one I had at school.'

'Ah, dear, good Joan!' remarked Mrs. Tudor, evidently just remembering her niece's existence. 'Dear, good, useful, industrious Joan! how is she? and my sister? You have not told me one word yet, love, as to how my dear sister is looking?'

'Aunt Engleheart never seems to change, to me,' answered Esther. 'She looks just as weak and pale and quiet as she did when I first went to Countisbury; but she can dress herself still; and twice this summer she has walked to church and back.'

'Poor dear Cecilia! She was never very strong. I should like extremely to go and see her if I could; but I am afraid the excitement would be too much for her. We were always so passionately attached to each other!' They had not met, or sought to meet, for the last twenty years. 'She was blonde, you know, and I brune; and the difference in age used not to show then as it must now. Blondes always fade all at once when they do fade. That is a *dédommagement* to dark women, my love; for, looking old when they are young, they wear better when the first *beauté du diable* is over. How old are you, Esther?—I forget—fifteen, sixteen? Which is it?'

'Oh, Aunt Thalia! I am past eighteen. And Joan and David both think I look two or three years older than that.'

'David! What is David? Whom are you talking of, child? I thought you had no acquaintance among those savage Devonshire wilds.'

'But David Engleheart, ma'am; my cousin David!'

'Never say "ma'am" again, Esther, I beg. It does not sound vulgar from you, but it is old-fashioned and provincial. Call me your Aunt Tudor, or your Aunt Thalia, or even Mrs. Tudor, but never ma'am. Will you remember?'

'Yes, Aunt Thalia.'

'And now, if you have really eaten as much as you wish, love' (Esther had eaten nothing), 'we will go and finish our chat by the open window. Yes, sit on the footstool. I like to see you so; the pose is good. Put your left arm a little

lower, and turn your face up towards me. That is right. Do you know you are really very like your great-grandfather? You have just poor dear Garratt's eyes, but you have not the family chin. There you are a Vincent. Your poor mother was a pretty little woman, but without the slightest style. Do you remember her?'

'Only a little,' answered Esther. 'I remember she was very white and tired-looking, and hardly ever took me in her arms or had me in the sitting-room to play with her; but that is all. I remember my father much the best.'

'Quite right, my dear Esther; quite right. Your mother's family were very nice people—very nice people indeed in their own way; but there is no occasion for us to remember them. I am glad to find you growing up such a complete Fleming. When I saw you last I was really distressed about your voice and manners, but you have immensely improved now. School has softened you down.'

'I am glad you think so,' said Esther. 'I was afraid I learnt very little for all the money it cost. I am not brilliant, Aunt Thalia. Years ago I used to think I should be a genius, able to write books and do all sorts of things. I rate my own abilities much more truly now.'

'I did not send you to school to learn lessons, Esther, but to acquire style and manner. You have learnt quite enough, I have no doubt, with Joan at home. What you want now is to know how to hide your learning and be agreeable in the world. Men don't like clever women; always remember that. Softness, liveliness, grace, are the qualities you must strive after.'

Esther thought of Oliver, of her never-ceasing, uneasy sense of her own superiority to him, and sighed. 'I am sure you are right there,' she remarked. 'I often wish I was more soft and yielding than I am.'

'Then you wish a very foolish thing, let me tell you, Esther,' said Mrs. Tudor. 'Seem as soft as you choose, but thank Providence for having made you really strong. You will want all your strength some day, depend upon it. A graceful, feminine manner, and perfect reliance in herself are what a young woman needs to obtain success in society.'

'I don't care a bit for success in society. I wish to have real success—I mean I wish to be really loveable.'

Mrs. Tudor looked hard at her great-niece's candid, flushed face, and laughed. 'You are full of sentiment, I can see,' she observed, 'in spite of Joan having had you in her hands so long. Wait until you have seen a little more of the world, and you will become like the other young people of this generation—like your friends the Miss Dashwoods, for example. I wonder knowing them has not put all romantic fancies out of your head!'

'But Jane ought to be very romantic just now.' Esther felt somewhat conscience-stricken as she put forth this remark. 'I suppose you know she is engaged?'

'To whom?'

'To—to Mr. Chichester, I believe. I know nothing of him.'

'What are you getting red for, child?'

'I am sure I don't know, Aunt Thalia. It is a dreadfully foolish habit of mine. I—I do wish I could get over it,' Miss Fleming added, indignantly, and then she blushed crimson indeed.

'No sign of modesty looks ill in a young person,' said Mrs. Tudor, complacently. 'As long as you are under twenty no one will think worse of you for blushing, and you will find it a habit that time soon cures. Who told you Jane Dashwood was to marry Paul Chichester?'

'Her sister Millicent. She speaks of it in all her letters as a regular engagement. Colonel Dashwood lets Mr. Chichester come to the house as often as he chooses.'

'Colonel Dashwood lets most unmarried men do that, Esther; and in the rare cases where he does not, the Miss Dashwoods save their lovers any trouble by meeting them elsewhere. I have seen a good many of Miss Dashwood's flirtations

during the last five years, although my acquaintance with the family, child, is of the slightest description. Understand that. A formal offer and declension of civility once a year, an exchange of cards in the interval. The lad to whom she engaged herself when she first came out, Arthur Peel, is the nephew of one of my most intimate friends, and I happen to know exactly how the Dashwoods first entangled and afterwards discarded him. Then came George Lawless; then Major Burroughs. I know every particular about them both. Lawless paid old Dashwood eleven hundred pounds to get off at the last moment; and now this last ridiculous affair with Paul Chichester! I have seen her walking about with him, and looking up into his face as she has done with a dozen other men before him; but an engagement—bah! Paul Chichester may be eccentric, but he is not quite such a fool as to take one of Colonel Dashwood's daughters without a penny, and with their reputation, for his wife.'

'And what is this Mr. Chichester like, himself? I—I feel a kind of interest in him, you know, as Jane's lover; but the Dashwoods give such conflicting accounts of him that I can form no picture to myself either of his manner or his face.'

'Never speak of forming a picture to yourself, child: it sounds pedantic. You want to know what Paul Chichester is like? Well, you will be able to judge for yourself: he is here in Weymouth.' Involuntarily Esther blushed again. 'He was speaking to me on the walk today. A very good style he has; far better, in spite of his threadbare coat, than two-thirds of the young men one meets. I told him I was quite sure from the likeness about the upper part of his face that he was a son of Hildebrand Chichester, and, although he evidently shunned the subject, he did not deny it; and that convinces me that he *is* the son whom I believed to have been dead, or to have gone abroad, years and years ago. They were a strange family always, the Chichesters,' went on Mrs. Tudor. 'If the stories that go about them are true, Hildebrand Chichester and his son were about the strangest of them all.'

'What are these stories, Aunt Thalia?'

'Nothing that can interest you, child; nothing, at all events, that it would profit you to repeat to the Miss Dashwoods.'

Esther flushed up indignantly. 'I repeat nothing that is told me. I should like to have heard, simply because I like listening to old family stories, and—and because you tell things in a way that interests one, Aunt Thalia. But don't say a word if you mistrust me. Never say anything of other people as long as I stay in your house if you think I am such a child that I cannot be trusted with a secret.'

'And if I tell you what I know about Paul Chichester, you will never breathe a syllable of it to those little fools, the Dashwood girls? never let the man himself, when you come to be acquainted with him, have the faintest idea that you know more of him than of a stranger? Don't answer: I read your face, child. You believe that you could be discreet as age, silent as death, and up to a certain point I believe you would. At all events, as a little test of your powers, also because I don't really care a straw whether it is repeated or not, I will tell you the story. There is madness in a good many of our old English families, Esther—I suppose that is a fact you have chanced to come across in some of your studies with Joan—more especially, I have noticed, amongst those of the extreme north and extreme south of the kingdom.' The Chichesters come from the border, and are not without their share of the aristocratic inheritance—the skeleton,' cried Mrs. Tudor, pleasantly, 'that mews and crouches in the unseen closet of so many a rich man's house; the spectre that is sought in vain to be kept at bay by men of science and art and medicine; and yet that is ever hovering over every christening-feast, every marriage-breakfast, in which any child of the ill-fated house has past.'

'But not—not on him?' broke from Esther's lips as she leant forward and looked, almost with a shudder, into Mrs. Tudor's bland face. 'This horrible calamity has not fallen upon Paul?'

'Don't look so excited, child, or I shall tell you no more. It doesn't matter to you. No Fleming has ever been known to be even eccentric; and as for the Vincents, families like the Vincents never *are* mad, I have remarked. Poor, good people, they are quite enough of everything else, I am sure, without that! Where had I got to? Ah! I know—the Chichesters have not been without their share of the aristocratic inheritance. They are a very old family—not in any way connected with the Dorsetshire Chichesters, Esther, remember that. I must impress upon you the absolute importance of a young woman who aspires to tone distinctly remembering who every human being is. Sir Hugh Chichester, of Newton, the great-grandfather of this young man, married the eldest daughter of Lord March, and from that time until the present there have, I believe, been only two decided cases of the hereditary complaint among them. One, Maria Chichester, a sister of Paul's father, who died quite young, and was indeed more weak of intellect than positively diseased or warped; the other—well, Esther, I will not shock your interest in the reputed lover of your friend's sister by calling Paul Chichester even eccentric. Hildebrand Chichester, his father, was, beyond all doubt, wrong in his mind for years.'

'But are you sure he is this Hildebrand Chichester's son? That he did not deny the relationship does not actually prove that the relationship exists.'

'Well reasoned, *ma petite;* but he not only did not deny, he virtually confessed it. When his father was dead, and his mother married again, I happened to stay with some friends of mine in Northumberland, not three miles from the place of his stepfather's uncle, old Lord Feltham; and speaking to Paul Chichester yesterday, the whole time and place came suddenly before me—the pink-and-white, silly beauty of his mother always lying on the sofa, and appealing to her husband for the sympathy he would not give; Paul himself, a dark, odd-looking child, running wild about the place, and utterly neglected for the sake of the heir of Newton, the child of the second marriage. "Your Christian name is Paul?" I said. "Then I recollect you well. When you were eight or nine years old you were the strangest, the most unchildlike child I ever came across. Have you forgotten?"

'He looked in my face steadily, and said "No." He had not forgotten one stone or one tree of Newton. Then he added, "But I have not been there. I have not spoken of Newton for years, nor shall I ever do so again while I live. None of the people with whom I associate now belong to that time or place, or know that I belong to it." And then he turned the subject resolutely, and we spoke of his family and of the past no more.'

'And if Mr. Chichester is indeed so well connected, how comes it that he wears a threadbare coat? I am very ignorant, Aunt Thalia. I have always thought that to be a lord's son, or a lord's stepson, even, would insure one, at least, enough to live respectably upon.'

'Then you have thought great nonsense, child; and Paul Chichester was never the stepson of a lord. His mother's second husband died, as far as I recollect, about six years ago, the title having in the mean time gone (on the old lord's death) to his cousin, from whom, if he continues childless, it will of course come to Paul's half-brother. The strange part of the story, the part illustrating the Chichester peculiarity, I am now going to tell you. Although Mrs. Chichester had brought nothing into the family but her pretty face and her imbecility, old Lord Feltham always made a great favourite of her, and on his death-bed requested his son to allow her—her husband was already ailing—to remain at New-

ton. This wish was carried out, and not only this; Paul Chichester received, I am told, an excellent education at the present Lord Feltham's expense (for the younger branches of the Chichesters, you must know, are absolutely penniless. When Paul's mother married again the bridegroom presented her with the very dress she was married in). Well, when the young man was about twenty years of age, his education finished, Lord Feltham about to present him with a commission in the army, some fearful domestic altercation took place, and Paul—the family blood showing—ran away from home, or, at all events, swore to them all, most solemnly, that they should see his face no more, and left them. From different sources I have heard of him afterwards as dead, or gone to the colonies, or roaming about, a ruined man, upon the Continent. But one thing I am certain of—neither his mother, nor Lord Feltham, nor any member of the family, have ever looked upon his face again from that day to this.'

'And you know nothing more of the cause of this quarrel? It must have been no common thing that could make a young lad throw up all his prospects, all his ties, at the very beginning of life, and take of his own free will to loneliness and poverty.'

'No common thing, if the young lad had been of perfectly sane mind, Esther; but with an hereditary tendency like that of the Chichesters, the slightest, the most unfounded suspicion might be enough to make him take up the notion that all his family were in league against him.'

'And does his manner give any indication of his inheriting the family disease? When you remember him, years ago, was he like other children? Aunt Thalia, the story takes possession of me. I feel that, while I wish it, I shall yet dread to become acquainted with Mr. Chichester.'

'In which feeling you show your extreme ignorance of the world, child. Half the people one meets have, probably, more of madness in their brain, certainly more in their manner, than Paul Chichester. What was he like as a child, did you ask me? Well, really, you know, the subject of children is one that never interests me. I could not bear to be in the room with you, my love, as you may recollect, until you had got well over the age of asking questions and upsetting things. Paul Chichester was like other children, I suppose—no, I recollect, by-the-way, he was not. He was taciturn. He used to come in after dinner at Newton when the nurse brought in his brother, and, none of the family ever paying him the slightest attention, he had a trick of standing apart from us all and staring with his great dark eyes at his mother's face until the young heir had been made enough of and fed, of course, with all the unwholesome things upon the table. Let us speak no more of him, child!' broke off Mrs. Tudor, abruptly, and accompanying the remark by the little deprecatory toss of her gloved hands with which it was her custom to throw off, as it were, the burthen of speaking of anything, or any person, the moment that it no longer amused herself. 'I have so much still to hear about my dear sister and her health. She should come here for a change—really you would not believe, Esther, how few people I have met here whom I know. Mrs. Strangways, and Paul Chichester, and poor good Whitty, who is coming to-night, are all. I have mentioned Miss Whitty to you, of course, have I not?'

'Yes, Aunt Thalia, I believe so. Is he—is Mr. Chichester, I mean—going to stop in Weymouth?'

'She lives in the dining-rooms under me. I call her my spaniel. She is a good creature in her way, but tiring—tiring and greedy. If she could, she would get me to give all my old dresses to her instead of to Wilson. Draw the curtain aside, Esther, and we shall see the people as they come up from the station. Who is that riding with Mrs. Strangways, I wonder!—hand me my opera-glasses, child, and I shall see better—young Orchard, again, positively. How ridiculous the poor lad is making *himself* with

that woman! You have heard of Mrs. Strangways from the Dashwoods? She and Jane Dashwood are extremely intimate, and, I should say, extremely well matched.

'I have heard Milly say they are intimate. Do you—do you think Mr. Chichester will be likely to stay long in Weymouth?'

'She is looking very thin; she has lost all her youth. That is invariably the way with blonde women; they fade in six months. Cecilia lost her complexion twenty years, at least, sooner than I did. I looked as young at five-and-thirty as you do now.'

It was hopeless to think of turning aside the current of Mrs. Tudor's thoughts, especially when the current had set back towards the all-delicious subject of her own youthful beauty. Esther gave herself up, resignedly, to listening to the chronicles of fifty-year-old charms and conquests, and strove, resolutely, but in vain, to turn away her thoughts from Jane Dashwood's lover and his sombre history.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIRST INFIDELITY.

And what, in good truth, was Paul Chichester to Esther Fleming? Why had Esther Fleming, in love with and engaged to Oliver Carew, coloured guiltily at the mention of her friend's sister's lover?

The reasons for emotion so unwarrantable, and of which Miss Fleming herself felt so duly ashamed, were, she firmly believed, to be found in certain complex sentiments set forth by Miss Millicent Dashwood's last letter; and as I feel I should fail in expressing these sentiments at all accurately, save in the Dashwood language, I will record simply what Milly wrote.

'Jane is going on in her old way with Arthur Peel, who is hanging out at present at the Strangways'. I think Mrs. Strangways makes a *catspaw* of Arthur Peel and Miss Dashwood too; but don't repeat that I said so, for it would make Jenny furious. Paul Chichester is in Bath again, and seems to be rather relieved than otherwise at seeing Jane sitting out half the night with Arthur on the staircase at balls. I should not like my lover to be so affable; but my own opinion is, there is no love at all between any of them—except, perhaps, where it would be better dispensed with. By-the-by, Jane says she is sure Paul would admire you extremely. She has learnt some very odd doctrines lately about "elective affinities" (are there two ff's or one?), the results of which seem to be that everybody is obliged by some moral law to fall in love with precisely the people they can't marry. Paul is not your style: I mean, he is not broad-shouldered and chubby, like our Swindon Viking; but, for a dark man, he is very handsome. Jenny puts back the hair off his forehead, and says, "Really, Mr. Chichester, you have quite a Vandyck face. I admire you extremely: how much I should like to be able to find some one worthy of you!" So like Jane. Then she will go to a party that same evening and talk half the night to Arthur Peel, and come back, poor Jenny! and cry till daylight. I dare say you and Paul won't like each other at all when you meet; but Jane relies on her "elective" theories, and, I have no doubt, will warn Paul to fall in love with you: the best way in the world, perhaps, to prevent him from doing so. You poor, dear, old Esther! how I do pity you, with only a tender recollection of Swindon, and a miraculously-proper flirtation with cousin David to keep you from stagnation!'

Esther had put down some of this nonsense to Milly's usual flighty style of writing; but she knew enough of the Dashwood girls to feel that, as likely as not, it had all been repeated to Mr. Chichester himself; and, as you have seen, she had not sufficient control to hinder her cheeks from burning at his name. What if she should meet him, be introduced to him! was her reflection when at last she had escaped from Mrs. Tudor's endless stories to the silence of her own little attic. Would she blush, with

this same contemptible folly, in his presence? She who had been able to speak of Oliver without her face betraying the real emotions of her heart, to colour in this guilty way about a person she had never seen—a person with a Vandyck face, and whom Mrs. Tudor considered distinguished? No doubt, a pale, effeminate, vain creature, the exact reverse of all she considered manly and admirable. For the first time for weeks other thoughts than those of Oliver were floating through Esther's brain before she went to sleep; and when she woke next morning she was dimly conscious that something unconnected with Mr. Carew and Countisbury had mingled with her dreams.

'I am going to make you very useful,' Mrs. Tudor remarked when, at eleven o'clock, blooming and airy in her fresh morning toilette, she joined her niece in the drawing-room. 'I am going to make you carry my book and cushion to the beach; and then we can dispense altogether with the presence of Wilson. How are you, my love?' presenting Esther, for an icy second, two gloved fingers of her left hand: 'Have you slept? have you recovered from your journey? That is well. Now run and put on your hat: anything will do for the beach, my love; you see how I am dressed.'

At Countisbury, Miss Fleming's custom was to put on her hat without so much as looking in the glass; but of course, at a great place like Weymouth, any human being must naturally care more for personal appearance than among the lonely Devonshire moors. When she had put on her holland jacket, and her best little black hat, and the narrow black velvet round her throat, and her dark neat-fitting gloves, she was conscious how well she looked in the extreme simplicity of her dress; and, half-guiltily, she started from the pleasure that consciousness awakened in her.

'You only want an umbrella to be perfectly well dressed,' Mrs. Tudor remarked, as she scanned her niece's appearance with satisfaction. 'I told you to put on anything, because I wanted to see you plainly dressed. It is the severest test of a young woman's taste. Every one can look well *en toilette*, very few in cotton and hollands. When you have a blue umbrella you will be the perfection of simple style. I will take you at once to a shop, and make you a present of one.'

'But what am I to do with a blue umbrella, Aunt Thalia? the weather is perfectly fine.'

'That is immaterial. All young persons of distinction carry blue umbrellas this season. You need not put it up unless you choose; but you must always carry it in the forenoon—indeed, I should say, you had better never put it up. It will last you longer.'

So they went to a shop and spent sixteen shillings on this indispensable addition to a young person of distinction's dress, and then proceeded to the beach, where, following her physician's advice, Mrs. Tudor forced herself to sit, for a couple or so of hours, every forenoon.

Now Esther Fleming was still of an age when to sit and dream silently at the waves is in itself a vague, voluptuous delight. To watch the pale sky fading in the far horizon, to watch the fisherman's sails starting forth, like the trembling venture of young hope, across the bay, filled her with yearning thoughts, if not of Oliver, of something infinitely dearer in reality—the love she had herself built up for him! And, full of such visions, she would contentedly have sat out the two hours of stipulated sea-air without speaking a word; but Mrs. Tudor, in common, I fancy, with most other old persons, had no liking whatever for being out-of-doors and alone. What dreams had she? what did a fading horizon or departing sail say to her? Her ventures had been put forth half a century before. She had welcomed back to shore ships well-laden with substantial merchandize in lieu of that frail, worthless ballast, with which they first set sail. Whatever interest this Weymouth parade could yield her was on the side where people rode up and down,

not on that where the morning sun glared on her face, and the fresh sea-wind despoiled her best artificial curls, and all the affluence of light, and air, and life told her, with the coarse ill-breeding of nature, how old, and weak, and sunless she, Thalia Tudor, was! She could care for Colonel Dash's new barouche and Mrs. Blank's shabby livery; but the sun, and wind, and dust, and heat, and cold by turns wearied and irritated her to death. At the end of an hour's complaining Esther found she could much more enter into Wilson's frame of mind respecting her aunt's requirements than she could have done the night before; and she was sensible of very considerable relief when Mrs. Tudor descried one of her Bath friends, the Miss Whitty already spoken of, approaching them along the promenade.

'My dearest Mrs. Tudor! such a delightfully-unexpected pleasure!' cried this lady in a tone of the most youthful excitement. 'To think, when we last parted, that we should meet so soon again, and at the seaside: really now, it is *most* extraordinary! Miss Fleming, I'm sure, from the family likeness. How-do-you-do, Miss Fleming? I hope you left your friends in Devonshire quite well?' [Miss Whitty always held it a point of politeness to inquire after everybody's relations, whether she knew them or not. 'It may please —it can't displease,' was her way of reasoning to herself. 'If I never see them, it does not signify; if I do, it is something like an introduction to have been constantly asking about them to their friends.' And to make acquaintance with fresh people was the grand goal and winning point of Miss Whitty's life.] 'I am so delighted we have met,' she proceeded, when Esther had satisfied her as to the sanitary condition of the Countisbury household. 'We can take such nice long walks together by the sea. Do you care for sea-anemones? I am a perfect child when I once find myself among the—the limpets and sea-weeds, and things, upon the rocks.'

'I should think you had best stop with me on dry land, Whitty,' remarked Mrs. Tudor, with a cutting laugh. 'We old women are not fitted for scrambling among rocks, and wetting our feet, like girls of [illegible]'s age. Where are you lodging? My woman tells me there is not a garret to be hired in Weymouth under thirty shillings a week.'

'I have taken apartments in one of the smaller streets, Mrs. Tudor,' answered poor Whitty, evidently with a great many high notes taken out of her by her patroness's first word. 'The people are not very civil; and I am afraid they take the butter already; but I get the rooms on moderate terms, and perhaps, as I shall be out a great deal, the cooking and attendance won't matter.'

'You can get your food with me when you will,' said Mrs. Tudor. 'I dine early here at the sea, and drink my tea at six. You are free to take both meals with me when you choose.'

Remembering Mrs. Tudor's somewhat scant hospitality to herself the night before, Esther was a little surprised at this open-handed offer to any one so hungry-looking as Miss Whitty. She did not yet understand the system upon which Mrs. Tudor's reputation for liberality was based and kept up; but poor Whitty did. Years of poverty and humility, and petty toad-eating, and little deceitful gratitude, had taught her the precise value of all proffered favours from richer people —the exact sort of answer it was incumbent upon herself to give. 'She would not for worlds intrude upon Mrs. Tudor. Nothing was more disagreeable, away from home, than having people dropping in at dinner-time. She would be delighted to come round any evening, or every evening, after tea, if Mrs. Tudor would permit her, and——'

'Very well, very well,' interrupted Mrs. Tudor complacently ('tis the creature's pride,' she remarked afterwards to Esther. 'Whenever I try to put bread in her mouth she makes excuses, as you saw; and she's starving, my dear, she's starving!'). 'You shall come to-night, Whitty. My niece and I will drink

our tea early, and if you come in by seven we shall just have time for a game [illegible] before bed-time. I am ordered to bed by my bed by ten, and it tells upon me [illegible] never shut my eyes before one. It tires me a vast deal more than being up.'

'Perhaps the noise of the waves keeps you awake, mim,' suggested Miss Whitty, with one of her faint little simpers. 'I had an aunt once who was ordered to the sea, and——'

'Do you know who that is driving with old Lady Fanshawe? I know the woman's face. Who is she?'

'Lady Fanshawe—where, mim? Oh, yes! to be sure; in the yellow barouche.' Poor Whitty was always ready to merge her own stories or observations on the faintest interruption from any one else. 'Now I see her face. It's Miss Garth, half-sister, you remember, to the late Lord Riversdale. There was a great talk about her once for Colonel Manners, mim; but he went to India suddenly, and she got a situation as companion, you may recollect; and she's had money left her since, and lives in very good style at Cheltenham—quite in the dinnering set.'

'I know her; but do talk grammar, Miss Whitty; "dinnering" means nothing. I knew Amelia Garth; I knew Amelia Garth's mother. She comes of bad blood. Old Lady Fanshawe would do better to mind her own needy flesh and blood than take up with such a woman as yon. Who is this coming along the walk? He has a distinguished air. Ah! now I recognize him. Esther, child,' in a whisper, 'this is your friend's lover, whom you were making so many inquiries about. Mr. Chichester, how do you do?'

And Esther, who had been listening with rather vacant attention to the conversation about Amelia Garth, started round, and positively trembled through all her frame on suddenly finding herself face to face with Paul Chichester.

'Mr. Chichester, my niece, Miss Fleming.'

Esther bowed, very distantly and cold: Paul smiled. 'I am quite accustomed to hear your name, Miss Fleming. I was intrusted with a great many messages for you, in case I should meet you here.'

'Oh! I am much obliged;' and then Esther stopped, and felt more confused than she had ever done in her life before.

'You were at school with Miss Dashwood, Esther, were you not?' said Mrs. Tudor, with a sharp look at her niece's downcast face. 'Mr. Chichester has recently come from Bath, and can, no doubt, give you news of your young friends.'

'Milly wrote to me a day or two before I left Countisbury, and told me all they were doing, Aunt Thalia. She and Jane seem to have been very gay of late.'

'Not so gay as usual, I imagine,' said Paul. 'I believe Bath is considered to be empty just at present.'

'I heard of two balls and an archery-fête in one week; that sounds gay to me.'

'But it would not to them. Miss Dashwood informed me in the race-week that she had danced four-and-twenty hours in four days, in addition to all her morning fatigue on the course. That is pretty well, I think, even for one of the fastest young ladies in England.'

'Do you mean Jane?'

'Certainly. Don't you know that to be considered fast is Miss Dashwood's own highest and most cherished ambition.'

'I thought you pretended to be engaged to her,' almost rose indignantly to Esther's lips; but as she was going to speak she happened to look straight into Paul Chichester's eyes, and something she read there made her stop short. She forgot her shyness, she forgot her indignation, she forgot Oliver Carew. 'I think Jane makes herself out worse than she is, sir. I could never believe that she was fast at heart.'

'Have you seen many of your friends here, Mr. Chichester?' interrupted Mrs. Tudor, who was inwardly chafing over her niece's deplorable want of *aplomb* and self-possession. 'I have been here a fortnight, and have scarce seen a dozen faces that I know. Weymouth is not what it was a few

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

THE DREAM BECOMES REALITY.

See "The Ordeal for Wives," Chapter XIV.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

years ago. These railways fill every place with the same sort of company. I think I shall begin to spend my summers in Bath for the sake of change. Everything is bad here; the medical men worst of all.'

And then Mr. Chichester had to listen for about a quarter of an hour to Mrs. Tudor's statements of all she had gone through at the seaside; varied only by occasional little echoes and notes of admiration on the part of Miss Whitty, whose eyes and hands and tongue always followed the sentiments of all wealthy persons with the regularity of clockwork.

'Can he really care for those long stories?' thought Esther to herself; 'or is he waiting so patiently only to give me the Dashwoods' messages? How I wish Milly had never written me such nonsense! If the man were a coxcomb he might think anything of me from the absurd way I coloured at meeting him!' And then she gave another stealthy look at Paul's face—I suppose to see if any of a coxcomb's attributes were to be found in its expression.

It was a strikingly handsome face: the forehead broad, the black, clear-marked eyebrows straight and delicate. Esther had sometimes laughed at hearing David descant from his old poets upon the beauty of greenish-grey eyes, but in Paul's face she was first sensible of the singular charm such eyes possess when accompanied by an olive-pale complexion and hair and lashes of jet. There hung in her own bedroom at Countisbury a little old engraving from one of Vandyck's pictures: it bore no name: it was simply the portrait of a cavalier in velvet coat and point-lace collar and ruffle: but from the time when she was six years old, and when she had to stand upon a chair to view her idol closely, Esther had bestowed a whole religion of secret veneration and love upon this engraving. When she first began to like Oliver a feeling of infidelity used to overcome her as she looked at her Vandyck—Mr. Carew's short British features being, as you may imagine, supremely unlike the pathetic, noble type of that unknown face; however pleasant in themselves when lit up with youth and health and the admiration that they expressed for her. But, as she looked at Paul, every detail of the picture rose, line by line, before her: the dark and delicate sweep of brow; the steady, deep-set eyes of hazel-grey; the clear-cut lips; the resolute chin—all, even to the jet-black hair and olive-brown complexion with which her imagination had been wont to give the picture life, rose before her, just as on many a score of summer evenings she had seen them, half in fancy, half within the little old oak frame, upon the wall at Countisbury. Now she knew what had made her suddenly stop short, had made her suddenly feel that she and Paul were speaking together as old friends, not as strangers whose acquaintance might be reckoned up by minutes. She had met—alas! for the first time—her childish ideal clothed with life; had found, in Jane Dashwood's lover, the type with which she had so vainly striven to identify her own.

'You have seen Mrs. Strangways?' broke in Mrs. Tudor's voice. 'She is a great deal aged, Mr. Chichester, is she not?'

'I don't see any difference in her,' answered Paul, promptly. 'To me Mrs. Strangways is always a very pretty woman indeed.'

'Oh, of course! You young men are all wild about Mrs. Strangways. A boy is riding with her to-day who might be her son? Who is he, Whitty? They are coming here, to the right, on horseback. Who is that silly lad Mrs. Strangways has got hold of now?'

'A son of Colonel Ashton's, mim,' returned Whitty, with her preternatural, instantaneous capacity for answering everything and knowing everybody's history. 'He left Eton at Christmas, and has got a commission in the Carbineers, but won't join the regiment till February.'

'And which is Mrs. Strangways?' Esther asked, with an undefined sensation of curiosity to see the woman Mr. Chichester admired.

'The lady on horseback on our left,' answered Miss Whitty. 'Turn your head a little round from the

sea, Miss Fleming; she will pass before us in a moment.'

'Mrs. Strangways is an acquaintance of yours, then, Mr. Chichester?' remarked Mrs. Tudor, when the lady had gone past and bestowed a radiantly-sweet smile on Paul. 'An old acquaintance, probably?'

'Oh, yes! a very old acquaintance,' Paul answered, carelessly. 'Every one who knows London well must know Mrs. Strangways.'

'She's a very nice-looking person, sir, isn't she?' cried poor Miss Whitty, who, on the strength of Paul's last somewhat equivocal compliment, thought she might as well hazard something generally pleasing. 'I believe she and Miss Dashwood were considered quite the two first beauties in Bath last winter.'

'Indeed!' responded Paul, coolly: much too coolly to meet Esther's ideas respecting what was required of him as Jane's lover. 'I should not, myself, place Miss Dashwood and Mrs. Strangways in the same rank as regards beauty.'

'I should think not!' replied Esther. 'Jane Dashwood is fair and fresh and young; and that—that person who has ridden past us is older by years, and looks quite bold and worn and faded. Yes, Aunt Thalia, she does; and I don't like to hear Jane Dashwood named with her.'

'Appearances are so very misleading, Miss Fleming,' suggested Whitty, apologetically. 'I have heard many people say how much like Mrs. Strangways when they get to know her well.'

'And it is never suitable for young persons, who know nothing on such matters, to pronounce judgment on their elders,' said Mrs. Tudor, rising from her seat with difficulty. 'Mr. Chichester, my lodging is at the red-brick house exactly opposite. I should be glad to see you at any time if you are going to stay in Weymouth.'

Mr. Chichester answered that he was going back to London next morning early; but—and he looked at Esther—he had not yet delivered any of his messages to Miss Fleming.

'Then come and do so this evening,' said Mrs. Tudor. 'We old ladies,' with a glance at Whitty, 'shall begin our game of cards at eight, and if you choose to encounter the stupidity of such an entertainment I shall be glad to see you. Esther, my love, you are anxious to receive the Miss Dashwoods' messages?'

'I—I—shall be very happy to see Mr. Chichester if he will come, Aunt Thalia.'

And then she looked straight in his face, with her honest smile: and Paul, for the first time, thought her handsome.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

"LOVELY LADY COVENTRY."

From the Print by Richard Houston. See the Story of her Life.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

LOVELY LADY COVENTRY.

The Story of a Belle.

www.libtool.com.cn

FOR the greedy print-gatherer—omnivorous, rapacious, and profuse—there is now, happily, but little toleration. This artistic craze is but a species of the other established insanities. The spectacle of the frantic virtuoso, hungering after proofs before letters, first, second, and third stages, plates that have been retouched, India proofs, and other developments of this fatal frenzy, excites only pity and contempt, and suggests serious thoughts as to the gracious interference of the Chancellor, and the wholesome restraint of a Commission.

Still, there is one agreeable shape of this mania, for which there may be indulgence. And when the print-devouring Vitellius is content to gorge himself on such delicacies as the public delighted in towards the close of the last century, and purchased and appreciated—when he becomes deranged in reference to PORTRAITS, and amasses such treasures as all the noble ladies and gentlemen of that day, turning his portfolio into a huge Walhalla—it is hard to be wroth with this agreeable lunatic, who furnishes so delightful an entertainment—not for himself merely, but for his heirs and assigns, and but too often, unhappily, for the cheap loungers of the suction-room. These were the 'heads' that 'were stuck in the print-shops,' like that admirable boaster's, Mr. Lofty; such a print also, 'in all the print-shops,' did amiable Goldsmith send home to his Irish relations, to show them how much considered he was; such a print was issued of the fashionable Mr. Sterne—afterwards reduced in size and placed as a frontispiece for his sermons. It was Sir Joshua, with the dainty brush and honied colouring, that first spiritualized the famous lord or lady upon canvas. Then followed the mezzotinto plate—the most perfect translation that could be conceived outside the world of colour—of the master's exquisite and most tender manner. They are to be seen now with the bloom still on, so clear, and cold, and delicate, brilliant, rich, full, deep, and full of marvellous effect. Modern work halts after these examples lamely; Smith, MacArdle, and others were the masters of this school. They have long since laid by their acids and burins, and it would seem as though their cunning was lost.

The London crowds drifting through the Strand often stopped to stare at a new print—one of this matchless series—which was then 'stuck in the print-shops.' The beautiful Lady Coventry, perhaps the most notorious on the crowded roll of English beauties, was painted by a fashionable artist, and is now to be found in the portfolios, sometimes in 'good condition,' clean, fresh, bright, and, above all, not 'cut down.' Looking on that attractive face and graceful figure, which turned half the fashionable heads in London, her strange and romantic story, as yet never told consecutively, seems to rise out of the past, more entertaining than a romance, and quite as profitable as a sermon.

There was a certain Irish country gentleman living down in the West, who is set down in the books of heraldry as 'John Gunning, Esquire, of co. Roscommon.' That is a notoriously boggy district; and it may be presumed 'John Gunning, Esquire,' fulfilled the customary function of many Irish gentlemen of that day, shooting snipe, and other Irish gentlemen, and certainly never dreaming of the prodigious destiny that was in store for his two little daughters. He had made a good connection, marrying a sister of the Earl of Mayo; so that the obscurity of the little girls is not quite so great as has been represented. They were born at Castlecoote—their father's place—still in the vast bog country; Maria, the eldest, coming into the world in the year seventeen hundred and thirty-three, the other, Elizabeth, the year after. Bridget was the name of the daughter of the

Mayo family, and the result of the alliance was one son and five daughters, namely, John, Mary, Elisabeth, Catherine, Lizzy, and Sophia. That John grew up from being 'a sweet little boy,' as one who knew him called him, entered the army, fought with distinction at Bunker's Hill, became a major-general in the army and Sir John Gunning. The first was to be hereafter Countess of Coventry and titular belle of the English court; the other was to wed successively the Duke of Argyle and Duke of Hamilton — elevations which, however striking, have been paralleled; not so, however, that union of beauty, fortune, and romance.

What became of 'John Gunning, Esquire, co. Roscommon,' has never distinctly appeared, nor would public curiosity be likely to be much excited in his behalf. One glimpse that we have of John Gunning, Esquire, is characteristic, and shows that the world had gone a little hard with him. He had come up to Dublin, and had lived in that gay capital during one of its gayest epochs, until he could reside there no longer; and, as we are naïvely told, had been 'obliged to retire into the country, to avoid *the disagreeable consequences that must ensue.*'

A strange, irregular actress, who about this time had an engagement at Mr. Sheridan's theatre, happened to be one day returning from rehearsal. When at the bottom of Great Britain Street she heard what she called 'the voice of distress.' These were the times when sentiment was fast coming into fashion both before and behind the curtain, and all ranks were diligently petting and cultivating their tender emotions to the very highest point of delicacy. On hearing, then, the voice of distress in Britain Street, the actress at once turned in the direction it seemed to proceed from, entered a house, and without ceremony proceeded upstairs. Strange men, however, stood at the door, about whose garments hung the true *ca sa* flavour; and in the parlour she found a distressed family, consisting of 'a woman of a most elegant figure,' and who was the centre of a group of 'four beautiful girls' and 'a sweet boy of about three years.' The united voices of this young family had joined in that mournful chorus which had so irresistibly attracted the actress in Britain Street.

The 'woman of a most elegant figure' proved to be Mrs. Gunning, the wife of 'John Gunning, Esquire, co. Roscommon;' she received her guest very politely, and complimented her 'upon possessing such humane sensations.' She then entered upon an explanation of her position—how they had lived beyond their income, and how John Gunning, Esquire, had been obliged, as before mentioned, 'to retire into the country, to avoid the disagreeable consequences that must ensue.' Some hopes had been entertained that Lord Mayo, her brother, would have come forward, 'listening to the dictates of fraternal affection,' and have done something for John Gunning, Esquire, and his family; but this reasonable hope had turned out quite unprofitable; and the ill-looking officials at the door were actually preparing to carry out their stern duty, in virtue of the powers confided to them by the high sheriff. The future countess and double duchess were awaiting with tears this indignity in what is now one of the obscurest streets in the City. But what shall be said of John Gunning, Esquire, who had 'withdrawn into the country' to avoid the inconveniencies of this proceeding, and left his family to face bailiffs and executions?

The actress and the lady, however, soon arranged a practical plan —a shape that pure sentiment rarely takes. It was resolved that when darkness set in, the actress's manservant should be despatched to Britain Street, should stand under the drawing-room, and catch any light articles that should be thrown down to him.

Further, the good-natured actress actually agreed to take in the whole of the young family and their servant until some arrangement could be made. Not long after, 'Miss Burke, Mrs. Gunning's sister, a lady

of exemplary piety who had passed her probation in the community of Channel Row,' sent for the younger children; but the two famous girls remained with the actress. Maria, the elder, seems to have been 'all life and spirits,' a sort of boisterous hoyden; the other was 'more reserved and solid.'

This charitable actress was the well-known George Anne Bellamy, who has left behind her some free, outspoken, vulgar memoirs; but which are yet so natural and characteristic, tinged also with that abundant Boswellian garrulity, as to become very entertaining. These were valuable services, which should have left a lasting sense of obligation; though, indeed, Mrs. Bellamy, who always looked very high, might have hoped to have found her profit in a connection with the Mayo family.

After this odd incident the actress was drifted away to London, and became lost in the whirl of theatrical intrigue. How the Gunning family were finally extricated does not appear; but Maria, our heroine, wrote her benefactress a letter—strange both in orthography and composition; but which seems so overdone in its mistakes as to excite reasonable suspicion. It is known, however, that these beauties were sadly illiterate, and so the letter is to a certain degree in keeping. It was addressed to

'Miss Bellamy in England.'

The following are some characteristic extracts:—

'I rece^{d} my dearest Miss Bellamy letter at last; after her long silence, indeed I was very jealous with you, but you make me *amen's* in Letting me hear from you now. it gives me great joy and all our *faimley* to hear that yr Dear mama and your Dearest self are in perfict health to be sure all yr Relations where fighting to see which of them shod have you first and Longest with y^{m}. . . . . I was very unfortunate to be in the country when our Vaux Hall was. if I was in Town I shod be thear and I believe I should be much more delighted than at a publicker deversion. . . . . I don't believe it was Mr. Knox you read of at Bath for he is hear. Dublin is ye stupites place. . . . . I believe Sheredian can get no one to play with him is doing all he can to get frinds for him sef to be sure you have hread he is marrd for sirtain to Miss Chamberlan. a sweet pare.

'I must bid a due and shall only say I am my D^{r} your ever affe^{cnat}

'M. Gunning.'

After all, this spelling was not exceptional. Mr. Sterne's MSS. are full of faults almost as gross; and he talks of 'opening a dore.'

What became of the 'sweet little boy' has been mentioned. Of the three younger sisters who are unknown to fame, one, Catherine, married an undistinguished gentleman who is only known to posterity as one 'Robert Travis, Esquire.' The destiny of the undistinguished portion of the family was written by an ancient parish clerk, in a letter to a Mr. Madder, of Fulham, and, appropriately enough, was adorned with spelling quite as unorthodox. 'I take the freedom,' says this odd document, which is dated from Huntingdonshire, 'in wrighting to you from an information of Mr. Warrington, that you would be glad to have the account of my Townswoman, the Notefied, the Famis, Beautifull Miss Gunnings, Born at Hemmingfordgrey, tho they left the Parish before I had knoledge enough to remember them, and I was born in 32. But I will give you the best account I can, which I believe is better than any man in the country besides myself, though I have not the Birth Register for so long a Date, and since Dr. Dickens is dead, I dont know where it is.' He then tells of the two elder sisters; and recollects distinctly seeing the Portrait of the wife of Robert Travis, Esq., in a print-shop, 'I beleeve in St. Poul's Churchyard;' and who had acquired a sort of reflected reputation from her sister's fame. This was an oval after Cotes, with a scrap of doggrel underneath.

'This youngest grace, so like her sister's frame,
Her kindred features tell from whence she came,
'Tis needless once to mention Gunning's name.

But which the memory of the ancient parish fashioned into something more elaborate—

'The youngest of these Beauties here we have in view
So like in person to the other two
Who ever views her person and her fame
Will see at once that Gunning is her name.'

'Which,' he adds, 'is the best account I can give of them three; but then there was two more, which perhaps you don't know anything about; which I will give you the true Mortalich Regester off, from a Black mavel which lies in our chancel, as follows.'

The 'black mavel' tells the story of the lives of little Sophia and Lizzy, in a pretty inscription.

By-and-by the two belles, now grown up, were taken over to London, and almost instantly caused a success and sensation, for which a parallel, in that department, can scarcely be found. They had no fortune, they had slender connections; but fashion in these days was more or less republican. In a society a little wild and frank in tone, and where men of the stamp of Lord March, Selwyn, Mr. Wilkes, and Sir Francis Dashwood were leaders, the claims of dazzling beauty were not to be resisted. They took the town by storm. They burst upon the metropolis in the early months of the year 1751. Walpole, that most full and delightful chronicler, made this appearance a leading item in his next budget for Florence. The wranglings of ministers, he wrote to his friend, were regarded with utter indifference. The Miss Gunnings were in everybody's mouth, 'being twenty times' more talked of than the Newcastle family and Lord Granville. These, he says, are 'two Irish girls of no fortune, who are declared the handsomest women alive. I think,' says the critical Horace, 'their being *two* so handsome and such perfect figures is their chief excellence, for singly I have seen much handsomer women than either.'

Many stories flutter about as to their first entry on the gay London social boards. Mrs. Gunning was not likely to step from Great Britain Street into the Mayfair of these days without some miracle of fashionable society being specially worked for her. One legend was, that some cruel wag sent them sham cards for a great lady's masquerade, but which the Irish mother was skilful enough to detect, and which she 'improved' with the wit and daring of her country. She waited on the noble lady in person, taking care to bring with her one of her matchless daughters. She told of her false card. The eyes of the noble lady were upon the daughter. She thought of her masquerade, and, as may be imagined, substituted a genuine for the forged invitation.

The new belles received a shape of homage that was almost inconvenient, for when they went forth upon the public prado, and took the air in the parks at fashionable hours, they were attended by such admiring crowds that it soon became impossible to enjoy that pastime. The public admiration was not restrained by any feeling of delicacy, and was perhaps the more acceptable as an honest testimonial. That was in June. In August they were still cynosures, and 'make more noise than any of their predecessors since the days of Helen.' No wonder Mrs. Montagu spoke of them as 'those goddesses the Gunnings.'

But their fresh Irish *naïveté* and, it must be said, rough *brusquerie*, laid them open to all manner of strange stories and ill-natured remarks. An odd legend went round the clubs. They went down to see the paintings at Hampton Court; and having passed into what is called the Beauty Room, where are the questionable shepherdesses of King Charles, they heard the housekeeper show another company in with this introduction, 'Ladies, here are the Beauties.' The wild pair, assuming this to be directed to themselves, flew into a violent rage, asked her what she meant—that they came to see the palace and paintings, not to be shown themselves.

They were in the best society. About Christmas in the same year, it was not surprising that each should have a distinguished ad-

mirer. James, Duke of Hamilton, a wild roué Scotch nobleman, 'equally damaged in his fortune and person,' says the bitter Horace, met her at a masquerade, and fell desperately in love with Elizabeth, the younger. Lord Coventry, 'a grave young lord of the patriot breed,' was the professed admirer of the other. Everyone watched the progress of the business eagerly. The malign Lord Chesterfield was inclined to think it would end doubtfully for the honour of the lady. She and her mother played a bold but skilful game. They appeared everywhere with the noble suitor. When he had to move the address in the House of Lords, the brilliant Irish girl sat beside him, and thus caused him to be agitated by the two passions of fear and love. Her mother told Lord Granville afterwards that 'the poor girl' was near fainting with agitation. The duke vaguely proposed marriage some time in the spring. Lord Chesterfield presently gave a magnificent assembly, at which every person of quality was present, who were to be amused with the spectacle of the duke's frantic courtship. He sat at one end of the room, and played faro and carried on a disorderly flirtation with the young beauty who was at the other end. Three hundred pounds was on each card; so in a very short time by these tactics he was a loser of nearly a thousand pounds. The Hon. Horace Walpole was among the company, taking sarcastic notes. 'I own,' he said, 'I was so little a professor in love that I thought all this parade looked ill for the poor girl, and could not conceive, if he was so much engaged with his mistress as to disregard such sums, why he played at all.'

Two nights afterwards, the strange *dénouement* came about. Her mother and sister were away at Bedford House, and the duke found himself alone with the famous belle. A sudden ardour—whether of wine or affection—seized on him, and he insisted on having the ceremony performed at once, and on the spot. A parson was promptly sent for, but, on arriving, refused to officiate without the important essentials of a license or a ring, neither of which had been thought of. The duke swore, and talked of calling in the archbishop. Finally, the parson's scruples gave way before his impatience; the license was overlooked, and the lack of the traditional gold ring was happily supplied by the *ring of a bed-curtain!* The ardent duke was at last lawfully married, at midnight, in Mayfair Chapel. This adventure threw all London into an uproar. The Scotch were furious; 'the women mad that so much beauty has had its effect' (thus the bitter Horace); and, better than all, it had a stimulating effect on the admirers of her sister, for Lord Coventry at once gave out that he intended marrying the sister; and within three weeks, on the 5th of March, 1752, she was, according to the suitable phrase, 'led to the hymeneal altar.' This rise in their fortunes brought about a perfect *furore*, both of curiosity and enthusiasm. The public, who had crowded before to see them as 'the Gunnings,' with the true instinct of a mob, became frantic to see them again in their new and higher station. We see in the old music-books a Lady Coventry's minuet. When the duchess was presented at court, the noble persons at St. James's actually climbed up on tables and chairs to have a good stare, like a mere vulgar crowd. When they came out to their chairs to go to parties, they found immense mobs gathered. There was a rush to take places at the theatres if it became known they were going. The critics, however, were not unanimous. The Duchess of Somerset thought her 'too tall to be genteel, and her face out of proportion to her height.' Her dress, too, was thought rather to savour of the ballet than of an English lady of quality. To the Duchess, Lady Di Egerton and Mrs. Selwyn appeared quite as pretty and a good deal more modest.

In a few weeks their lords took them down to their respective castles, and 'one hears no more about them,' save this simple fact, which amounted to a good deal, that when

the duchess put up one night at a Yorkshire inn, no less than seven hundred people sat up all night round it to see her get into her post-chaise in the morning! She was always good-natured, and gave Tate Wilkinson benefits at his theatre.

When the season came round again, there were no signs of a reaction. But a new beauty had appeared in the horizon, and comparisons began to be made. The world was talking of Lady Caroline Petersham. Mrs. Grenville, writing to her husband, tells him, as a little bit of gossip, that the 'Morocco ambassador' — whose standard of beauty, however, would have been directed by barbaric canons—actually preferred Lady Caroline to Lady Coventry. Both were now being taken over to another metropolis, to confound our hereditary enemies—or allies?—in their own capital. The Gunning went with a vast prestige. A lucky shoemaker of Worcester was making her a pair of shoes, and actually 'turned' two guineas and a half, in pennies, for showing them! Still the old *gaucherie* was not softened down; rather it became more conspicuous by their high position; and the ill-natured public indemnified itself for its insane freaks of admiration by circulating all manner of what are called '*sproposito*s.' 'I can't say,' even Mr. Walpole must admit, 'her genius is equal to her beauty.' It would be unreasonable to expect such a combination.

Looking at the brilliant mezzotint which once hung in the print-shops, we can gather a faint notion of those wonderful charms which once so dazzled the London lieges. Something very bright, very spiritual, very dazzling; but what all agree was the greater charm, is, of course, lost. This was the extraordinary play of expression, which comes from wild spirits, and which may still be seen in many Irish girls. Mrs. Delany saw her often, and noted this special attraction. 'She has a thousand dimples and prettinesses in her cheeks, her eyes a little drooping at the corners, but fine for all that; she has a thousand airs, but with a sort of humour that diverts me.' There was a good dash of the hoyden about her, with some of that polite sauciness which is more or less the titular belle's prerogative. The pretty elegy, in which the Reverend Mr. Mason bewailed her loss, touches very happily on these charms, and, with the aid of her picture, sets her before us—

'Whene'er with soft serenity she smiled,
Or caught the orient blush of quick surprise,
How sweetly mutable, how brightly wild,
The liquid lustre darted from her eyes!
Each look, each motion, waked a new-born grace
That o'er her form a transient glory cast,
Some lovelier wonder soon usurp'd the place,
Chased by a charm still lovelier than the last.'

Mr. Mason's lines were greatly relished at Cambridge. They were got by heart and adapted to the charms of university sempstresses and bed-makers.

This was the figure that the Parisians now saw at all their leading *fêtes*; but, as might be expected, the French refused to confess their admiration, or, at least, would not allow themselves to be dazzled. It is natural, indeed, that when a beauty or singer comes, with heraldings and flourishes, their patents should be looked into jealously. Lady Caroline Petersham they dismissed contemptuously, not crediting that she had ever been handsome. Lady Coventry was admitted to be passable. But there was a native belle in the field, one Madame Brionne, to whose charms even the English abroad testified; and French beauty, fortified with the graces of French wit and training, and refined by the associations of the most elegant court, was scarcely fair competition. The Roscommon girl, as her friend Walpole remarked, 'was under piteous disadvantages.' For she was 'very silly, ignorant of the world,' and could not speak a word of French; and was not to be redeemed as to any of these failings by her husband, who was the best illustration in the world of what the French call '*bête*.' He is described as being 'sillied in a wise way, ignorant, ill-bred, and speaking very little French himself—just enough to show how ill-bred he is.' He

was, in fact, a sort of titled fox-hunting squire. He was, besides, *openly* jealous—a fatal and unpardonable *sottise* with the French—and almost childish in his treatment of her. He would not tolerate any rouge or powder upon her cheeks, adornments then so fashionable, and which was indeed an excusable stretch of conjugal tyranny. At a large dinner-party at Sir John Bland's, he fancied he perceived the presence of this forbidden cosmetic on her cheek, and instantly rose, chased her round the table, caught her, and with a napkin actually 'scrubbed it off by force'—it may be imagined to the intense amusement and surprise of the persons of quality then assembled. He then sat down in a pet, and told her publicly that since she had deceived him and broken her promise he would take her back to England.

It does not appear that she was presented at the court of the gallant monarch who then ruled France; at least, that scrupulous courtier, Dangeau, who registered every presentation, makes no mention of her. The French, however, were very anxious they should stay for the grand *fêtes* at St. Cloud that evening, but her lord said he was obliged to return, as he said he would not like to miss a musical meeting at Worcester! There were some fireworks at Madame Pompadour's, to which she was invited, but she excused herself on the ground of her music master coming at that hour. The Duc de Luxemburg, the pink of French quality, when they were leaving some party, came to tell him that he had called up Milady Coventry's coach, upon which my lord 'Vous avez fort bien fait.' The *comble* to these joint *bêtises* was when the Maréchal de Lowendahl admired an English fan of Lady Coventry's, who, upon that, presented it to him. But next morning came a letter, asking it back, and saying that it had been presented by her lord before marriage, and that parting with it would cause an 'irreparable breach.' An old one was sent instead. On this, the beautiful stranger went round telling her wrongs to everybody, saying, it is 'so odd my lord should treat her in this way, when she knew he would die for her, and he had been so kind as to marry her without a shilling.' It may be imagined what the polite but amazed Frenchmen thought of these confidences. It must be recollected she was eighteen.

They returned to London. The year after Mrs. Delany saw her at a party—a party where the Duke of Portland wore 'a coat of dark mouse-coloured velvet,' and a vest of 'Isabella velvet'—and described her as 'looking in high beauty.' In the November of the following year, one Sunday afternoon, a ducal friend brought the famous countess from church to visit Mrs. Delany: 'To feast me.' And a feast indeed she was. Her dress was 'a black silk sack, made for a large hoop, which she wore without any, and it trailed a yard on the ground.' She also wore 'a cobwebbed lace handkerchief, a pink satin long cloke, lined with ermine mixed with squirrel skins.' That wonderful face was adorned with 'a French cap that just covered the top of her head—of blonde—and stood in the *form of a butterfly with wings* not quite extended.' The whole was completed by lappets tied under the chin with pink and green ribbons; a headdress, in short, which charmed the Dean of Down's lady. Still she was struck by 'a sort of silly look at times about her mouth;' and in the portraits there are traces. about that feature of a little weakness.

After all, she seems to have had a sort of unsophisticated good-nature, which all the extravagant worship she was paid did not impair. She was not a 'hollow' beauty, and had friends as well as admirers. One of the prettiest stories about her, is her behaviour to the young Irish hoyden (a belle also, whom fickle London was already beginning to talk of) who had naïvely asked to have her pointed out to her.

A grand masquerade had been given at Somerset House, at which was a little Irish beauty—a Miss Allen, an unsophisticated 'lively sort of a fairy,' says Mrs. Delany. She went up to Lady Coventry, and looking at her very earnestly, said,

'I have indeed heard a great deal of this lady's beauty, but it far surpasses all I have heard. 'What!' said the other Irish belle, 'did you never see me before?' The young girl's *naïveté* amused everybody. A gentleman then took her about, showed her everything, got her a good seat at supper — everyone, to the astonishment of the young girl, bowing and making way for them. At the end of the night he turned out to be the Duke of York. The story has quite a Cinderella air.

Horace Walpole testifies to this good-humour under certainly trying circumstances. 'If she was not,' he says, 'the best-humoured creature in the world, I should have made her angry.' It was at a great supper at Lord Hertford's, and the beauty was asked to take some more wine. She answered 'in a very vulgar accent, if she drank more she should be *muckibus!* "Lord," said Lady Mary Coke, "what is that?" "Oh," said Mr. Walpole, "it is only Irish for sentiment."' Lady Mary Coke, we may be sure, would not be slack to point attention to the odd phrase.

Her short race was but for eight years; and yet, to the last, London training seems to have had but little effect on the old wild nature. In one sense, this is a good testimony to her disposition. Even the year before her death Mr. Jenkinson filled in a corner of one of his letters with a story about her which was then amusing all London—'a silly action,' he calls it. Walking in the Park, the mob had been disrespectful, incited by her airs. It came to the ears of the king (that good-natured king to whom she had said, that of all sights in the world 'she longed to see a coronation'), and on the following Sunday evening he sent her a guard, to attend her as she walked. A discreet person would have declined the questionable honour, but the saucy countess exulted in her escort, and made a triumphant progress with 'two sergeants in front carrying their halberds, and twelve soldiers following behind, and the whole guard held ready close by to turn out at a moment's notice.' Thus attended, the gay countess continued her promenade from eight until ten o'clock, the mob also forming part of the procession, and not restrained by the military force from uttering some plain truths—so plain, indeed, that 'Fielding's men' had to take up a few. As an illustration of that 'silliness in the mouth' which Mrs. Delany remarked, this is worth a whole essay.

So her short butterfly life passed. We have glimpses of her down at Crome, the family seat, with a house-ful of company, and 'Gilly Williams,' one of the Selwyn set (whose letters should be more known), and 'old Sandys;' while the earl good-naturedly held a faro bank every night, which 'we have as yet,' writes Gilly, 'plundered considerably.' There was a certain captain there who is mentioned as 'studying a pretty attitude for the countess.' She was then 'in high spirits and great beauty.'—Poor countess!

But in August, 1760—the great Tristram year, when Mr. Sterne was in London—she fell sick. That bourgeois husband of hers was not altogether so foolish in his generation when he chased her round the Paris dining-room and rubbed the paint off her cheeks with a napkin; for she had since had her own way, and used to daub her cheeks profusely with white-lead. To this abominable custom — one of the sacrifices which Moloch fashion then demanded—she is said to have fallen a victim. She was living down at her own place, and a Doctor Wall, who attended on her, wrote to Mr. Selwyn an account of her sickness, making, as he said, 'no excuse for being minute, because I believed that it would be most agreeable to you that I should be so.'—For the profound wit was of her admirers. She was very ill indeed, having an oppression on her chest, with a sort of spasmodic rheumatism. She was very weak, and the bourgeois husband was away. The marvellous charms began to pass away, and the discovery of this fatal change brought on, perhaps, her real malady. It is painful to read how it affected her. She never was without a pocket-glass in her hand, and when

this sad truth-teller betrayed to her the ravages of disease, she seems to have lost all hope and spirit, took to her bed permanently, allowed no light in the room but 'the lamp of a teakettle,' and actually took things in through the curtains without suffering them to be withdrawn. This recals another death-bed scene —that of the charming Mrs. Oldfield, Pope's Narcissa:—

'"Odious in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke."
Were the last words that Narcissa spoke.
"No; let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
Wrap my cold limbs and shade my lifeless face;
One would not sure be frightful when one's dead—
And, Betty, give this cheek a little red."'

Unfortunately, a letter for Lord Coventry was brought in to her, the handwriting of which she recognized as that of her sister. She opened it without scruple, and read in it a touching lament over her own piteous case; the duchess bewailing her hard fate in not being able ever to see her again, and plainly considering her case as hopeless.

The effect on the wretched beauty was almost fatal. The doctor rushed to the room, and found her almost dying. Through the rest of the day and night she passed from one fainting fit to another. Her attendants thought she had not an hour to live, and hurried expresses were sent for Lord Coventry, who was to arrive the next night.

On the 1st of October she died. That Walpole really felt her death —as much, indeed, as that water-colour Voltaire could feel the loss of any living thing—is evident from his letters. 'The charming countess is dead at last,' he wrote, five days after her demise. The Reverend Mr. Mason tuned his genteel lyre to some desponding chords for the occasion.

'Yes, Coventry is dead! Attend the strain,
Daughters of Albion: ye that, light as air,
So oft have tripped in her fantastic train,
With hearts as gay and faces half as fair,
For she was fair beyond yon brightest bloom,
This Envy owns, since now her bloom is fled.'

Lord Bolingbroke, known to his wild friends as 'Bully,' had affected a sort of *tendresse* for the Countess; and it is said that when news was brought to Newmarket of her death, he acted a burst of well got up emotion, and left the room, says spiteful Horace, to hide not his crying but his not crying. But 'the mob,' as the same authority usually styled the broad, bold citizen element of the British people, held by her to the last, and ten thousand people witnessed her funeral.

Old Mr. Gunning, who had risen with his daughter's fame, and had got into good society, was seen by Lord March, two or three years afterwards, at a grand masquerade. He wore 'a running footman's habit, with Lady Coventry's picture hung at his button-hole, like a cross of St. Louis.' This is the last appearance of John Gunning, Esq., of Roscommon. By that time, no doubt, the rest of the world had forgotten *her*.

ART IN A RAILWAY STATION.

II.—The Electric Telegraph: an Allegory.

IN our last number we gave an engraving and brief notice of the large allegorical fresco of 'The Railway,' painted by Herr Echter, at the end of the great hall of the Munich Railway Station. We now add the companion fresco—'The Electric Telegraph.'

When Mr. Watts offered to paint frescoes in the hall of the Euston Terminus for the mere cost of the materials, his offer, as we have seen, was blandly though peremptorily declined. Had a proposal been made to the directors of the North Western, Great Western, Great Eastern, or any other great line, to decorate the walls of their head station with huge allegories, like these of Herr Echter, and to pay a fair price for them, one can appreciate the surprise with which they would have received the proposition, and the suspicion they would have felt of the sanity of the proposer. But if, under some malign influence, they had entertained the project, what alarm and indignation would have seized the opposition at the next meeting of the shareholders, and with what noisy unanimity would the wasteful and iniquitous scheme have been summarily spurned!

But, not to resort to improbable instances, it seems to have almost become one of the understood, if not written, canons of accepted critical results—those results which are such a comfort to quiet common-sense folk—that Allegory is hardly suited to our practical, matter-of-fact, iron age, and that if, out of consideration to honoured precedents, it may be properly enough allowed a place on the walls of a mediæval palace of legislature, it would certainly not be justified in invading the domains of the railway or telegraph. In ancient Greece and Rome, the personages of the mythology—whether deities or attributes—were at least actualities. They were mingled with every one's thoughts of earth and sea and sky, associated with their ordinary every-day actions, the agents of all extraordinary events. They were believed in by the great mass of the people, even when the more cultivated were becoming indifferent, if not sceptical.

With us, the heirs of all the ages, the denizens of this iron-traversed half century, these mythic beings are merely shadows of the past. We know all about them, and care nothing for them. We have outgrown allegory. A little innocent symbolism is just tolerable—as a sort of universal stenography, a matter of convenience—for the outside of a county court, or the seal of an insurance office, the top of a column, a tombstone in a cemetery, a painted church-window, or a national memorial in Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's. There Hope may have her anchor, Justice her balance, St. George his dragon, St. Catherine her wheel, St. Peter his keys; and if they are smooth-faced, neat-limbed, classic-looking figures in sculpture, or grim, gaunt, lanky, and mediæval in church-work, we know they are orthodox, and are content.

Content, that is, for such strictly official art; for in all our public works—whether architectural or monumental—we are a patient, much-enduring, peace-loving, though grumbling people. But outside this official art we are more exacting, and there we resolutely avert our face from allegory. We have come in every branch of art to demand more reality—to speak plainly, more meaning and more truth. But whether, in order to attain that, it is necessary to abolish allegory altogether, is a matter which our artistic friends and guides would do well to consider. Allegory is but the higher poetry of representative art. It is in no sense dependent on the pagan's worn-out creed. It seeks 'to convey a larger sense by simpler means,' to utter that which, if expressed in the poet's fitting words, would satisfy an intelligent reader. Among its means are

images and symbols, its essence is vivid personification. It addresses itself, therefore, to the imaginative as well as the reflective faculties. But, at its best, all it asks is an intelligent consideration — an audience such as would enjoy and sympathize with the poet in his higher moods.

If, however, this higher form of art is again to lay hold of the common mind, to be a thing really felt and enjoyed as well as understood, it must not only abandon all the effeminate Della Cruscan use of worn-out names and attributes, but must present itself in an intelligent and comprehensible as well as poetic guise. It must neither be super-subtle, nor vaguely recondite, but clear to those who will take the trouble to understand it: though even on the walls of a railway station an allegory need not be like a Notice to Passengers, so expressed that he who runs may read.

Herr Echter has, in the pictures before us, fairly grappled with the requirements of a modern allegory, if he has not wholly mastered them. In the 'Railway' and the 'Electric Telegraph' he has essayed to deal with the Present without resorting for assistance to the Past. His personages are the beings of To-Day, as mirrored in his Imagination. He has not sought to exhaust his conception, but leaves something to the imagination of the spectator. He has given not the whole thought, but the suggestion of the thought—so that, as is ever the case in true poetry, he will there find most who brings most.

Herr Echter is still a comparatively young man. A Dantziger by birth, his art education belongs wholly to Munich. He is one of the most trusted and the most original of Kaulbach's pupils. With Nilsen he painted the great pictures on the exterior of the New Pinacothek at Munich, and he has executed much of those in the New Museum at Berlin, working only from the master's cartoons, and without his personal superintendence. Echter's original works have not been numerous, but he was employed by the King of Bavaria, Maximilian II. (just deceased), along with Von Schwind, Hiltensperger, Piloty, and Foltz, to paint a series of large pictures from the leading events in the lives of the Bavarian princes, and his share of the undertaking is considered to be certainly not the least successful. The present is, however, his most ambitious effort.

The picture of the 'Electric Telegraph' is, in many respects, very different in feeling from that of the 'Railway.' It is wider in scope, more universal in its appeal. The other was local, or, at most, national, in its range of vision. The overturned bureaucrat is essentially German. The scattered gate-tickets, wanderbuchs, passports, are all German, but the Bavarian are the most marked. On the other hand, the 'Electric Telegraph' is written in a language common to all. And as it is higher in aim, so is it more purely poetic in expression, lovelier and more graceful in imagery.

The Electric Force, personified as a female of powerful frame, and capable of swift energetic action, occupies the centre of the composition. She is an earth Power, strong, sinewy, muscular, as having much work to do and the capacity to do it. Though sufficiently freed from her native earth to accomplish readily the work that lies before her, she is yet not wholly freed, still drawing from it life and vigour. Her mighty arms, stretched apart to their utmost extent, indicate the opposite electric poles. They are upheld by peasant hands, the hands of the stalwart, heavy-browed miners, to whose industry she owes her free external existence, and on whose aid she still depends. Upwards streams from her the marvellous fluid that accomplishes daily and hourly for us wonders greater than ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. It flows forth on all sides, from body arms and hands—even her wild hair streaming out like tongues of fire charged with messages of weal or woe. But while it streams forth thus madly, it is gathered up by one hand and transmitted in a freely flowing yet regular current, traceable behind the buoyant children, to the opposite hand, whence it is carried

down, and the mystic circle is completed.

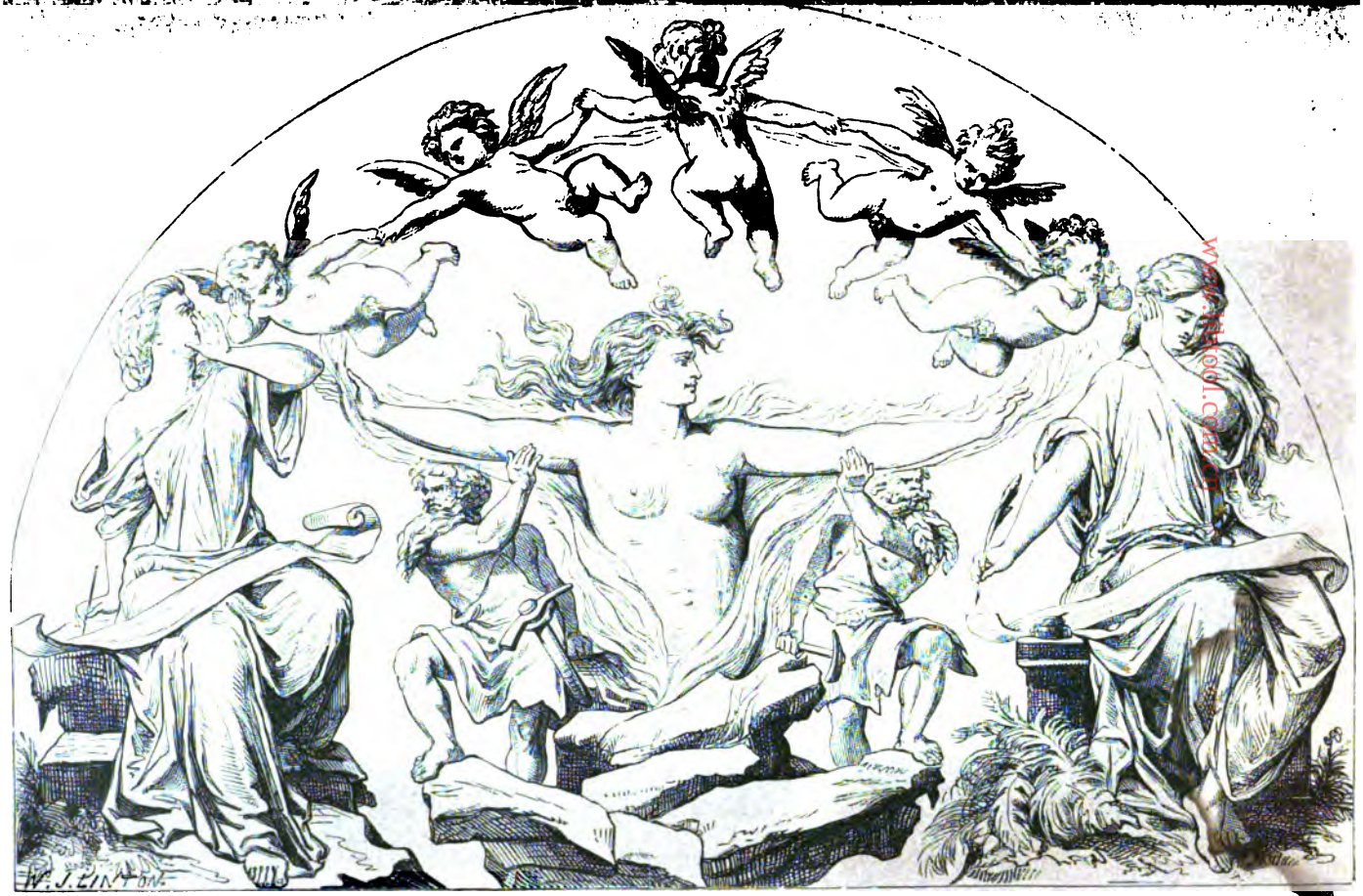
On either side, sitting with an open scroll on her knees and pen in hand, is a nymph—typifying, as suggested by the slight indications of vegetation at their feet, one luxuriant, the other scant and small, the opposite ends of the earth. The nymph on the left is whispering a message into the ear of her attendant messenger—a winged child, unconscious as the actual telegraph's material wires, of the meaning of what it conveys. By him the message is transmitted to the second of the chain of genii, with whom he is in connection (hand linked in hand), and thus it is carried on to the last, who repeats the message he has so mysteriously received to the right-hand nymph, and she in her turn swiftly writes it down.

Such, as it appears to us, is, broadly, the purpose of the allegory. Every German holds himself free to interpret an allegory after his own fashion, and some famous allegories have, consequently, almost as many interpretations as interpreters. Very likely, therefore, this of Echter's may be found differently rendered by German critics: but our version will, we believe, be found tolerably faithful to the author's meaning. Be it understood, however, that we only profess to have sketched the broad outline. The reader must fill in the details for himself. And he will find, as he does so, not only that the analogy will come out much more fully, but that many a delicate and subtle trait will reveal itself. We have, for example, indicated the connection and affinities of the female personifying the Electric Force, with earth, the metals, &c.; but dwell a while patiently on the group of which she is the centre, and see how many other, and finer, are the scientific and poetic relations which the painter has at least desired to suggest: how many are the turns of thought for which these serve as galvanic conductors. So, again, notice the manner in which the message is conveyed, how carefully the idea of the *secrecy*, as well as the rapidity of the transmission of intelligence is rendered. The nymph who forwards the message places her hand against her face, that not the feeblest echo of the words she whispers may reach any other ear than that of her tiny child-messenger, who, on his part, curves his hand around his ear with like design. So the child who imparts the message moulds both his hands, trumpet-like, as he hovers above the nymph who receives it. She, again, sets close her hand before her ear that no syllable may be lost, or murmur onwards, to be caught up by vagrant listeners.

These are but crude hints: the reader will easily improve on them. If they set him in the right track, it is all that is needed. Of the beauty of the composition as a work of art; the power of drawing; the skilful arrangement, regard being had to the place the picture occupies, and the distance from which it has to be seen; the grandeur of form, and majesty of expression in the female representing the Electric Force; the loveliness of feature in the listening nymph, and the grace of both, with the fine contrast between them and the central figure; the beauty of the buoyant children—and in drawing children Echter almost rivals his master Kaulbach, happiest by far, in this matter, of all the Munich painters—of these and other technical merits, and shortcomings, this is not the place to speak, and the reader will be best pleased to find them out for himself.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn



Engraved by W. J. Linton, from a Photograph of Echter's Fresco.

THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH: AN ALLEGORY.

www.libtool.com.cn

EASTER EVE AT ST. PETERSBURGH.

THE days when East and West contended about the time at which Easter should fall are over, as far as we are concerned, and the English congregation at St. Petersburgh conforms itself to the practice of the National Church by keeping Easter according to the Eastern and not the Western practice. The Russian mode of ushering in the festival is so different from anything that we are accustomed to in England, that an account of it may interest some readers, especially as it possesses the charm of undoubted antiquity.

In England, on Easter Eve, we go to bed as usual, and wait patiently until broad daylight has ushered in the joyful day; but the Russian is not content so to do. He considers it begun as the last stroke of twelve dies on the ear, and is impatient to welcome it. At the Palace some thousand people assemble, late on Easter Eve, for the service in the Imperial Chapel, and while the Gospel is being read, the guns of the fortress sympathetically announce to the whole city that 'Christ is risen;' whilst, after the service, each one of the guests hears the news from his sovereign's lips, and exchanges with him the Easter salute. This has, however, been reduced, in consideration of the number of recipients, from three to two kisses.

It is not among the higher ranks alone that Easter morning is thus anticipated, and welcomed with excitement. Every church, from the grandest to the most humble, is thronged with worshippers; and happening to be in St. Petersburgh on Easter Eve, I felt anxious to see the service performed at the Isaak Church, which, from its form and size, may be called the St. Paul's of St. Petersburgh, though vastly superior to the latter in its great magnificence. I had been warned to start early, and accordingly set off at ten o'clock P.M., having about two miles to walk. Even at that early hour, streams of people were to be seen on their way to their respective churches, whilst all along the streets saucers of tallow were placed at intervals on the pavement, each with its blazing wick diffusing a smoky, greasy smell, which was far from agreeable. Here and there, also, servants were hurrying along, bearing in cloths the Easter cakes, and a kind of cream cheese, that they might be blessed by the priest before being eaten. Towards the great church the largest number was flocking, and as I entered with the throng, a curious scene presented itself to my gaze. Excepting a part railed off in front of the altar, the church was moderately crowded with people of the lower class, chiefly men, whilst along the walls, and around the bases of the columns, were reclining numbers of peasants in their sheepskins, looking somewhat like gipsies under a hedge. These had come early to secure places, and were bivouacking until a quarter to twelve, when the service began, and all had to stand. Each of them held in his hand apparently a slender white wand, which proved, on closer inspection, to be the wax taper, not yet lighted, which it is the custom for everyone to hold during the time of service upon special occasions. The dome, about the size of that of St. Paul's, but unlike it in being decorated with coloured marbles, frescoes, and gilding, was only lighted by four or five groups of votive tapers, which burned on a raised platform in the centre, around a tomb with the figure of the Saviour painted on it, which had remained there since Good Friday. No sound was heard but the buzz of subdued talking, and the voice of those who were taking it in turns to read some portion of Scripture on the platform, which had continued from the time of the afternoon service, any one who liked being allowed to read. Presently those who were admitted by ticket to the reserved portion began to enter, and many pausing, crossed themselves, and stooped and kissed the tomb. The

body of the church began also to fill, and an uninterrupted stream of people poured in at the doors. Within the rails of the altar is a magnificent screen, separating off the Holy of Holies, adorned with immense pictures exquisitely worked in mosaic, and pillars of malachite and lapis lazulæ. It has three doors; the centre one, or royal gate, was now opened, and the Metropolitan, attended by several bishops and priests, came forth. Before him were borne a triple, a double, and a single candle, emblematic of Christian doctrine, and they walked round the tomb, bowing and swinging censers. Their gorgeous dresses, jewelled mitres, and flowing beards, seen amidst the smoke of the censers had a most striking effect, and I could almost have imagined myself witnessing some ceremony of the old Jewish worship. After kissing the tomb, the bishops raised it at the corners, and held it resting on the head of the Metropolitan, whose mitre had been previously removed, and in this manner they all retired within the gates, which were again closed.

And now a curtain was drawn aside which had covered a coloured transparency representing a figure of the Saviour, which appeared over the gates, and at the same moment a flame ran along the cords, which lighted the large chandeliers and a cluster of candles high up in the dome, and from several points the assembled thousands began to light their tapers. I had not provided myself with one, but presently I felt a tap on my shoulder, and some unseen benefactor (for to turn round in the dense crowd was out of the question) supplied my deficiency. This seemed to be a general practice, to judge by the number of tapers I saw handed about. Again the doors opened, not to be closed again during the Easter week, and the procession came forth — the choir chanting a hymn announcing the resurrection, whilst candles and banners were borne by some of the train. A passage was with difficulty cleared for them by the officials down the centre of the church, and they moved on, singing, and proceeded, on leaving the west door, to make the circuit of the building.

Whilst they were doing this I had time to look around me. We were packed as closely as possible, each with his flaming taper increasing the otherwise excessive heat, whilst the mass was occasionally convulsed, as fresh comers, with one going before as the point of the wedge, worked their way into it. The heads of the people appeared to have been anointed with something in honour of the occasion which made them glisten in the candle-light, whilst not a few of them got singed in the press, whether purposely or not I could not feel sure. One man I observed with a bright red head of hair, to whose locks a bystander deliberately applied his taper, with an exclamation of disgust at their colour. The odour of the crowd baffles all power of description. In no country is one's sense of smell gratified by an assemblage of the lower orders; but in Russia the peasant wears his sheepskin and boots all through the winter by day and by night, and this in huts closed against ventilation, reeking with the smell of its inmates, their fish and their cabbage; and when it is considered that some thousands of them were crammed together in a building already artificially heated, the state of the atmosphere may be faintly conceived by those who have not experienced the reality.

After a time the procession re-entered the church at the same door by which they had left it, and the service was continued; but however impressive it may be to those who understand the language, and are not pinioned in a crowd, to one who enjoys neither of these advantages, the fine music, which, as in all Greek churches, is solely vocal, fails to atone for the discomfort, so I determined to extricate myself, knowing that the service would continue for at least two hours. The task proved easier than I anticipated, and after pushing my way, shoulder first, through the crowd of dirty, good-humoured faces, I reached the door at a quarter

to one. The streets were singularly deserted, but several churches into which I looked presented a similar scene to the one I had just left, being filled with the same dense crowd with their burning tapers; whilst outside the doors were placed quantities of Easter cakes, each with a lighted taper stuck in the centre, awaiting the priest's blessing. I was not sorry to reach home at two o'clock, and resign myself for the remainder of the Easter morning to sound slumbers, which were only broken by the sound of salutes from the fortress guns, which twice came booming at intervals across the Neva.

C.

TWO APRIL PICTURES.

1.

THE first of April! Many an ancient vision
Those words recall—the bygone days of school;
When it was wit's *chef-d'œuvre* to heap derision
(Albeit mildly) on an April fool.
When strong in youthful faith we fondly cherished
Illusions which were rudely put to flight
By chorused laughs. So sank our trust and perished,
Type of the after years' long ceaseless fight.

2.

But there are two more pictures limned so clearly
Upon my memory through the buried years;
I see them even now so close—so nearly—
And yet so far off in the mist of tears.
One is a stately room, through which is streaming
A crowd of beauties robed in splendid guise;
The flashing jewels on brow and fingers gleaming,
Paled in the radiance of those flashing eyes.

3.

It is the April Drawing-room—the fairest,
The noblest of the land are gathered now
To pay their homage. One there is—the rarest,
Sweetest in her fresh grace of lip and brow;
The feathers bending o'er her braided tresses
Of darkest chestnut-gold—the sweeping train—
The radiant hazel eyes whose look caresses
All fill the picture which I see again.

4.

I see her first in all that scene of splendour,
I see the looks of wonder from the crowd
At her sweet face, so lovely—yet so tender
In timid innocence—the head just bowed
As if subdued by the wide admiration
That circles round her in each word and sign;
And ah! I see with love's wild exultation,
The precious glance that answers back to mine.

5.

Two years have passed. It is an April morning,
And I am kneeling in a darkened room,
Where all the signs of sickness give their warning
Of the deep shadow rising in its gloom;
And by the couch I kneel—kneel tightly clasping,
While my tears burn upon that tiny hand,
Which faintly presses mine as if still grasping
Her love while drifting to the unknown land.

6.

The fair young face is beautiful as ever,
But pale as marble and so worn and wan,
For the frail thread of life each hour may sever,
And those dread hours have fled so swiftly on.
The ripe red lips whose melody has spoken
Existence' poetry to me are hushed,
I kiss and kiss them—but my heart feels broken,
My brain seems burning and my spirit crushed.

7.

And I can see, too, in the picture plainly
A tiny baby-form whose week of life
Is almost over as it wails so vainly
For its girl-mother. And at length the strife
Of death and nature ends, and as the morrow
Dawns, there looms my loss in all its power,
To veil my life in silent sacred sorrow,
And fix within my soul that one dark hour.

8.

April is sunny, and its vernal gladness
Wakes joy in most hearts—but to me its tone
Speaks in the accents of a dreary sadness,
Tells me so plainly that I am—alone,
Alone with only memory, which stealing
All other pictures save that April morn,
Will only paint me bowed in silence, kneeling
By my own darling—left for life forlorn.

MY ROWING DAYS.

By an Old University Oar.

IT was with somewhat of trepidation that I 'put up' for the Lady Margaret Boat Club. I was a sizar; a poor man. No Johnian sizar had ever been elected to the club before. But 'I was born a gentleman, before I was made a' sizar; and being proposed by two men of good position in the college, I was elected with only one 'black ball,' that one being deposited in the ballot box by the son of a Chartist M.P., who thus showed that his levelling was to be done by pulling all down to his own position, and by keeping all below him who were in that very inferior position.

I had been down the river in a four-oar a few times with the ex-captain of the Westminster eight, and had the benefit of his 'coaching,' so that I did not row long in the third boat, but was soon promoted to the second, and in the first

term of my belonging to the club had the honour of rowing two races in the first boat. Our boat was third, and had not been 'head of the river' since the days when Bishop Selwyn, of New Zealand, and Bishop Tyrrell, of Newcastle (one of the Australian dioceses), rowed in it. Poor Bishop Mackenzie, of the Central Africa Mission, was rowing in the Caius' boat when I first went up. His boating experience, and that of Bishop Selwyn, afterwards did them good service in their mission work. We made no bump that season. In the following October term, the club won the 'four's,' after a hard race. Our hopes for the head of the river then began to increase, and in the March term we felt sure we should 'do it.' The stroke of the winning four came up to row, and his fine, steady stroke soon got the crew into good style and swing. He has since distinguished himself as an Alpine climber—being one of the first party who mounted Mont Blanc without a guide. The same stamina and pluck that have carried him over Alpine peaks and passes then served us in good stead on the Cam. We had a good, but not heavy crew. Bow little, but muscular. Two, our captain—my old coach. Three, a Wrangler of that year — a strong, awkwardly-made man, with a decided touch of eccentricity. Four, a well-made wiry man, afterwards in the University boat. Five, a heavily-built man, who would smoke. Six, a new hand, who got all the slanging. Seven, a well-made man, under eleven stone. The coxswain an experienced steersman, cool and self-possessed.

The first day of the races in the Lent Term we started third. Black Prince was head of the river; the Eton and Westminster Club second; Emmanuel behind us. There was a flood out, and the stream was tremendously strong. Anxious to get a good start, we got out from the bank too soon. The bow of the boat was across the river. Our eccentric 'three' began by rowing as hard as he could, and nearly drove our bows into the opposite bank. In the mean time the boat behind us had made a good start, and was nearly into us; but before they quite caught us we were underweigh, and soon walked away from them. The Eton and Westminster men had also got off well, and had soon gained a distance. Nothing daunted, we got into swing, and by dint of steady rowing, caught them soon after we had passed 'The Plough' corner—thus making our first bump. We knew that the Black Prince would be tougher customers, and laid ourselves out for harder work the next racing day. This time both boats got off equally well, and hard was the rowing on both sides. The Eton and Westminsters were left far behind; but where the others were, we, tugging at our oars, and not daring to look behind us, knew not. But soon the crowds with the two boats seemed to mingle. 'You are gaining' was the shout. At last, when more than three-fourths of the course was finished, our coxswain takes off his hat as the signal for the last effort, and we bumped them. But in vain: a barge had got in their way, and fouled them just before we caught them, and therefore we did not 'claim the bump,' and again rowed up second. Having thus discovered that we were the better men, we determined not to be done out of our bump the next time. While discussing our beefsteaks at breakfast on the morning of the race (the races of the boats 'on the river,' and the 'sloggers,' *alias* 'slow-goers,' answering to the Oxford 'torpids,' were then rowed on alternate days,) we laid our plans, or rather adopted the plan of our stroke. The great thing in a race is to know when to make your effort, for however hard men may be rowing, they can always row a little harder when called upon. The scheme proposed was that we should row steadily till we came to 'The Plough,' where a group of University men was always congregated. Their shouts were to be the signal for putting on a terrific spurt. Men told us afterwards that when we reached 'The Plough' we had just kept the distance, forty yards, at which we started from the Black Prince. The whole crew took up the spurt

beautifully. The boat felt like a cork on our arms. It seemed like madly going backwards and forwards—but to some good purpose; for before we were well straight round 'The Plough' corner we had bumped them, and were 'head of the river.' Never had such a spurt been made in 'the memory of the oldest inhabitant'—Donkin, the landlord of 'The Hoop'—who had seen almost every race then rowed in Cambridge. The Black Prince men said it seemed as if they were standing still, and we rowing into them, and owned that we had done it splendidly. We all rejoiced exceedingly at our success, and felt ourselves, and were thought by all true Johnians, to be perfect heroes.

We kept our place during the other three races of that term; our flag coming up flying as first boat every afternoon.

In the next term we lost our brave stroke and our proud position, though still keeping second.

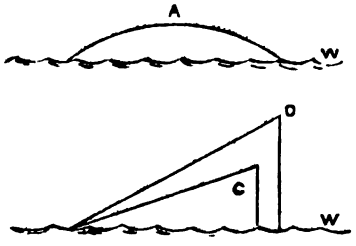
For some time I had heard that I should certainly have a place in the University boat which was to represent Cambridge at the Henley Regatta. At last one evening I found myself amongst the select eight, swinging down from lock to lock on the narrow Cam. We did fair work at Cambridge for a few days, and then went in a large party to Henley, taking with us the Black Prince eight, as well as the University crew. We were a merry, as well as a large party, at the good old inn, near the bridge; and many of us must look back to that week at Henley as being one of the happiest in our lives. We had two or three noisy spirits with us; but the majority of us were reading men, who enjoyed the liberty of English University life without abusing it.

Our work was pretty well cut out for us. A run before breakfast: once over the course at racing pace in the University boat. As the three Black Prince men who were rowing with us were also practising with their college crew, our captain told four of us to borrow a boat and row over the course again. A local club kindly lent us a good old boat, which, with a little patching, we made strong enough to hold us. We happily were the two extremities of the eight—bow and two, seven and stroke; so we kept the same places in the four-oar, and with the 'Varsity' coxswain made a very fair crew. As we found that we went over the ground in the same time as the Black Prince eight, and that we could beat their four-oar by more than a minute, we thought we might as well enter for the Stewards' Cup, the entrance for which had been left open for the convenience of some Oxford crew. We entered on our own responsibility, as the 'University Qualification Crew'—not sent by our Alma Mater, but not unworthily representing her. And as we had no captain with us, we formed ourselves into a republic, allowing our steerer to exercise the necessary executive functions as president, but all claiming a voice as to when we should row, and when 'easy all,' &c., and most amicably we got on.

A day or two before the first day of the races, the Oxford University and college crews put in an appearance, and at first considerably astonished us by the immense difference between their style and ours. It was especially the very high feather that struck us. They dropped their hands right down to their toes as they went forward, thus throwing the blades of their oars some feet into the air. The advantage of this undoubtedly is that it makes all the oars catch hold of the water together at the beginning of the stroke, and sends the boat along with a shoot. But again, the excessive stooping, as it seemed to us, must be very exhausting. Our Cambridge style then was very much that of the watermen—a moderately high feather—the oar being higher in the air at the end of the feather than in the middle, the body swinging further back than in the Oxford boat, and the stroke pulled well through. I hear that the coaching at Cambridge now is, that the blade should be highest at the middle of the feather, and that it should gradually slope down into the water. If it be so, it is no wonder to me that the Oxonians beat the Cantabs; for I be-

lieve no eight men will get hold of the water well together, unless they give time for doing it by raising the blades of the oars just before they are put into the water.

www.libtool.com.cn



In the diagram W is the surface of the water. A represents the flight of the end of the oar as recently practised in Cambridge. C is our old Cambridge plan. O, the old Oxford method. Either of the two last seems to me infinitely preferable to the semicircular plan of recent Cantabs.

At last the race day arrived. Our first race was at half-past two, between the Cambridge University Qualification, and Christ Church, Oxford, for the Stewards' Cup, for four-oars. We started evenly, and for about half the distance they kept up with us, but then we went ahead and won in a paddle by sixty or eighty yards. At half-past five came the grand struggle between the eights. We got off fairly together, and for about three hundred yards were alongside; when, sad to relate, our number three, one of the strongest men in the boat, broke his tholepin, or rowlock, and at once the Oxford boat shot out of sight, and we never saw it again till we stopped at the bridge. It is no use raking up old grievances, but it is undoubtedly the case that we felt very sore at being thus beaten, and very angry at the imputation which one gentleman was pleased to cast upon our honesty, when he informed us that we did it on purpose, and that he heard the coxswain give the order for breaking the rowlock. The fact was that poor 'three' at first put his oar in, and tried to row, but when he found that he could not keep his oar in its place, he said to the coxswain, 'What shall I do; I have broken my rowlock?' 'Throw your oar up,' was the answer; and as by this time the Oxford boat was some way ahead, many thought we had been thoroughly beaten even before our accident took place. Thus it happened that we lost the Grand Challenge Cup, and never knew which was the best boat.

The next day we had to row the final heat for the Stewards' Challenge Cup with the Brasenose boat. They stuck to us much better than the Christ Church men had done, giving us some work to beat them by three or four lengths. I have ever preserved my medal for the Stewards' Cup; and that still more precious one with the bi-glott inscription, 'Head of the River,' 'Universitas Cantabrigiensis,' among my most precious relics, and shall hand them down as heirlooms to my sons.

After the races were over, I started with four old Etonians to row down the Thames to Eton. The row the first night was chiefly in the dark, as far as Marlow, where we slept at a rustic inn on the river bank, and the next morning enjoyed the luxury of a bathe close by the memorable bridge under which the bargees ate the 'puppy pie,' which they are said to have stolen out of a window which overlooked the river. The chaff, 'Who ate the puppy pie under Marlow bridge?' will still excite the wrath of Thames bargemen.

The next day our fifteen miles' row from Marlow, past Maidenhead, through a lovely country, was one of the most pleasant of my boating experiences. We arrived at Eton in the afternoon, and as a stranger, I was admitted to the exclusive circle of boating men who patronized 'cellar.' This excellent institution was simply a very good lunch of bread in every form, cheese, salad, and beer *ad libitum*. It had originally been held in a cellar, but when I visited it the lunch was eaten in a very comfortable room upstairs. The mode of initiation was peculiar. The youth ambitious of being admitted to 'cellar' had to drink a quart of ale from a curiously-shaped vessel without taking breath. This sacred vessel had a thin stem a

yard long, at the end of which was a bulb, which held the greater part of the liquor to be drunk. As long as the aspirant was drinking the beer in the stem it was easy enough, but when, to get at the rest, he raised the bulb to allow it to flow into his mouth, unless done very cautiously, the beer came down with a rush and nearly choked him. The boy who tried whilst I was present failed. In the evening a scratch Cambridge crew, steered by a man who had never been there before, rowed the Eton eight and beat them easily; though a few days afterwards they beat as easily an Oxford boat with more of the University crew in it than we had.

The next day I was initiated into the mysteries of punting, and left Eton with great regret.

In my last term we went in for the 'fours,' and lost them. I went in for the 'Lady Margaret Sculls,' and was upset, and should have had my head split open by the bow of the boat that bumped me, had I not dived under it. I also was induced to enter with an old schoolfellow for the 'pair-oars;' but as we only had two days' practice, we thought we should be bumped at once, instead of which on the first day we bumped the second favourites. In the straight I dare say they would have got away from us, but coming round 'Grassy' we had a great advantage over them. I was bow, and could row much stronger than my stroke; I was therefore able to look about me to attend to the steering; and coming round 'Grassy,' instead of his having to 'easy,' as most strokes did, I simply put out all my strength, and brought the boat round the corner at full speed, and so caught them. The next day we got away, after a hard race, from two Queen's men, who had been practising for months, and after all we finished second. Thus ended my Cambridge boating; and if I had my time over again, I should again join the boats, and row as I did before; for I always noticed that unless a man had some regular amusement he fell into idle ways, unless he was of much firmer mould than most lads of nineteen are. If the derivation of the word 'amusement' is kept in view, and that is not looked upon as the business of life which is only its relaxation 'à musis,' no harm will follow from the cultivation of manly sports.

C. U. B. C.

FROM PUTNEY TO MORTLAKE WITH THE UNIVERSITY 'EIGHTS.'

'VIRTUALLY the race is over, and it only remains to shout.' Such was the answer I received to a question which everybody was asking of everybody else for many days prior to the 19th of March, the day of the great boat-race—and the question was 'Who will win?' It was three days before the one fixed upon for the event. My friend was neither an Oxonian nor a Cantab. He had just seen the two crews perform on London water, and that was the conclusion at which he had arrived. Without claiming for him any special gift of prophecy with regard to matters of an aquatic nature, I may state that it was even as he said.

Everybody expected that the result would be, not exactly what it was. A fine race was anticipated, but that Oxford would be, for the first time since the establishment of the race, one ahead of their opponents. That expectation was verified. They won. Speaking candidly the *race* was over in two minutes after the hands that held the boats had let them go. But this, as I have said, was not anticipated, and to see the winners of the first race in the third decade win, was an object worth making effort for. Twenty times had they met in the same water, and half a score of victories had been registered on the tablets of Oxford and Cambridge. Add to this a March morning that for mildness, beauty, and sunshine might contrast favourably with May, and you will be quite prepared, my dear reader, to hear without surprise that the scene on

Waterloo Bridge was like that of a Derby day; that there was an enormous amount of confusion at all the piers on the river, where people *would* get into wrong boats, and where others were arriving panting from a sharp run, which ended after all in disappointment. I felt for them—I ought, for I was among the number, but then I was in time—only the steamer had gone earlier than the hour advertised. On hearing this I was prepared to feel aggrieved and wrathful. If paper and ink had been at hand, I might even have written to the ——; but no, paper was not there, and to be wrathful in that glorious sunshiny spring morning was not an easy matter. I only mention this purely personal feeling because it leads me to an important and interesting fact. My boat had gone earlier because H.R.H. the Prince of Wales was waiting to honour the race, and the Thames Subscription Fund, by occupying a place thereon. And I arrived at the boat in time to join in the cheers which the collegians raised when they saw his face lit by a genial smile, and animated by the general excitement of the hour, and the interest of the coming struggle between the two crews of athletes. What a jolly hearty affair an English cheer is—such a cheer as young men, greeting a young and popular Prince, raise! It really seems to make the blood spin more rapidly along its course. The enthusiasm — affection, is so real and genuine.

Failing steam on the water I found it on the rail, and made one wave in the mighty deluge that flowed down Putney-ward about 10·30 a.m. on the morning of the race. What a splendid scene it was after the dull, dark fog, and the nipping frost and desolation of a long winter! How grandly the revival of spring acted upon the whole being! There were more races in the neighbourhood of Putney that day than the one upon the river. 'Awful jolly' is a shocking phrase; as English it is execrable: but I think I arrived at a tolerable notion of what it means that day. Exuberant spirits, hearty greetings, and a general buoyancy of thought and limb prevailed. Every man wanted to tell his friend that it was 'awful jolly,' and to repeat the assertion frequently, by way of assuring himself that he was fully alive to the circumstance. One didn't want to 'take the odds,' but to see the race, and shout and laugh, and when the race was over, to get up an impromptu pic-nic in the nearest daisied meadow. The liberal sunshine was everywhere. It seemed especially to have found its way to men's hearts. The Prince enjoyed it; so did the pedestrians on the banks, and the great human panorama of faces on the bridges was brightened by it. The Oxford and Cambridge eights never rowed in presence of such an assembly before. Royalty, divinity, law, medicine, art, and literature were represented; among them all was but one feeling, that it was a *holiday* — holiday in the happiest sense of the word.

The happiness reached its climax when the Cantabs in their light blue jackets were descried rowing towards the starting-place, and followed by the dark blues. Steadily they came to the barge, and bowed to the Prince. The two crews were men to be envied. As they removed their jackets, their well-developed figures and powerful sinews were displayed. The Cantab crew looked well—some said like winning men. They were more equal men than the Oxford crew, among whom were two or three powerful athletes. The host of steamers on the river began to move uneasily as the two boats took up their position at the starting-point.

There was a grand sight to be seen between that moment and the one when the race began. The boats were perfectly motionless—so were the men; every man with his oar ready for the stroke. It was the most perfect thing of the kind I ever saw. In work the motion is too rapid for the eye to form any adequate idea of the beauty of the pose. Here was one of the positions maintained for a sufficiently long time for the spectators who were near to see and admire it. The movements of a thoroughly good oarsman are very graceful. The sunshine and the water rippling in it, the cheers, and the buzz of conversation, the concentration of all eyes and all thoughts on one spot and subject, added something to the charm. People felt that it was a very fine thing to be one of the oarsmen in the champion boats. So it was.

At the signal they darted away. I have endeavoured to indicate the position during the pause before the start. I can only hope to make you know, if you, reader, were not one of the many who saw what the first stroke was like, by comparing the sixteen men of the two crews to a very vast and beautiful machine in rest at one minute and the next set in motion at full speed. The sixteen appeared to have no individuality in that first stroke. They were as one man. Beautifully the oars dipped into the water and rose again, scattering the drops from the blue blades; and the sunshine made even Thames water bright as crystal.

Cambridge went ahead, and people be-

gan to talk of 'hedging,' and to wish they had not laid so many sevens to four against them. Still they went ahead, and as they did so the men who bet—and who doesn't lay a little wager, even if it is only a dozen of gloves with a lady, for the sake of having an interest in the race?—made the Cantabs favourites, and there were offers to bet upon them on the very terms they had hesitated at accepting against them. But Cambridge never got a boat's length ahead. The Oxford bowman never lost sight of the Cantabs. It was a vigorous trial of powers. The Cantabs made forty strokes per minute. The Oxonians increased to forty-three, and they pulled away mightily; and it was soon apparent that strength of stroke was with Oxford, and then arose a cry, 'They have passed them!' At this stage, the action of the two crews, as side by side, stroke for stroke, they pulled, was very fine. The light blues made a vigorous effort, but failed to increase the speed; and away went the dark blues, and when next a cry arose, it was, 'They've taken Cambridge water!' after that there was no race. The distance between the boats gradually increased, and it was voted a 'hollow' affair by those who could see it; but this was not possible to many, for the river was choked with steamers, that were not so fast as the University boats, and dense volumes of smoke poured out of the funnels, and swept over the water. The race was run in the shortest time that it has yet been accomplished—21 minutes 48 seconds. The Cantabs were at least from 16 to 20 lengths behind. Had the contest at the finish been closer, it is very probable that the time would have been still shorter. The Oxford crew was unquestionably one of the finest the University has ever sent out to row against the sister university team.

Going back when the 'shouting' had been done, a good opportunity was offered for the study of the two styles. The crews rowed alongside the boat that bore the Prince's ensign; and as an ingenious gentleman remarked, it was evident that they had the 'raw material' at Cambridge, and that what is known as 'good coaching' was all that was wanted. The Cantabs rowed well—in good time and good style, though sometimes they were jerky. Their stroke is a grand one, but the Oxford is grander. They lost the race in a time that would in almost any previous year have served for winning it. They want that *perfect swing and enormous reach forward* which is the characteristic of the Oxonian rowing. Without it they will continue to be beaten. This was the universal remark of the witnesses of their defeat in the twenty-first race. *It is the first part of the stroke which tells.*

The first of the races was rowed on the 10th of June, 1829, at Henley. It was the inauguration of a brilliant series of gallant struggles between the two Universities. Their boating, as the best exhibition of skill in the art exhibited in London is more attractive than their cricket. Oxford won the first race, but when nine had been rowed the Cantabs were five ahead. During recent years the Oxonians have renewed the position, and the victory of the 19th of March places them first. The Oxonians in the last twelve contests have shown as marked a superiority as their opponents did in the previous nine.

The day's festivities did not end with the race. There were the usual attendants; the great itinerant band of miscellaneous public performers of wonderful feats and shocking music were there, and all was hilarity. Where do these people go to in the winter? Do they, dormouse-like, lie torpid? I cannot say; but their campaign begins with the boat race, and when the leaves fall they are lost sight of till the spring, and another, a greater contest, wakes them up. Not with these have we to do, nor with the billiard match, nor the racket (what a grand festival week, a sort of carnival of muscle and sinew, might be made if the athletic sports, the boat races, and the billiard and racket matches could be held in one week), but with a scene that deserves a paragraph. To some readers the mention of one name will be sufficient to conjure it up. It is 'Evans!'

'Evans's' after the toils of the day—after the general expenditure of enthusiasm with the prodigality of spendthrifts—after the dinner at Willis's—after the speeches and the billiard-match in Leicester-square—there was yet left an abundance of exuberant jollity for Evans's. Muscle and sinew and high spirits are grand things. I do not attempt to describe the scene, for I have not space; and the said muscle and sinew and high spirits refuse to be set down on paper. The enthusiasm was so complete—the fraternity so great—the free interchange of thought—the merry jokes—the mighty cheers that rose when the champions came in, and when the extempore song-maker sang their victories, were demonstrations which had significance. It is such a capital thing to forget sometimes that one is a student, a lawyer, a doctor, or a journalist, and be simply a man—a rowing or a cricket man, ready to apply to your fellows only the standard of skill in the pursuit of these bracing pastimes.

Young England's College Sports:

www.libtool.com.cn

A DAY WITH THE CHAMPION ATHLETES OF THE UNIVERSITIES.

'ARE you ready, gentlemen? Go!' And then the eager race began, and with it a new era in the sports of the Universities, and, as I believe and hope, in those of England generally. The gentlemen, I may remark, *en passant*, obeyed the emphatic command of the starter, and went with a promptitude and speed that Mercury, had that deity been present at the time, might well have been pardoned for regarding with envy.

The scene was Christ Church Cricket-ground, Oxford. The time was shortly after noon on the 5th of March, a soft spring day—it seemed the first day of spring—the blackbirds were whistling; over distant fields, the larks were trying their pinions and their voices, ready for the chorus of May; the air had that peculiar sweetness which follows a gentle rain and prompts one to ramble to the woods in the belief that the primrose and the violet will there be found in all their beauty. The gentleman who gave the word of command was standing behind four whose toes were pointed to a line of tape that stretched across the green-sward. They were four comely, well-proportioned men. They wore no caps, one had no boots, and their costume generally was of the slightest kind. So much the better, thought I, since it gives to me a better opportunity of observing the beautiful figures of the athletes who stand before me, whose skins are snowy white, and whose arms are suggestive of great strength, though, except at the muscles, they are delicate and fair as a lady's. They stand in a roped course: on their breasts they wear the University colours—the light-blue of Cambridge and the darker dye of Oxford—sewn upon their white Jerseys in shape of a cross or a star: it has a pretty effect. On either side of the course on which I stand are long lines of men, and here and there are groups of ladies, who look on with an interest that is scarcely surpassed by the keenest lover of athletics among the students who throng the edges of the course. To the ladies it is certainly a novel sight.

'Go!' And they were gone before the little monosyllable had died on the lips of him that uttered it. The athletes of the Universities, with the fresh bloom of youth, health, and strength upon their cheeks, who had stood motionless as statues, leapt into marvellous activity. The race was not so much for personal honour as for that of the whole University of which they were the chosen representatives. They were contending, as the 'flower of the youth' of Greece contended of old, for honour. Glances from bright eyes were not wanting to reward the efforts of the victor; and as they sped away over the green-sward with the first daisy of the year beneath their feet, the voices of their friends and fellow-collegians arose in one mighty shout that sent the name of the favourite echoing away to the turrets and the towers of the distant colleges. The race was but a short one. A trifle more than half a score of seconds sufficed for the running of it. What varied emotions may be crowded even into that brief space of time! The astonishing feat of living an age in a moment is usually supposed to be confined, in actual experience, to the heroes and heroines of novels. Far be it from me to disturb the supposition, but I would say that if any man has a fair chance of arriving at an adequate knowledge of what men mean when they describe that kind of thing, it is he who runs a race with varying fortunes, is passed and repasses, and loses in the end.

Ask one of those Cantabs or Oxonians who ran under the circumstances which I have mentioned, what deep and opposite emotions

he knew while he was striding the hundred yards of the race, as if upon each stride depended his dearest hopes in life. He will tell you what a pleasurable thrill he felt while 'leading,' when the heads of his friends were bared that hats might be waved in his honour, adding to the loud huzzas that arose on every side another stimulus to exertion. Then will come, if he be a faithful interpreter and narrator of his own emotions, an account of a deplorable sense of disappointment which stole upon him when the opposing Cantab came up with him, and he felt that his power of going faster was gone. Still he hoped as they strode breast to breast and stride for stride for a short distance, and then he dropped behind. Meanwhile the shouts died away, and when they rose again another name was uttered, and he grew conscious of the fact that he had been first in the race for the last time; that knowledge, come when it will, and be 'the race' of what kind it may, is always a sad one; or, maybe, he tried to do what is called 'putting on a spurt,' and to catch his opponent, and his comrades, observing the gallant effort, raised another faint cheer in which his name was heard; but this entirely subsided when the effort, which was of no avail, relaxed, and another competitor passed him, and left him to 'come in' an indifferent third, with the knowledge that his opponent had wrested from him, and the University, the honour which, when half the race was run, seemed within his grasp. Had he won, the victory would have been not his, but that of his University. He has lost; and the knowledge that it is not an individual defeat does not make it more easy to bear. In this way eleven seconds may be made to seem a very long time. It is a mistake to suppose that the necessity which exists for hard and vigorous action prevents all this being felt. It rather heightens the effect by giving increased activity to the nervous system.

The race was run amid a tumult of cheering, and victory was with Oxford. It is in the natural order of things that wherever a contest is waged, and whatever its character may be, if there is a victor there must also be a vanquished. It is easier to bear defeat well than to achieve a victory and wear the laurel with becoming modesty. Not a little of the charm of the University sports lay in the perfect evenness of humour with which the enthusiastic students triumphed or failed.

Victory is generally very sweet, and defeat is proportionately bitter. I was witness of a little scene one tranquil evening last summer that illustrated both the sweet and bitter qualities rather forcibly. That, too, was a race. I came at the close of a woodland walk in a Midland county to a village green, a pretty pastoral place, on which were assembled the villagers—all the men and women and boys and girls of the village were apparently there—and as I stepped on to the grass a farmer driving by in his dog-cart pulled the rein and stopped on the roadway that skirted the green. The occasion of the gathering was a race between two village lads—little ruddy-faced fellows, who stood side by side, jacketless, and with naked feet.

'I know I can beat him,' said one.

'I know you can't,' said the other.

The race was run, and the victor, the first speaker, won with ease, and was loudly cheered. The vanquished lay down and cried, with his face buried in the grass, while the victor, with a proud step, marched across the green talking to the men. The defeated took his defeat greatly to heart, and words could not console him. Perhaps it was his first defeat. First defeats and first sorrows are always hard to bear, especially to untutored and untrained minds, let them come in what form they may. As none of us are privileged to run all the heats of life without being sometimes beaten, it is well for those who get their first experience early, when, if the pang is exceedingly bitter, there is the consolation that its duration will be all the more brief.

These considerations forced themselves upon me as I walked among

the throngs of students to the scene of the next contest. What a happy scene it was! What a pleasure, after the hard stones of the great metropolis, and the faces that one sees there, to tread on the soft, buoyant turf, and be surrounded only by the young and vigorous, to whom all the great cares of life were as yet unknown, who had, apparently, all the elements of success and all the qualifications for sustaining defeats with the easy, even humour of philosophical men, and whose enthusiasm for their representatives in the races was suggestive of that *esprit de corps* which rules over College life, and still exists when many years intervene between the day upon which College friendships and University associations are broken up. Meeting years hence on foreign shores, perhaps on battle-fields, or in the British House of Representatives, some links of the chain that bind Balliol men, or Trinity or Christ Church men together, will still be firm. Reminiscences of days like this will help to cement the friendship. How should men who to-day walk about the course arm-linked together separate to-morrow and forget the day, forget their companions in the boat, and in many a cricket eleven?

The bell rings, and a shout proclaims the first jump and cuts short my musings on the always suggestive and pleasant theme of College friendships. Again there are four competitors, equally divided between the light and the dark blues. It is not difficult to prophesy that the contest will end in another victory for the dark.

What varied movements the anatomy of the human frame admits! I was recently at an 'Assault of Arms' given in London by the Guardsmen for a charitable purpose. My admiration for the skill they displayed in the use of the small sword, the rapier, single-stick, and sabre was dwarfed by the superior attraction presented by the endless variety of positions and motions which those gladiator-like men assumed in the course of their attacks and defences upon each other. It requires such a demonstration of skilled men to show how really marvellous, how full of grace and strength man is, or, by cultivation, may become. So is it, too, with the jumping. Every one of the competitors has an individual style. One comes up with an easy step, and after a preparatory stoop vaults over the bar, which is five feet high, with perfect ease, measuring the distance with complete accuracy, and alighting only a yard and a half from the spot at which he started. Another runs forward, and leaps, as the stag does, a long flying jump of four yards. A third, whose feet I observe are bootless, takes still fewer steps, and as he is passing over the bar he turns round, so that his face fronts the spot from which he started. The Oxford champion has yet to jump. It is Mr. Gooch, who is a wonderful leaper. The Oxonians remember the feats he performed two days ago, and as he removes his overcoat and discloses the dark-blue shirt of satin there is a cheer for him. His feet are cased in dainty white boots, his legs are bare (they are thin, but muscular), and he has the very physique of a jumper. Everybody wants to 'back him to win,' and nobody does so because nobody else doubts that he will win. Delicately he pats down the turf and scatters a handful of sawdust on the spot from which he means to start; the rains have made the turf soft, and even the long spikes might not be sufficient to hold him up. A little run—a stoop—a spring—over! Then the bar is raised another inch, and another, and another; and then the Cantabs, who jump well for all that—particularly the agile man who takes the stag-like leaps—begin to knock the bar down, and having done it twice, take a rather longer run, make a greater effort, and go over amid cries of 'Oh, well jumped indeed!' and the Cantabs begin to hope for victory, for that is five feet four inches high that they have cleared, and Mr. Gooch did no more against his Oxonian competitors. That gentleman follows, for the contest now remains between these two. He evidently does not believe in knock-

ing the bar down, and goes over beautifully: the higher the bar is raised the more grace he displays. There is a visible excitement among the collegians when Mr. Osborne walks slowly down the course, turns sharp round, and runs at the bar. His effort is vain, and his heels bring it down. Once again Mr. Gooch goes over, apparently with the greatest ease. As he reaches the highest point his long, lissome legs are drawn up, and he appears to be flying. Twice more did the Cantab gallantly strive to carry his toes over without touching, but failed; and then there were more triumphant cheers on the part of the Oxonians, for the second contest in the first year's inter-University sports was decided in their favour. The Oxonian afterwards delighted the spectators by leaping over the bar at 5 feet 6 inches height; and that, on the heavy turf that gave no spring, was a feat not often equalled.

England is disposed at the present time to set a very high value upon sinew and muscle. There are means by which these are attainable under special circumstances. Unfortunately these special circumstances are such as make them almost unattainable to the great majority of Englishmen. With the observance of the proper rules, there are hundreds of young men who might equal or surpass the feats of the University athletes. The Volunteer drill has been of incalculable service to our rising men. Athletic sports might be of still greater. As a means of promoting health and strength they and the training which prepares men for them are pre-eminent.

A great deal has recently been written and said on the subject of training. Let me employ the interval between the jump and the next race in adding yet a few words more. The subject is one of great interest, and it connects itself naturally with the sports I am describing.

Physically speaking, the trainer can do wonders with a man. There is scarcely a wider difference between two intellects naturally of equal strength, one of which has been trained thoroughly and the other left entirely dependent upon itself, than between a man living according to the customary habits of society and one who is what is technically described as 'in condition.' Supposing the two men to be of the same natural proportions, the one will be able to do a giant's work, the other a dwarf's. This was partially exemplified according to the different degree of 'training' the competitors had undergone; in many races some of the runners came in scarcely in worse condition than they started, some panting and thoroughly exhausted. The well-trained men were very pleasant to look upon. The most had been made of their natural resources, their limbs were beautifully symmetrical, and the clear complexion and whiteness of their flesh might have vied with the colour of the paper upon which these words are printed. Why, then, the reader will ask, do not all men who covet strength, ability to endure long walks, long hours of labour, or capacity for great activity, 'train?' The answer is simple. It is an art in itself. To be followed with complete success it requires a man's whole attention, and men cannot afford to pay such a price for even the elastic step, the fair skin, and the hard muscle of the trained athlete. The ordinary occupations of life forbid the attempt; the luxuries of life would nullify its good effects; and it is generally incompatible with the conditions under which we live in the present age. 'Early to bed and early to rise' is a very excellent rule, but it is continually being violated by the very men who wish to be strong. The special diets—fear not, gentle reader, that I am about to enter into the details of the trainer's art, to which you might object—are moreover impossible; the strict regimen cannot be observed; the giving up of cigars and wines, operas and suppers, balls and theatres, possible to the students at the Universities and the 'professionals,' before great events at given periods, is difficult, to those in the stream, in

the life of London. For training to be really effectual such things must be relinquished, and this is but the least part of the business. Constant exercise at stated periods, followed by changes of dress, cold baths, and many other proceedings which cannot be taken by men of business, are also necessary. It is true that these laws, which are considered absolute for great contests, may be modified for lighter ones, and are very frequently put into practice in a more gentle form. The London rowing clubs that are now so numerous, and that celebrate so many excellent matches every year on our river, are, for the most part, composed of professional gentlemen and City men. They also celebrate athletic sports, and for both of these they 'train' to a certain extent, but they do it under great difficulties. Taking these into consideration, it is not too much to say that they do it with a great degree of success. They find it impossible all the year round, their imperative duties, their professional avocations, office and city work, and indeed the whole routine of their life, compels them to violate, if not hygienic laws, those of the trainer.

The 'trainer' enables a man to walk twenty miles with far greater ease when he has been 'brought into condition' than he could previously walk half that distance. This, my readers will say, is a positive good. The statement may be admitted, there is an increase of power in one direction without any loss in another. Yet it does not follow that all training is good or desirable. Very much of that which now takes place is unquestionably injurious. A man who would 'train' for 'the eight' need have an iron constitution. The work which the crews that met on the Thames on the 19th of last month went through was very great, such as the majority of men could not possibly withstand. The honour of a place in the representative 'eight' of the Universities has been purchased in many instances at the cost of years of life. It very frequently happens that the injury done by over-training does not show itself at once, and afterwards it may assume only the form of ordinary disease and be attributed to other causes. But the severity of the training which is applied to the champion oarsmen, and the great test that is put upon their strength amid the excitement of the contest, taxes the system so greatly that the balance is, in many cases, equally poised, and events that would, but for that strain, have been powerless for injury, turn the scale to the wrong side and the oarsman sinks. I have no desire to draw a gloomy picture, but much that is mistaken has got abroad on the subject. It is assuring to see that the attention of the friends of crack oarsmen has been directed to this state of the case, and changes were in consequence made in the Cambridge crew. It requires a considerable amount of moral courage to interfere with the arrangements of so national an affair as is the annual eight-oared race on the Thames, especially in a case like that in which an oarsman was taken from the crew because there was reason to fear—not evidence to prove, be it observed, that can only come after the trial is made, and the injury, if there be such, is done and irreparable—that the constitution could not safely pass the ordeal.

The training required for athletic sports is widely different to this. It is general; in it there is no danger: the weak may become strong under it, and the strong will certainly become stronger. The training is not like that for the boat-race, nor like that which a Derby horse undergoes, and by means of which it comes to the post with a good chance of winning the race and almost an equally good one of breaking down utterly and for ever. General principles founded upon hygienic laws are chiefly relied upon. 'Make the man as healthy and generally strong as you can,' is the law, and nobody will question the value of that. The athletes of the Universities ran no risk. They were young, and strong, and long of wind, and art had simply aided nature in making the most of those qualities. Probably the competitors had, at no previous period of their

lives, been so healthy and strong as on the day they came to the starting-post. Herein lies one of the greatest claims these sports have, and one of the greatest reasons for the extension of them that is now taking place. 'How strange it is,' was a remark I heard many times on the cricket-ground at Oxford, 'that the Universities have never challenged each other to this kind of contest before!' It is not an unreasonable matter of surprise. Apart from the physical benefits to be derived from them, they are such popular sources of recreation. From the day nurse, acting as starter, cries—

'Bell horses, bell horses, what time o' day?
One o'clock, two o'clock, three and away'—

up to the solemn one when we resign bats and balls to our sons, race-running, jumping, and walking matches are very popular. Possibly the reason was, that pedestrianism had fallen so low that no respectable man dare be seen at a foot-race, even though 'Deerfoot,' who popularised it very much, was one of the competitors. It remained for the Universities to take it out of the mire and make it possible for reverend gentlemen to attend, and ladies to look on with pleasure, and the editor to permit this article to appear in 'London Society.'

'Clear the course,' cried the stewards, as I stepped over the ropes, which is a privilege accorded to journalists, and without waiting for a repetition of the command, as it is the custom of that portion of the British public who attend race-courses to do, the gentlemen at once got outside the ropes, and Mr. Darbyshire, the winner of the first race, took a little canter that inspired his friends with confidence, though he again had for a competitor a formidable opponent who, if his legs were not actually of sufficient length to warrant the supposition that he was a descendant of the original owner of the seven-league boots, was at least tall enough to dwarf and dismay so much less a man as Mr. Darbyshire, although in the shorter distance of one hundred yards that gentleman had beaten him. A buzzing of voices, a cry from the lower end of 'They're off,' and away went the four competitors. The Cambridge men having been twice beaten, were very glad to see the long legs carry their owner well in front, while Mr. Darbyshire went steadily several yards in the rear. Who was the philosophizer and moralizer who declared that everything in life depended on a good start? I recollect such a maxim being impressed upon me early in life, and I called it to mind as the racers went down the course and turned. The popular opinion was, that the Cantab had made a good start and would win. But he didn't. Whatever it may be in real life, it isn't in a race a good thing to start at full speed. Once more there was joy among the Oxonians, and the dark-blue triumphed over the light amid waving hats and shouts of 'Darbyshire.'

The intervals are long and the races short; 56 seconds have sufficed for the quarter of a mile. The jubilant Oxonians wend their way to the hurdle-race course; some are joking, some whistling the air of the new and popular College song the 'Buttery Hatch,' all are in high spirits. Is it not natural in them to be so? Victory is sweet and they are victorious. It is 'play time' with them, and their play is of an inspiriting, exhilarating kind.

As they pass the pavilion 'the Hammer' is observed and its weight is nicely tested. Did you ever see the hammer thrown, reader? I do not mean an ordinary hammer thrown in an ordinary fashion, but such as that used by the collegians trying their strength with its aid. It most nearly resembles a paviour's hammer. The stem is long, and at the head there is a circular piece of iron. It weighs 21 lbs. It is not one of the 'events' in the programme, of this, the champions' day's sports. I saw six men, fine stalwart fellows most of them were, trying their skill in the inclosure there two days ago. There are many ways of throwing; some are very eccentric and amusing. One retired six paces from the line of tape before which the hammer had to be loosed, and there held it out at arm's length, then swung it

three times, taking a jump each time, and letting it go at the last. That did not succeed. Another stood by the line and swung it thrice backwards and forwards with terrific force, loosing the handle when it was at its greatest altitude. That made a capital throw, though not the best. Mr. Morgan, of Jesus College, whose physique was slighter than those of most of the others, then essayed, and he sent it 83 ft. 2 in. The way he threw was charming. Taking the hammer in his hand, he measured about four paces from the line, and then turned his face from it. He held the bottom of the handle with the grip of a vice in both hands, extending them above his head. The firm set muscles, at the top of each arm, were visible beneath his shirt. For a few seconds he stood in this position, getting the perfect poise of the hammer; then he lowered it, waltzed round three times very rapidly, and, stopping just short of the line, let the unwieldy instrument loose. It had travelled upwards of 27 yards when it fell to the ground, ploughing up the turf. Strength is much, but skill is more in this contest. Mr. Morgan was probably anything but the strongest man among the six who threw this hammer, and a novice, though a strong man, would find it difficult, if not impossible, to throw it a score of yards in half a day's practice. I saw some tyros try. The result was rather amusing.

'4. *A Hurdle-Race, 120 yds., over 10 Flights.*' That was what I read on my card as I walked away rapidly to the hurdle-race course, where six competitors were already assembled; and as I reached the spot they started all abreast, and all leaping the first six hurdles at the same instant of time. The sun had just come from behind a cloud and shone full upon them as they dashed on, taking a leap at every fourth or fifth stride. What a jolly affair a hurdle-race is! What a pleasant feeling it gives to the runners, who when, as we used to say in schoolboy days, the 'steam is up' luxuriate in a sense of power that has long lain dormant, and make leaps and run as they have never run before! I don't suppose this was the case with the Cantabs and Oxonians. They had practised industriously, but for them there was the additional excitement which attends a great contest; the applause of the students was showered upon the best men, and the Oxonians raised their voices in honour of the Cantab who leapt the last hurdle breast to breast with a dark-blue and then shot away beyond the winning post, and won by a few inches. That little struggle for mastery, during the last two seconds, was a fine display. There were three competitors, and it was not easy to say one was before the other till the last stride was made, and the first breast came in contact with the tape.

The course had to be crossed again for the next competition, which was a long jump. Some of the spectators, by way of enlivening the business of getting over, essayed a walking race, which reminds me that there is no such item down upon the card. This I regret. Few kinds of races are more interesting than walking matches. Everybody appreciates them because everybody has to walk.

In the three days' Cambridge sports there were some feats not to be found on the Oxford card, or the inter-University one. The most important of these was a seven miles walking race. In these days, when men 'do' Devonshire with a knapsack in a fortnight, this practical test of the powers of getting along is a good one. Nine men came out to compete for the prize, but only four came past the winning post. What of the others? They had given in by the wayside. Three I find by a report, 'went to have some beer and were no more seen.' And what more natural? Have not you, reader, a pleasant recollection of some roadside inn, at which at the close of a country ramble you have enjoyed a glass of sparkling 'home brewed' and some bread and cheese? The dish may be humble, but it *is* sweet to the hungry, after the fresh invigorating air of the country. But this walk was in a cricket-ground, on a circular course that had to be traversed twenty-eight

times to make the seven miles, and there was no scenery to admire and no time to admire it, if there had been. So they walked away, and this was one of those few races in which it is as well to go 'slow and steady,' if you wish to win. Some of the competitors did not think so and started off at a swinging pace, and probably it was these who found, during the seventeenth 'lap,' that they had, like the hare in the fable, a little time to spare, and further like the hare, prolonged their nap or stay until the race was won. Meanwhile the others went on walking round and round till the spectators got weary of watching them.

Impromptu walking matches are of very common occurrence among friends who take rambles together. I have seen a great number, and fair walking is seldom practised. The Cantab athletes set an example worthy of imitation in this matter. They *walked*. They did not jump or hop along doubled up. 'Fair toe and heel' was the rule. If you watch twenty persons in the street, you will observe that in every case the heel of the first foot touches the ground before the toe of the last leaves it. That is the criterion of fair walking. Keep to that and go as fast as you can. It was a fine sight to see those nine men start on their race. Dancing and skating, running and rowing, and riding, are fine exercises; but for dignity and beauty of movement they are not equal to walking, when a good athlete, who has studied walking, is the performer. Englishmen walk with more manliness and grace than any other people I have seen; yet an observer in our streets will, if he turns his attention to the matter (this is very seldom done: I make you a present of the suggestion, reader; follow it next time you walk from Trafalgar Square to Temple Bar; it will be quite as interesting as the study of coats, booksellers' shops, or photographic collections of theatrical celebrities in the windows), come to the conclusion that not more than one-fourth of the men he meets know how to walk as well as they might. I am not now speaking of walking as applied to matches. I have taken advantage of my subject to make a little digression. The subject is not unimportant, so I hope I may be pardoned.

The competitors in the race started with straight knees and upright figures. Their shoulders were well back and their heads erect. Such an attitude as that shows off a well-proportioned man; but then comes the feature which makes the defect, from a spectator's point of view, in a walking match—the arms are bent at the elbow and the hands point upward. This destroys much grace, but for speed and the avoidance of fatigue is absolutely necessary. In such a 'form,' with long and steady strides, did Mr. Doig of St. John's walk seven miles in the space of time which an Englishman ordinarily takes for a walk of four — 1 hour 4 minutes and 18 seconds. And three of his fellow-students were only from 42 seconds up to 2 minutes 10 seconds longer over the journey.

Everybody had made up their minds who was to win the long jump. Had not Mr. Booth of Cambridge jumped 18 feet 6½ inches on Fenner's Cricket-ground, while Mr. Gooch, the champion of Oxford, had only jumped 18 feet and half an inch? Nobody could deny these facts, and so nobody disputed the general assertion that Mr. Booth would win. He did not, however. The event was another, and the last, triumph of that day for the Oxonians. Mr. Gooch, who leapt like an antelope—fancy going 18 feet in a leap—gained the honour for Merton College, Oxford. The ground—level grass land made hard by years of 'rolling' for cricket—was wet upon the surface, and Mr. Booth, at the finish of a long jump, made a gambol and hurt his wrist. Probably but for this, the result might have been other than it was.

This trivial accident was the only one of the day. What a contrast to the long list of casualties, broken heads, and fractured bones, that occurred of old at English athletic gatherings like those great ones that took place annually on the Cotswold Hills and upon Halgaver Moor, where the stalwart Cornish men met to wrestle, and throw the

bar, and the sledge, and toss the pike, and indulge in cudgel-play! Here, upon the College grounds, you may see men who have Saxon blood in their veins as surely as had those remnants of the race who held their own in the wild mountains of Devon and Cornwall. There is much of the ancient fire in them after all these generations and centuries, but it is toned down, and they enjoy the refined sports of to-day not less than did those who assembled in the western corner of the island of old. The contrast, whether it be of the men or the sports, is wholly in favour of the modern ones, though the feats are less wonderful and the athletes not so powerful.

Looking back upon the athletic sports of England, in the days when pastimes were taken up or abandoned by royal command—in the semi-military period when every man was half a soldier, when Moorfields was properly described by its name, and quintains were set up on Cornhill and on the river, and contrasting them with those of to-day, what a change is observable! The subject is full of interest, for the history of our country is traceable in the games that have prevailed. But the bell has rung for another race, evening is giving signs of its approach, and the two great events of the day have yet to be decided.

Another hurdle-race, ending in a victory for Cambridge, is followed by the mile of level running. To this event everybody looks with great interest, and as the competitors make their appearance they are scrutinized with critical eyes. Everybody is very anxious to see Mr. Lawes, who is the crack runner of the light-blues, and presently a gentleman with very dark hair hanging loosely about his brows comes trotting round the course, and an enthusiastic Trinity man asks him 'How he feels,' and is delighted to receive for an answer, 'All right, as far as I know.' Next comes Mr. Hannam, of Merton; he won the Oxford mile-race two days ago, and his collegians believe he can win it again to-day. They don't take into account the fact that he has not yet had time to recover from the exhaustion of that triumph—a fact which may be discerned on glancing from him to Mr. Lawes, whose cheeks are glowing and whose attitudes are suggestive of great vigour and powers of endurance; and even the stanchest supporters of the Oxonian lose something of their confidence in the event terminating as they wish.

'I shall say, "Are you ready? Go!"' the starter said; and then, he having pronounced the phrase, they broke away. The course, which was circular, was only a quarter of a mile, so that they had to pass the starting-line four times. Even at the first it was evident that Mr. Hannam felt the fatigue of his previous race, yet he kept close to his opponent; and Cantabs and Oxonians ran round and met them at points crying, 'Hannam!' and 'Lawes!'

When it came to the last 'lap'—that is the professional term—the race began. Not that they had not been racing before; the three-quarters of a mile had been traversed in a little over three minutes. I mean the struggle for victory. For a little way it was a grand one. The two best men—the favourites—were first and second, and the second made up his mind to catch the first. He did it, too, amid the loud acclamations of thousands of voices shouting his name. Boldly at a wonderful speed he ran till he was breast to breast with his opponent, and for twenty yards each ran his best. Then Lawes went forward and Hannam dropped behind, and all his after efforts were in vain. Victory was with the Cantabs. It is not much to describe, but it was a sight to see, and having seen, to remember how gallantly they struggled while the contest was even.

And now remains but the steeple-chase—it is over two miles of fair hunting country. The flags mark out the course; whole fields are under water, for the river has overflowed its banks. There are wire fences, stiff rails, thick, thorny hedges, and 'bullfinches' innumerable. There is a brook jump, too, far away, but with the aid of my glasses I can see its breadth and the water, and it is very broad, and,

in fact, a formidable brook for human legs to leap. The spectators like formidable brooks, and rather relish seeing the runners get in. As this fate is nearly sure to befall one or more of them, the majority go off at once to take up a favourable position in the vicinity. Here and there a stranger turns round to look at a group of collegians, among whom are one or two of the 'eight,' it is whispered; and there is a sudden desire on the part of many persons to 'lay the odds against the light-blues,' for the whisper goes round that they have been the 'Long Distance' once or twice, and are in remarkably good 'form,' whatever that may mean. Ere these lines see the light that contest, too, will have been decided. Were it otherwise, I might, after the fashion of sporting men, utter a prophecy anent the final issue.

'Here they come!' and true enough *they* were coming. Six men in white and blue, as I turned, were leaping over a quickset hedge into a newly-ploughed field. The rain had made the soil soft, and at every step the feet of the racers went deep into it. Fortunately on leaping the next hedge they had a convenient opportunity of washing the earth that clung to them away, for the next thirty yards of running was through a pool. Running in water is neither an easy nor a pleasant feat, but they dashed on, the Oxonian favourite acting as pioneer. The country was something more than 'fair:' it was very rough, the hedges were high, and the lane that had to be crossed was a foot deep in a damp, clayey mixture. Here, if ever, strength and power of endurance were needed. They were found, too, and presently all the competitors were seen climbing up the hill out of the valley, and glad, no doubt, to leave behind them the sloughs in which it abounded. And now the spectators began to get excited. The competitors, running in many instances with uncovered legs, saturated with water, splashed with mud, torn by briars and hawthorn hedges, as they leapt the iron railings into the 'home field,' presented a woe-begone spectacle, but, withal, were happy representatives of the Universities that honour and love all exhibitions of 'British Pluck.' Two seemed 'iron-jointed, supple sinewed.' They were Mr. Gurnett and Mr. Webster, of Trinity College, Cambridge, the first and second, who dashed along the course at the close as fast as they went, while the hedges and the water were still before them.

So ended the Oxford and Cambridge University Sports—the most important gathering of the kind that has taken place for a century. In the fulness of time—for it will become an institution, as the boat-race and the cricket-match has—they cannot fail to be highly beneficial. Cricket, rowing, and athletic sports are lessons in the art of power. The intuitive love of power makes the students desire to excel in them, and by their aid strength and health will be developed. The brain is all the better able to do its work when the limbs are vigorous, and, happily, vigorous limbs and robust frames are not scarce at our Universities; and the picture that paints the student pale and worn is no longer a faithful portrait.

Passing over Magdalen Bridge and down High Street, looking from my cab at the groups of students discussing on their way back to their colleges the games of the day, these reflections came as the natural sequel to the display of prowess I had witnessed.

In the soft sunset light of spring the classic city, hoar with antiquity, was suggestive of far different thoughts. But the cabman with remorseless haste hurried me on past all the venerable colleges—past the sombre gateway of ancient Balliol, from which the stone is peeling away and mouldering, making the outer walls look like the crust of an over-ripe cream cheese—past the newer colleges, the stones of which are smooth and sharp of edge, and so down to the Great Western Station, and away from Oxford with a pleasant memory of a happy day's sport, which will, I hope, have many a parallel in springs to come.

J. D. C.

LONDON SOCIETY.
www.libtool.com.cn

MAY, 1864.

HOW CHARLIE BLAKE WENT IN FOR THE HEIRESS.

HAVE you ever had a bosom friend? By that I don't mean only one on whom you bestow that cheap article called your confidence, but one to whom a half (and the biggest) of the loaf belongs, while a loaf is there; who has the key of your cellar, even though you have arrived at your last dozen; who in short may put his hand into your purse, take out the last shilling, and give you the change.

Such friends were Charlie Blake and I. We had been on the same side in all our games at school. We had shared alike in tender years our marbles and our half-yearly boxes from home, and if Charlie was bottom of his class, I was sure to be found 'next boy.' Together we

had struggled through Smalls, and conquered Mods; and emerged at the same time from under the shadow of our old college walls, and come together to the Temple (that emporium for younger sons), and gone on struggling for some two or three years at the time of which I write. It might be that deluded relatives had discovered in Charlie and me the germs of undeveloped Eldons, but alas! briefless barristers we were, even though the down on our cheeks (or rather on Charlie's, for I am a smooth man) had ripened long ago, and grown into dense forests of hair, and briefless we seemed likely to remain. I don't think Charlie and I should have fretted that the world in general did not look upon our genius with a mother's eye, only we were hard up—very hard up—so hard up, in short, that of course bulky papers came to us day by day which decidedly were cheques upon nobody's bank, but only very useless appeals for us to give what we had not got.

So Charlie and I had determined to look matters in the face, and see what could be done. Charlie was leaning on my mantelpiece, surveying the fit of his coat, and the length of his whiskers in my mirror, on the day we had come to this determination, while I was in my easiest attitude on one of my easiest chairs, with as good an Havannah as Turk or Christian need wish to smoke, in my mouth—for, as Charlie wisely observed, if one couldn't pay for anything, why shouldn't one have the best?

Pay! why we had given over even thinking of paying for some time. Did we not know that had we given a free entrée to our rooms, and been left with what only lawfully belonged to us, we should have presented a very primitive appearance indeed. N.B. I know Charlie had a pair of slippers worked by a cousin; I don't remember anything else. How could we help it? The world would shake us by the hand in an unpaid-for coat, but how would it look if we were strictly honest, and had no coat at all. Query?

'I had rather not sweep a crossing, Arthur,' quoth Charlie; 'for a B.A. it isn't dignified; or even go to the diggings, which some of my countrymen would hardly permit me to do at present—and yet we can't hold on much longer.'

Then Charlie's feelings burst through his waistcoat and came forth in a sweeping anathema against bills, and the rascals who sent them, and the unsatisfactory state of the world in general to briefless barristers, as is the fashion with Oxford men with large views and no income.

'My good fellow,' I observed, throwing away the end of my cigar, 'let us look at the matter in a business-like point of view. Statement of the case: Two worthy gentlemen possessing——.' I paused—for what did we possess?

'Possessing every advantage except those to be derived from filthy lucre—can't get their creditors to credit 'em any longer,' observed Charlie.

'Under which trying and unaccountable circumstance, the second point in view is—what are they to do?'

Men have been known to attempt a joke on their way to the scaffold, but depend upon it the first sight of the cord puts a stop to it.

Charlie looked grave—so did I. My havannah was done, and there were only two more left in the box.

'The governor has seven babes and sucklings to provide for, and yours as many more: no chance in that quarter,' murmured Charlie.

N.B. Our forefathers were popularly supposed to have held landed estates somewhere in some bypast time—a belief their descendants held to, on the principle, ''Tis better to have *had* and lost, than never to have had at all.'

Suddenly Charlie, who had been pensively stroking out his moustachios, was roused by the following remark from myself—'Charlie, couldn't we marry?'

Charlie suspended his operation—'Marry,' he said, vaguely—'what? whom?'

'Why, a woman who is not only a woman, but an heiress.'

'But where do they grow?' said

Charlie. 'It strikes me golden apples are not to be had without presenting a testimonial to the dragon; besides I've a polite objection to heiresses. They have generally large mouths, haven't they?' he added, plaintively. 'However,' he continued, 'I suppose one sacrifice is sufficient, so *you* may have her, and I'll dance at the wedding, with a pocket full of chinking gold.'

'After *I* have *come* over the dragon.'

'*Pre*cisely,' said Charlie. 'You wouldn't expose my tender frame to the monster; besides, you know, you will have the golden hen all your life—only giving me an egg now and then. But she mayn't like you.'

'Then she'll like you, which doubtless you consider far more likely.'

'Chacun à son goût,' Charlie observed; 'if I prefer myself, it doesn't hurt you. But seriously, Arthur, if there's a chance of my having to engage the young person's affections, I don't like it. Hasn't anybody got a maiden aunt? I possess a mourning ring as a mark of respect from mine—but isn't there some old spinster bottled up in your family, Arthur?'

'Yes, there was such an "old spinster," in the north of Scotland, whom I hadn't seen since I was a child in petticoats. She had petted me then, but, owing to some feud with my father, all intercourse between us had ceased even before my mother's death. Was she accessible?'

'North of Scotland,' quoth Charlie, 'very good indeed. "Loved you when a boy," ably worked by a pleader like you—it is just the thing. "North of Scotland:" has she any salmon up at her place? By Jove! I feel 'em bite already. We are as safe as trivets.'

I can't say I exactly shared Charlie's exhilaration: but then I was Blondin, and had the rope to cross, while Charlie was safe below; and if I fell, though he might sympathise, he would not feel the bruises; and, depend upon it, feeling the bruises on your own person, and feeling *for* that person, are two very different things indeed. However, our present life of retirement was not pleasant—to say the least, so I commenced operations by writing to my relative. It is needless now to write that letter again. There are so many excellent jokes one makes to oneself, after the party is over and one can't rouse the house to tell them—so many moves the spectator of a game at chess feels he could make, which are neglected. At the time, however, I considered my letter a very fair sample of its class—from a man who had kissed that celebrated Irish stone at Blarney Castle. The letter was posted by our own hands, after dusk, and a bottle of champagne drunk to its success.

'I want some dress bags,' said Charlie to me that evening; 'shall I order them?'

I muttered something to the effect that it is inexpedient to reckon the number of your brood till your eggs have escaped the casualties peculiar to eggs.

'Bother!' said Charlie. 'What an old curmudgeon you are over the tin! I wish it were *my* maiden aunt.'

'I wish it were,' I replied.

A few days passed over eventlessly, except that Charlie and I grew restless at post hours, and depressed afterwards—except that we were unsuccessfully courted by seedy-looking individuals with unshaven chins, who seemed to grow more particular in their attentions as our engagements from home increased. Being as I said, low down in my class, I forget how long the siege of Derry lasted, but I know the ships only came in just in time. Would our ship come in? and in time?

Charlie's dress bags were still in perspective, and allusions thereto rendered him touchy; but the darkest hour is that before the dawn. We had had our darkest hour, and the dawn came. We had been wandering dejectedly in the gardens, and stared at the river through the fog, without being cheered—when, on entering my rooms, I found a letter in an unknown female hand.

'Maiden aunt,' said Charlie, 'my bottle of champagne to the next cigar you have bestowed on you.'

I took no notice of him, but tore open the seal.

'"Lyringa Grove, Edinburgh."'

'Hang it!' said Charlie, 'she's removed: how about the salmon?'

www.libtool.com.cn

'"My dear Boy,

'"How I was carried back yesterday to the time when you were a child at my knee, and I teaching you your letters. Do you remember that big box, Arthur, and how you would never say anything but 'B was a butcher, and had a great dog?'

('Pleasing,' said Charlie. 'Maiden aunt in evident possession of faculties. Well——')

'"Lackaday! I have no doubt you have forgotten it. I never thought once that my favourite nephew would have let so long a time pass without a word; but as you say, 'These unhappy differences have come between us,' and prevented you seeking me out, for fear of being considered intrusive.

'"My dear boy, had you no better memory of me than that? On many accounts I wish you had made yourself known to me sooner. You know—at all events it is so—that I have no near relatives, and I hoped that you would stand in the place of one to me. When I could hope so no longer, and only think you had forgotten your old aunt, I adopted a dear young friend and connection of mine—Mary Mackenzie—(not that she had any need of adoption, in one sense; for she has a comfortable independent fortune); but we are both lonely women, and both know that riches have nothing to do with happiness—('By Jove! haven't they, old lady?' burst in Charlie)—so we have cast in our lot together, and she is a dear friend and daughter to me. My dear boy, will you come and see me? I am a foolish old woman to build castles in the air, at my time of life; but still if you *can* manage to arrange your professional duties—(Charlie, irreverently, 'Can't he just, you maiden aunt?') and will come to see me next month, it will make me happy, and bring back old times. Good-bye, my dear boy. '"Yours, &c.,

'"Martha Thoroughgood."'

'"P.S. Mary is away now, but returns next week I believe; and will be prepared to like you."'

'Oh maiden aunt—maiden aunt!' exclaimed Charlie, 'thou art shallow as thy nephew's purse.'

'Has been, Charlie. You see the times aren't over when, if some men choose to walk in a new path, they find the road laid down with gold paving-stones. But I wonder what age she is?'

'Who?—The aunt?'

'Pshaw!—Mary.'

'Mary—ah, Mary. Why, considering your female relative's powers of subtraction, and the way she alludes to her as a lonely woman, I should say not much below fifty.'

'There's a limit to chaff,' I observed, angrily, as I sat down to think of my position.

How Charlie appeased the Philistines, I do not exactly know, but they were appeased for the time.

Unshaven chins left off their craving for our society, while Charlie Blake took pleasure in openly parading in regions before marked dangerous, with the graceful ease and assurance of a man who has 'come in' for what he has given up expecting. I say Charlie Blake did this. As for me, I had never felt less exhilarated. Had the golden image in the future only appeared to me in the form of my aunt, I should have been happy indeed; but one's prospects, to hang on a woman one had never seen!

I was sitting in my rooms, one day, trying to see a bright future through the medium of my pipe, when a letter was brought to me in the writing of my aunt. A wild rush at the seal, and the contents were soon my own. The old lady thought I might like to see a photograph of her young friend Mary Mackenzie, and so she sent me one which had been taken by a friend.

Now, at the time of which I speak cartes de visite were not; no benignant statesmen with extended forefinger on heavy volume; no smiling Spurgeons at home, or mighty foreign powers displaying quite touching proofs of affection to their families, might be bought for prices

not worth mentioning, to repose under cover of gay moroccos on drawing-room tables.

These things were yet to be. So my heart beat loudly as I undid the paper in which lay my future bride.

Did the royal Harry so unclasp the miniatures of his lady loves? [I wonder, by the way, if poor Anne would have been trotted over on her useless mission, if photographs had come in?] At all events, the royal sceptre and crown were not endangered. Alas for me, my all was staked thereon!

I opened the paper! Ye powers! Could mortal in the blessed guise of woman be so ugly? This likeness represented a figure of colossal proportions as far as the knees. Her eyes, or rather her eye, for one was wanting, was of that kind commonly denominated a 'wall,' her nose was embellished by a disfiguring scar, while her mouth—had I been in the mood to think of it, it would have permitted a belief in the man who eat the church and eat the steeple. My wife!!

At this moment, Charlie Blake came in. I had heard his laugh on the staircase. He was going to some party, and the fellow had the audacity to come before me in the dress bags which he had ordered on my fortune. He had some studs, too, I noticed angrily, and a new pin with ruby eyes; and as he came up, he brought in a perfume (only to be obtained at a great expense) which made me feel, friend though he was, I hated him.

I flung the likeness of my bride at him, with a savage laugh, as he came in. He picked it up and muttered, '*Le diable!*' out of politeness, I suppose, to a lady.

'Pleasant,' I said, 'considering that is the person on the prospect of my marriage with whom you choose to dress yourself up like a man milliner.'

'*By* Jove!' said Charlie Blake again.

I hated him more than ever. I said so. I told him to send back his jewellery and his perfumes, for I was not going to be tied to a creature with one eye.

'My good fellow,' said Charlie, 'but you don't know what you're saying, we'll trust reflection will bring you to a more Christian frame of mind.' So saying Charlie strolled up to the mirror, tried on two fingers of a glove, murmured, 'I'm engaged to little Lucy for the 4th,' and left me to go to his confounded party.

How selfish men are, I reflected; and as I thought of those studs and perfumes, my wrath exploded.

I paced my room, I walked miles over my carpet, and at every square, I vowed that I would not have Miss Mackenzie. But what could I do? Debt and her Majesty's charitable institutions stared me in the face. or——and I gave Miss Mackenzie a passing salute on the carpet for being so ugly.

Charles returned at three in a provokingly good humour.

The dancing had been a success, supper good, champagne the correct thing.

'I'm glad you've been enjoying yourself,' I said, savagely, 'as it seems to me your enjoyments are limited.'

'You don't mean to say,' exclaimed Charlie, looking hard at me, 'that you are going to turn us both over?'

'Yes, I do,' I replied, 'unless *you* have a fancy to become the possessor of—' and I glanced at Miss M. on the carpet; 'if you have, take her, aunt's fortune, and all, and—bless you, my boy.'

Charlie whistled and took up the picture.

'I wish she had two eyes,' he said, thoughtfully; 'it puts a man under a suspicion.'

'She mayn't be so bad after all, I added, viewing the case more hopefully.

'It is done by the sun,' mused Charlie,' (with that belief in photographic power we had at first), 'and that can't be mistaken.'

'Oh well, after all, beauty is but skin deep,' I pursued.

'It's a good thing you hold such views, old fellow. It is simply (don't be hurt) hideous; but we'll trust, seeing this, we know the worst. Come Arthur, do your duty like a man; or stay, we've lived and suffered together, and I won't desert

you, my boy. I'll agree to toss up as to who it shall be.'

'Very well.' I grasped at the straw.

Charlie pulled from the recesses of his pocket a suspicious-looking halfpenny. The golden age had not begun with us.

'Heads,' I faltered.

'Tails,' quoth Charlie, as being more appropriate.

Up went her Majesty's current coin. Down—I felt my heart beat against the table in that moment of suspense.

All right, old fellow,' said Charlie Blake, 'you've got her.'

I looked. Heads—unmistakably heads.

'Well,' said Charlie, as I continued speechless. 'as it's settled, I suppose I may as well turn in. At all events, it's some consolation to think the young person's affections will probably be at liberty to fix themselves on you. Good night, Arthur, and pleasant dreams.

The savage left me. 'Pleasant dreams!' I tossed restlessly to and fro till my pillow scorched me. I attacked my water-jug, and again returned to my pillow, and arose, as it was probable, unrefreshed. Days passed on—the appointed hour grew near. I lost my appetite; I lost all interest in the parting of my hair; I went and played with little Tommy Smallwood at long whist for love, for five hours without a murmur. I dined with Smith, and stopped at the second glass of champagne. Altogether, I was in a fair way to alarm my friends. Some men said I had a hopeless attachment (hadn't I?); others, that I had overworked my brain (those who didn't know me); and, as I avoided my friends, so they grew tired of me in my present state. Only, Charlie Blake avoided me too, and that cut me. I might be surly to him, but still, under the present circumstances, I thought he would have stood by me. I heard him laughing with Smith on the floor below, possibly at me, and I grew hot at the idea. Wouldn't I pay his debts after my marriage? (An icy shudder crossed me.) And now that he knew I couldn't get out of it, he was basely ungrateful.

It was the evening before my departure, and I was standing helplessly regarding my portmanteau, when Charlie Blake came in.

'All ready?' he said, cheerfully. (How easy is such cheerfulness.)

'I shall be in due time,' I replied, in that funereal tone I had adopted.

'But your hair,' said Charlie, surveying me, 'and your garments, and—ahem, pardon me—your general aspect. Really you look more like some Esau than a Christian of to-day.'

A mirror opposite reflected Charlie's words.

'I am not going to act happy lover.'

'No. But won't she expect it? and so *I* must do it, with your leave.'

I stared wildly.

'Yes, Arthur,' he went on, 'this shutting yourself up and going about unshaven and unshorn, sounds better than it looks; so, craving your permission, I am going to try for the heiress.'

'But——'

He cut me short. 'My dear fellow, it's no matter of choice; one of us must do it. I am the tougher animal, and if it weren't for the aunt, I should be as right as——'

'Take my name, my identity, what you will,' I said, wringing his hand, 'and may I turn out a more satisfactory fellow to you than I have ever been to myself.'

'All right,' said Charlie, 'and now I must turn in and pack—I suppose I may take the dress bags in case my heiress dances, without exciting your ire now.'

He shut the door and left me. Did he really think his offer so light and easy? I could not tell. But who would not have a bosom friend after this?

I went to bed and slept as I had never slept since that portrait had haunted my dreams.

Here ended all personal concern of mine in that unlucky picture. The remaining portion of the story I have no wish or power to speak about, and leave it to Charlie Blake to tell in his own words.

And so I took Arthur's ticket, and the place which should have been

his in the Great Northern train, opposite an inflammatory-looking old gentleman in a fur cap, and a spinster getting on in years unmistakably, and of a most forbidding cast of countenance. I was attracted by that spinster. Would the Mackenzie be like her? Would her eyes suggest young gooseberries as unmistakably? Would she wear cotton gloves; and have as strong an appetite for tallow pies? As I made these remarks to myself—I made them and sundry others over and over again—the lady's face grew sterner and sterner. I could not keep my eyes off. At last, she requested me to hand her a corpulent umbrella, upon which I sat oblivious, and left the carriage.

A cold chill seized me. Could that have been Miss Mackenzie? I had seen her ticket, and it was marked Edinburgh. 'The last straw breaks the camel's back.' I was that camel. The idea haunted me, also, how I should be received at Lyringa Grove. I had a story to relate, but I had not acted it on the stage, and I might fail. I read 'Punch' as if it were the milliner's bill, and I the father of a family all wearing crinoline. His follies failed to make me smile.

I was uncivil to the young women at the refreshment stalls. When the old gentleman in the fur cap grew crimson with the heat, I did not offer my seat near the window. What were his feelings to mine?

At last, in the dull grey light of a foggy evening, we reached Edinburgh. Everybody got out. I got out.

'Cab, sir?' said a jolly-looking cabby, who exasperated me by his jovial appearance. Should I wait till morning? No; morning light would make things worse. I gave the address, and got in. At every slackening of speed on the part of the gaunt old horse, I felt a tremor. We drove on into the suburbs. There were trees and fields; then an iron gate was opened. We creaked over a gravel drive, and a glow of ruddy light from the windows of a good-sized house said we had arrived.

There is on record the history of a venerable mother of a family who lived in her shoe. Would that I had been acquainted with her secret, and could have retired into that residence. As it was, the entrance of myself (I'm six foot one in my boots), my portmanteau, and cabby made a considerable noise in the hall. A most highly respectable and very corpulent flunkey stood at the door, before whom, owing to the intense respectability of his aspect I suppose, I actually blushed. At this moment, a little old lady, who, by reason of a narrowness round the base, and a profusion of headgear, reminded me of a well-grown cauliflower, appeared at a door, and rushed towards me. And while I stood, doubtful of her intentions, she imprinted an anything but doubtful kiss on my chin, as the only attainable feature.

'My dear Arthur, my *dear* boy,' said the little old lady, 'how glad I am to see you here' (in parenthesis to hoary head who stood by, rubicund and serene). 'Saunders, this is my nephew, Mr. Arthur.'

What could I do? Contradict the old lady to her face. Be turned out by hoary head as an impostor, and lose all chance of my golden bride. In honour to Arthur, I could not. There was, too, a steaming odour ascending to my nostrils, resembling roast goose unmistakably. At all events, I would stay to dinner.

So with many expressions of affection, the Aunt ushered me into the drawing-room. Was my bride there? No. And Thoroughgood was again repeating her expressions of satisfaction at seeing me there—was roasting me at an enormous fire, and feared I was starving, after the fashion of old ladies, when I heard a step in the passage. A lighter step than I should have thought the foot of such a Colossus as the photograph represented would have made. Click went the door. I turned round to meet my fate, and saw, instead—not an angel with rosy wings borne on a cloud, but something slightly of the genus in the form of a young and pretty girl, with laughing blue eyes, waving light hair, and most becomingly dressed in—excuse me, ladies, whether muslin or gauze, I am unable to say.

Aunt Thoroughgood looked up and sighed. Well might she sigh. It was not policy to introduce me to such a young lady, when I was to fall in love with somebody else.

'Well, Aunt,' said the young lady at the door, 'won't you introduce me to your nephew?' She smiled so oddly that I stared. Possibly she knew about my coming for the heiress. 'Miss Murphey,—my nephew, Arthur Hamilton,' and I *was* Charlie Blake. So we went in to the roast goose in the other room. I could not regret Miss Mackenzie, with that merry little girl near me, and plenty of 'victuals to eat and to drink,' as the song says. There would be plenty of time for 'the other,' after a little flirtation with this, before I settled down.

So I enjoyed my dinner. The soup was a testimony to the principles of the Scotch cook, who put in all that was required. The fish had apparently but just left its native element; and the roast goose was everything a goose roasted should be. If I abstained from the stuffing on account of the ladies, I did not regret that abstinence. During the sweets, I looked at Miss Murphey, and yet I am anything but a ladies' man.

I might be a little absent sometimes when I ought to have answered to the name of Arthur, as the advertisements for lost dogs say. I might feel I was eating Arthur's dinner, and drinking Arthur's wine, but Arthur declined it, and really I seemed to answer the purpose so well, that I thought he was as well at the Temple.

'My dear,' said Miss Thoroughgood, surveying me intensely through her spectacles, as we stood over the fire after dinner. 'How much lighter your hair has grown! When you were a boy it used to be, nearly black, and your eyes are lighter too.'

'How very odd,' said Miss Murphey, with another little sly glance out of her eyes at my aunt. 'Do you think he's an impostor?'

An impostor, good heavens! What did the girl mean? I felt I grew red even to the roots of my whiskers, but what was singular was that Aunt Thoroughgood turned very red too.

I felt (afterwards) what a good opportunity it was for discovering myself. I think I should have done it, had not thoughts of Saunders restrained me. Imagine his being told to take down Mr. Hamilton's coat at night, and to bring up Mr. Blake's in the morning. However, Miss Thoroughgood dismissed my hair from the subject of conversation, sat down in an easy chair, and was very soon (God bless her and preserve the habit in old ladies) in the land of Nod. So Miss Murphey and I turned to each other.

'I am your cousin,' she observed, looking at me with her blue eyes. 'At least, I am Aunt Thoroughgood's once removed, though I do call her Aunt,' (whereupon I observed that we would not count the removes). Truly if Arthur's identity brought me nothing worse than this cousinship, I should be a lucky fellow, indeed. Here I demanded whether as cousins we should not address each other in cousinly fashion.

'I think you may,' said Miss Mary, working vigorously at some mechanism in her lap, after the fashion of young ladies, 'as you aren't like what I expected,' (a marvel if I were, I *thought*). I *said*, however, as if one isn't always obliged to say what one thinks to a pretty girl sitting near one in a drawing-room, 'Indeed! pray what monster did you expect?'

'Oh, not a monster at all,' said Miss Mary, 'only a very practical person, a sort of grown-up version of the little boy who hated poetry, because it was nothing to eat.'

'A sensible little fellow,' I replied (thinking we were a good deal alike after all), 'and very like a young lady to condemn one for caring for one's bread and butter.'

'Oh, I dare say it is very *sensible*' (slightly shrugging her shoulders); and 'if I were an heiress, I suppose it would be sensible of you to offer to thread my needles,' she said, laughingly. Whereupon—But this is folly. She told me that Miss Mackenzie had had a trifling quarrel with the old lady, and had gone away for a short time, but would soon be back again. 'In the meantime; Cousin Arthur, you must be

content with me.' Could I be content? Ah yes, if it weren't for Arthur, and the unpaid debts.

And then Miss Thoroughgood awoke, and we had our coffee. I watched the little figure of Miss Murphey flitting about: she did everything so prettily, even to putting the sugar in my cup, and looked as if she was flirting with the cream jug. (I did not go so far as to wish myself a cream jug that night for her sake, after the fashion of Mr. Disraeli's lovers.)

Then Miss Thoroughgood began to grow personal and disagreeable once more.

'My dear Arthur, I was thinking just now about your father.'

'Dreaming, dear, don't you mean?' put in Mary, saucily.

'No, Mary, I was not asleep; though you always persist in disbelieving me. You are like your father, Arthur' (extraordinary coincidence that I should be like Arthur's father). 'There's the same stern look about your mouth when you are grave as I saw when you thought I was asleep just now. (A decided proof she had been.) I only said, 'Indeed!' 'Your father was a stern man, Arthur, when I knew him. Is he altered?' (Confound my father.)

'But little,' I said, and turned to Miss Murphey; but she was eating her bread and butter thoughtfully.

'Has time dealt lightly with him?' pursued Miss Thoroughgood. 'Is he grey?'

Was he grey? I felt uncomfortable. I might commit myself, notwithstanding the old lady's hazy recollections, and though the questions were easy. Yet a man must be in very peculiar circumstances to feel as I felt then.

'Slightly,' I observed.

'Well, I *am* surprised,' said Miss Thoroughgood; 'I always thought he would be grey so early.'

I turned to Miss Murphey again, and was silent.

'And how has Julia turned out?' continued my tormentor.

I had heard of Arthur's sisters often, and seen one or two of them, but—he had eight—whether Julia was old or young, married or single, I had quite forgotten. Besides, what was there in Julia to turn out? What could a person turn out? Why, pretty, of course. I felt myself growing warm.

'She had turned out pretty,' I observed, prompted by my inner man.

'Pretty!' cried Miss Thoroughgood, holding up both her hands. 'Julia pretty! I said Julia.' (I was silent.) 'Well-a-day, we never know how to account for tastes. Listen.' (I was listening, heaven knows.) Here the old lady dived into her bag, brought out a letter, arranged her spectacles, and began again about that wretched Julia.

'A friend of mine writes, who saw your sisters at a ball a few weeks ago (by Jove! I hoped the correspondent didn't write often), '"Ann and Mary Hamilton looked as handsome young women as any in the room, and were much sought after. Poor Julia certainly doesn't take after the family. She is unmistakably very plain."'

'Tastes *do* differ, aunt,' said little Miss Murphey, to my great relief. 'In the meanwhile, will you take your tea, and let your nephew have his, or he will think as little of my tea as your friend does of Miss Julia's beauty. You must have a strong attachment to your family' (turning to me). 'You grew quite red when aunt said your sister was thought plain. Besides, you know she said she did not take after the family.' And she looked demurely at her tea.

It *was* disagreeable being somebody else under Miss Murphey's eyes. However, the aunt's personalities ceased. Miss Murphey's tea, though I abhor the fluid, tasted drinkable to me, and I felt tolerably happy, even though I was Charles Blake—in debt—no nearer the heiress—and wasting my time. How I wished Miss Murphey had been that golden image; and how oilily the wheels would have gone then. What a jolly little girl she was! I shouldn't object to turn Benedict with such an inducement. The next morning saw me established quite as a member of the family at Lyringa Grove. Miss Murphey looked quite as

charming as she had done under the lamplight. She was watering her flowers and feeding her canaries, as busy as that little insect whom Dr. Watts holds up for our example, when I came in. I was not going to be cheated out of my 'good-morning,' though; and waited till she put down her seed-boxes. And then the old lady came in.

I began to act dutiful nephew to her, but Mary pushed me aside, arranged the cushions, and set her up like a ninepin.

'Ah! Mary knows no one can do anything for me like she does,' apologized Miss Thoroughgood.

'Except Miss Mackenzie,' put in Mary, looking ironically at me; and again the aunt sighed. (Was it not a sigh of compassion for me?)

After breakfast, I, who can only be induced into a vehicle behind a thorough stepper—smoking allowed—actually found myself like a domestic animal, with a shawl over my arm, going into a miniature clothes-basket on wheels, which I could have carried with ease, pronged by an enormous hoop (they had just come in again), with Miss Mary beside me, holding the most absurd whip growing out of a parasol.

I couldn't drive such a ridiculous conveyance. I couldn't take reins which seemed made for a rocking-horse, so Mary took them, and drove me, while I creaked in the clothes-basket, and actually felt contented. I came back contented. After luncheon, too, I found myself scratching my hands in attempts at embedded violets in the hedges, which Miss Murphey pointed out at the foot of the banks, with the top of her parasol. It did strike me that the parasol generally aimed at those violets which were deepest in nettles; and when I returned scratched and bleeding, Miss Murphey suggested docking-leaf quite coolly as a remedy.

Still I was content. And was not this contentment dangerous? Was it not? Evening came on, and when the siesta was in process I took up my position at an heroic distance from Mary's pricker. The recollections afterwards were less troublesome, only the aunt would puzzle her head as to which of Arthur's ancestors I had derived my light hair from. 'All the family had dark,' she said, surveying me perplexed. Here Miss Mary came to my aid. 'There are mysteries in the masculine toilette,' she laughed. And so Aunt Thoroughgood's mind was relieved in supposing my hair was dyed! It was come to this!

And yet Mary's tea tasted more like nectar. I felt I could have forsworn beer and tobacco at unseemly hours, held the kettle, or walked out with a poodle in a red jacket for Mary's sake, but, alas! the grapes were unattainable.

So the days passed away. I took to the basket carriage, and found myself trying to ingratiate Mary's canaries (the feeble-minded creatures trembling and fluttering at my approach, not seeming to take to me). I also found myself looking forward to Aunt Thoroughgood's nap, and suggesting sleepy-viands to the dear old lady at dinner. She *was* a worthy soul, and did not seem to notice my conversations with Mary. I wished Miss Mackenzie would come; at least—that is, I thought it time. A letter from Arthur suggested it. He wanted to hear how I got on with the heiress. Why didn't I write? Ah! why didn't I? I had nothing to say. Hamlet had not come on yet, though the play was 'Hamlet,' and the pit was growing impatient. It was time. I said so twice that afternoon. I had written (though anything but a poet) a stanza to blue eyes in Mary's album—and very flowing lines indeed. I found myself looking at the moon before I went down to dinner, so I took myself to task; and when Mary greeted me with her sunny smile, I refrained from any answering sunshine. During dinner, I discussed the subject of drainage with Aunt Thoroughgood with the gravity of a whole Board of Health. I saw Mary elevate her pretty shoulders, and for that reason I avoided her glance, and ate my dinner like an alderman. Had I not been looking at the moon? And when a man had advanced to that stage, and the next was impossible, had he not

better pause at once? Pshaw! it was time to end this trifling.

So after dinner, when Aunt Thoroughgood had left our company for that other land so distant, I avoided Mary. I went to a distant table, and taking up a great book, I sat down to it. Did not that prove my weakness? Mary put her work by, and came to the table. She did not seem offended. Nay, she had cause for triumph, if she cared for such triumph.

'What have you there?' she said, placing her small fingers on the musty volume.

'"Abridged Edition of the Lives of Forty Scotch Divines," by Job Plasterman.'

'There! I'm sure you don't care for that. Come and play chess with me.'

I did not care for *that*, but I did not say so. However, what could a man do but rise, with musty book on one hand and pretty girl on the other. And yet I felt it was a dangerous game. That seeking in the box for the pieces, with small fingers seeking for their pieces too, followed by the importance of hiding the two pawns behind your back, and the deliberate choice (Mary and I always made a great deal of this part of the proceedings). As I say, it's a dangerous game. To-night, however, Mary made me put on all the men, chose her hand without any deliberation, and—I missed it.

'Why did you want to read?' said Miss Mary, moving her pawn.

Why did I? I could not tell her. Oxford man, and—ahem!—rising barrister though I was, I felt confused.

'Why shouldn't I read?' at length I feebly remarked, and turned her attention to the game.

'Shall you read when Miss Mackenzie comes?' persisted Mary. 'Aunt Thoroughgood heard to-day that she is coming most likely next Wednesday.'

Frantic movements on the part of the gentleman's bishop; and, goaded to desperation, he says—

'Hang Miss Mackenzie!' After all his resolutions too.

'Arthur! isn't that rude? But you don't know her—she's a very nice person.'

'I *have* seen her, Mary—Arthur—that is, I saw a likeness of her.

'Oh! Plain, isn't she?'

'Plain!' I exclaimed. 'Hideous!'

I heard a suppressed laugh, but Mary was under the table, having dropped a piece, and when she rose, it was with a vehement 'Check!' on her tongue.

I didn't see it.

'No, you never do see anything; you are very blind,' she said, laughing. 'I don't know what you will be like, when Miss Mackenzie comes; for you know what they say is blind.'

'Nothing at all appropriate,' I observed, in a surly tone, thrusting my king on to destruction.

'Ah!' said Mary, looking up; 'but you like heiresses, don't you?'

What an odious conversation to a man who had come for an heiress! I did hate prying women.

Another mad move on the part of the frantic bishop, and I was checkmated.

I would not play chess any more, I said to myself; and I did not. I ceased to coo to Mary's canaries. The basket carriage did not creak under my weight, and the pony doubtless was proportionately relieved. Was it only the pony? I did all this for two whole days. I was acting with the usual good sense of Charles Blake, Esquire. I patted that gentleman on the back. (This is figurative.) I said, 'Well done, Charlie, my boy!' but I could not raise my own spirits thereby: I still said, 'Hang Miss Mackenzie!' mentally, and looked at the moon when I was alone.

And so the day came before that one on which Mary told me the heiress was to come. We were going to a pic-nic, but I felt very low indeed. Wasn't the apple going to swing over my head for another twenty-four hours? and hadn't I to keep that great fence in view between it and me—all the time? Not all my cigar-bills, unpaid-for coats, dunning brewers, covetous and mercenary tailors, had ever preyed so upon my spirits.

I wasn't Charlie Blake. I was the little longing boy for the plum-cake, and forced to submit to the

bread and butter. What! did all little boys have butter? and wasn't I content? I cut my chin in shaving, though the sun was streaming through the windows. Even the sight of Mary in a white dress, and a hat with a bird of paradise reposing on the top, did not raise my spirits. What had I to do with birds of paradise, or with anything but the most earthly of the tribe? There was a man, too, with a great deal of red hair, who, Aunt Thoroughgood said, was much 'sought after.' He seemed, I thought, on far too intimate terms with paradise. Mary smiled, too, as if she liked him; she shook out her blue ribbons, and actually seemed pleased (girls have no discrimination) when he paid her a stupid compliment.

More people came, and I was introduced, and I bowed, and smiled, and hated them. I was to drive two girls (by courtesy) in brown, who were to be trusted—and very steady and mature they looked. Red whiskers, who rejoiced in the name of Gushington—was to drive Aunt Thoroughgood and Mary. What a fool he looked, handing her into his trap! As if she couldn't get in by herself!

The girls in brown did not belie their sober nature. Their schoolmistress (though it must have been long—very long since they required such a preceptress) might have been guarding them invisibly, and smiling in spirit; nevertheless they might have been desired a trifle more amusing. They—at least, the one on the seat beside me, was of a pleasing turn of mind, and seemed grateful for what luck had bestowed on her in the shape of myself, and the back-seat. She liked picnics? 'Oh yes.' And driving? 'Oh yes.' And a dusty road, with the sun like blazes on her head? 'Oh she didn't mind dust or the sun;'—all of which might be gratifying, but not amusing. Happy 'brown ribbons,' who could be happy in waltz or carriage, all unconscious of the feelings of thy partner! When we reached the old abbey (which I thought we never should reach), I was requested to show the brown girl a good point for sketching, and would I take a camp-stool? I was a Christian, whatever my frame of mind might be; and we sat undisturbed till a great bell sounded. Then the young lady, whose time seemed to have been spent in rubbing out, and who was now struggling with the legs of a cow figuratively on her paper, mildly asked, 'Was I hungry?' and as I thought this betokened a desire for a prolonged struggle with the cow, I gave a more truthful than polite 'Yes,' and we descended. I felt angry as I took my place on the grass. Mary told me afterwards I helped to the pigeon pie, as if I were at war with its contents; and so I was. Wasn't I Arthur's pigeon, and my own plucking just about to begin?

Mary sat opposite to me, smiling at Mr. Gushington's very poor jokes over the crackers. For my part, I see small amusement in crackers, unless indeed you happen yourself to make a particularly good remark.

However Mary pulled the crackers at one side, and red whiskers on the other, and she laughed because it wouldn't go off—and then it went off, and she laughed again, and then he read the motto, and she laughed again, and gave him the comfit. Why couldn't he pull the thing with somebody else?

I didn't enjoy it. The lady next to me, with a fixed purpose for lobster salad, was heavy. The brown ribbons reverted to how she should finish the cow after lunch, and was heavy too—while Miss Murphey opposite was not heavy, and I am not the man to look pleasantly at the cold mutton, with the hot roast at the other table spread out for somebody else. I found that champagne may be as uninvigorating as toast-and-water, and that chickens may be tender (and cut up) without a power to please in their tenderness, even though one hopes to marry an heiress shortly. I had never thought so before. I did now.

I sat long over that cheerless entertainment, until I saw an old lady eye me with suspicion, and then I got up and moved on by myself into a little wood, where—my thoughts

being in a medley that afternoon—I wished to avoid the world; so I threw myself on a bed of nettles, and called myself a fool.

'What's done, Charlie Blake,' I observed, 'can't be helped. For the future—' And then down below I saw Mary coming over the stile by herself, chopping off the heads of the flowers with her parasol. So I strolled down my bank, and met her.

'Hasn't it been pleasant,' she said (by the way, I thought her face looked very grave before she saw me—but I wasn't up to young ladies), 'and everybody charming?'

'Meaning I suppose thereby Mr. Gushington?—to me he seems an insufferable puppy.'

If ever a girl who didn't talk slang said, 'Oh, you muff!' with her eyes, Mary said so then.

'There are many things worse than puppies,' said Miss Murphey, colouring a little, and continuing to chop.

'I am down—don't hit me, Mary,' said I. 'Do you care for this red-whiskered fellow?'

'They aren't red, Arthur—but—no—I don't care for him' (a little scornfully), and we were silent.

How pretty she looked! I had made up my mind that I would go away without a word—but I could not—so I 'did it.' I told her how I had come for the sake of the heiress who was to help us, and what a poor wretch I was, with a cartload of debts hanging about me—and how before the heiress had come, she being there—I—&c., &c., and how useless it was. But though I could not make love to her, I would not stay and make it to any one else. I would leave to-night, and try if there was nothing else but an heiress who would help to roll this heavy load away from us.

Her blue eyes had a curious look in them when I paused. The worst had yet to be told.

'Arthur,' she began.

'Stay, Mary,' I said, and I felt a blush on my face, 'I am not Arthur.'

'Not Arthur—not my cousin?' She started back as if she were about to cry out 'murder,' or 'Mr. Gushington;' but looking at me as a preliminary measure, seemed to reassure her. Then I told her the rest,—how Arthur had grown ill over the photograph, and I had taken his place. How every one had greeted me as Arthur, and I had been too cowardly to face an explanation. Then I asked her if she would not accord to Charlie Blake the grace she would have given her cousin? I had freely confessed—

'And expect to be as freely forgiven, I suppose. Well, I don't see what else you can do, though it was very wrong. There is one condition, though, to the act of grace.'

'Well! What was it?'

'You will stay till Miss Mackenzie comes—for an act of penance. You are not obliged to make love to her, you know.'

'Thank you,' I said; for I confess to a feeling of disappointment at the cavalier way in which she had treated my offer. I felt piqued. What can a man offer more than his hand, even though that hand be an empty one?

She might be prudent; perhaps she deemed such a hopeless attachment not worth alluding to; still, though prudence is doubtless an estimable quality, yet a man may desire other qualities in his fair one. Something seemed to amuse her too. We were hardly out of the wood when, standing still, Mary burst forth into a peal of silvery laughter. 'I cannot help it, Arthur; pray forgive it.'

I felt angry in my heart at her; and I think Mary saw my disappointment and anger, as we silently joined the rest of the party. I was glad to get back—glad with a negative-gladness, when I put my companions again under the maternal wing. There was nothing more to be done now. I went upstairs and packed my portmanteau. This was the first time I had meddled with young ladies, and it should be the last. Oh, you wise Solomon! What a world this would be if your thoughts and your acts were the same.

I had only to say good-bye to Aunt Thoroughgood (London being unable to settle its law-suits without me would explain matters in that

quarter), and to bid that—young person farewell—who would doubtless hold out her pretty hand, smile, and go out to gather violets with that puppy, Gushington, five minutes afterwards.

www.libtool.com.cn

As I went downstairs a servant met me, not Saunders, but one of the housemaids, saying I was wanted in the library. 'Who is there?' I inquired.

'Only Miss Mackenzie, sir,' Susan replied.

'Only Miss Mackenzie!' Well really this was making a dead set at me; *she* couldn't be going to propose!

I would represent my forlorn condition in very plain terms, if I saw a chance of it. Hang it! I wished I had gone straight off. I didn't wish Arthur at the Temple now.

I went into the room, but there was no one but Mary. 'Some one told me Miss Mackenzie had come,' I said. 'Thank goodness she isn't come—I hate seeing the woman.'

'Hate seeing the woman!' said Mary, with a little smile, which I couldn't make out, and a bright colour in her cheeks. 'Are you sure she isn't here, Arthur—I mean Mr. Blake—hovering about you in the shape of an invisible spirit?'

For once in my life I stared.

'You won't notice her,' she went on, 'even though she is before you. It was not fair that you should not be Arthur, and I myself. You are not like the knight in the fairy tale, Mr. Blake, who found out the lady even after she was changed into the cat, from the depth of feeling in her mews.'

'But the photograph?' I murmured feebly, not being myself. Indeed, an infant, so to speak, might at that moment have knocked me down. 'Who was that?'

'I assure you,' she said, smiling, 'it was I—only done by an amateur.' (God bless him! I mentally added.) 'I stood too near—that made me look so gigantic, and then I moved—that deprived me of an eye.'

'We said you were like the Sphinx pyramid, Mary.'

Mary laughed. 'They said it was not like me, and so I sent it. I thought it would frighten all the crows away; and when I heard you were still coming, I thought I would rely upon it *not* being like me. I had a struggle with dear Aunty's idea of deceit. She has had many a sigh over me; but as the servants all call me "Miss Mary," I was safe; —and so—and so I will forgive you for all the pretty things you have said of me to my face, and will never do so any more.'

And then I stood before her, not knowing what to say—wasn't the prize too great?

'Mr. Blake,' said Mary, coming towards me, and shyly holding out her little white hand (which it is needless to say was soon in another larger and browner one), 'you asked me something this afternoon—shall I answer it now?—or do you still "hate the woman?"'

Did I hate the woman? No, I don't think I did. I had loved her for herself, and she knew it—so I did not go away.

* * * * *

I don't know what Arthur's feelings were when he saw my pretty bride, because I only thought about my own at that time. He had, however, a well-made coat on at my wedding, which was paid for—but—he did not dance—he sat apart, and somewhat gloomy.

I keep the ugly photograph; for I can never forget what I gained and Arthur lost by amateur photography. Here we may drop the curtain.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

AARON HILL,

DRAMATIC AUTHOR AND OPERA MANAGER

(HAYMARKET AND DRURY LANE, 1710).

From the Print by Hulsbergh.

THE LONDON OPERA DIRECTORS:

A SERIES OF CURIOUS ANECDOTIC MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL MEN CONNECTED WITH THE DIRECTION OF THE OPERA; THE INCIDENTS WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEIR MANAGEMENT; WITH REMINISCENCES OF CELEBRATED COMPOSERS AND THE LEADING SINGERS WHO HAVE APPEARED BEFORE THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

www.libtool.com.cn

By the Author of 'Queens of Song.'

FRANÇOIS XAVIER GEMINIANI.

CHAPTER II.

The King's Theatre and the Little Theatre in the Haymarket.

THE EARL OF MIDDLESEX, HANDEL'S SUCCESSOR—GALUPPI, 'IL BURANELLO'—FASHIONABLE SINGERS—VANESCHI—MONTICELLI—A FAT PRIMA DONNA—OPERA IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—SIGNOR AMICONI, SCENE PAINTER—CASTRUCCI, THE ECCENTRIC FIDDLER—VERACINI THE VAINGLORIOUS—FESTING THE GOOD-HEARTED—ORIGIN OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPORT OF DECAYED MUSICIANS AND THEIR FAMILIES—EFFECT OF THE REBELLION ON OPERATIC AFFAIRS—GEMINIANI THE ERRATIC—THE LITTLE THEATRE IN THE HAYMARKET—GLUCK—REGINELLI—THE EARL OF MIDDLESEX JOINED BY OTHER NOBLEMEN, WHO FAIL—DR. CROZA—FELICE GIARDINI—CUZZONI: THE CONSEQUENCES OF RECKLESS EXTRAVAGANCE—A DIVISION IN THE CAMP—FLIGHT OF DR. CROZA—FASHIONABLE AMUSEMENTS. [1741—1750.]

OPERA Directors, above all other mortals, refuse to profit by the warnings of their fellow-men, and persist in buying their own experience, generally at a most costly rate. Knowing the destiny from which scarcely one of their predecessors could escape, that failure is the rule, only proved by exceptional successes, they are stubborn in courting ruin.

The moment that Handel flung down his cumbrous sceptre it was eagerly snatched up by the Earl of Middlesex. Very little is extant regarding this nobleman, beyond the fact that he was manager of the Opera from the autumn of 1741 to the spring of 1748, and that he had not, apparently, been endowed, either by nature or education, with the qualities requisite to form an able director.

His lordship engaged the theatre in the Haymarket, and an almost entirely new band of singers from the Continent. He enlisted also the services of Galuppi, then a very young man. Galuppi was more frequently called Il Buranello, from the little Venetian island where he was born. When eighteen, he had produced, at Venice, an opera which had failed; but in nowise discouraged, he studied hard, and went on undauntedly until he turned the tide of fortune in his favour.

After the fashion of the time, the singers chose their own songs, from the popular compositions of the day, by Leo, Hasse, Areno, Pescetti, Lampugnani, Domenico Scarlatti; and these were 'interwoven' by Galuppi in a pasticcio called 'Alessandro in Persia.' This piece had been originally written for Lucca, some three years previously, by the Abate Francesco Vaneschi, when it was set by Paradies. The nephew of the priestly poet being in London at the time that the Earl of Middlesex's operatic reign began, was employed by him first as poet, and subsequently as assistant manager. Twelve years later, 'upon his lordship's abdication he assumed the sovereignty of the opera state,' to use Burney's pithy words.

The Opera opened October 31, 1741, with 'Alessandro in Persia,' which was represented twelve nights. The singers were Monticelli, Andreoni, Amorevoli, Signora Visconti, Signora Panichi, and Signora Tedeschi. They were all good, but not sufficiently so to insure a great success for the opera season. Angelo Maria Monticelli, the most remarkable of the men, appeared first on the stage at Rome, just ten years before he came to London. He was so graceful, and had such a perfectly beautiful face and figure, that he commenced his career by impersonating female characters, women not being permitted to go on the stage in Rome. His voice was clear, soft, and free from defects of any kind. He never hazarded a difficulty which he was not certain of being able to execute. He was an excellent actor; and had he not come while the remembrance of the magnificent talents of Farinelli, the exquisite voice and majestic grace of Senesino, and the brilliant performance and statuesque beauty of Nicolini were fresh in the public mind, he would have made a profound impression. The Visconti had a shrill flexible voice, and was more admired in rapid songs than in those requiring pathos or intensity of expression. Her excessive fat afforded ample opportunity for sarcasm and joking to the wits of the day. Lord Chesterfield was with a group of friends on one occasion when they were speaking of this prima donna; they were guessing her age, and one gentleman, supposing her to be much younger than any other singer at the Opera, said he thought she was not more than two-and-twenty. 'You mean *stone*, sir, not years?' interrupted Lord Chesterfield.

Galuppi was enabled to give a more satisfactory idea of his capacity as an original composer in an opera called 'Penelope,' written expressly for our stage by Paolo Rolli, who had written a great deal in conjunction with Handel, and who was an admired librettist. This work was dedicated to the noble impresario, Lord Middlesex. At this time, being young, Galuppi's genius was not matured, and he copied the hasty, light, and flimsy style which was the fashion in Italy, and which the solidity and science of Handel had taught the English to despise. This opera was performed only five times, 'and in examining the pieces that were printed by Walsh,' says Dr. Burney, 'it seems not to have been unjustly treated.'

In the following March (1742), another new opera was produced, entitled 'Scipione in Carthagina.' The greater number of operas in the

eighteenth century were founded on classical or mythological subjects; Didone, Phaëton, Nero, Antigone, Semiramide, Artaserse, Zenobia, Perseus, were the personages round whom the plots of the operatic pieces were linked; and these personages always appeared in all the radiance of hoops, powdered wigs, red heels, silk stockings, paste buckles, and patches. Signor Amiconi, an Italian artist of considerable talent, was the scene-painter at the King's Theatre at this time. His scenes were greatly admired, and it was acknowledged that nothing so splendid had been seen in England before his advent. Music, singing, and painting were what Lord Middlesex depended on for success, as he had no dancers. The opera of 'Scipione' was followed by several pieces, the composition of Pergolese, Hesse, and other musicians, none of which pleased, and which were generally performed only three or four times. One of Porpora's operas, 'Temistocle,' was produced in the February of 1743, for the first time in England. It was full of shakes, for which the maestro had an extraordinary fancy; and one of the airs ('Contrasto assai') suggests the idea of having been composed in a shivering fit. The singers were the same as in the two preceding seasons, with the exception of some inferior performers, the most noticeable of whom was Giulia Frasi. This singer was then young, and interesting in person, with a sweet, clear voice, and a cold, smooth style, which was just good enough to enable her to escape censure.

At the close of 1743, Galuppi returned to Italy. He was succeeded by Lampugnani, a new composer, and a very young man. Lampugnani was an agreeable composer, and wrote in a gay, lively style. Critics have expressed various opinions of his merits, agreeing only in condemning his works as flimsy. He imitated the style of Hasse in his airs and choruses. The first piece which he brought out in London was 'Roxana,' which was followed in January by 'Alfonso.' Both these operas had a graceful gaiety of imagination, and evidenced an elegant taste, peculiarly novel in their day, but lacking grandeur and richness of harmony.

Veracini then led the band. He had taken the place of conductor alternately with Festing, from the time that Pietro Castrucci was dismissed. Castrucci had come to England with Lord Burlington in 1715, and was one of the most eccentric men that ever lived: he was, in truth, regarded as little less than mad, although he was a brilliant performer on the violin. He had succeeded Corbett as first violin at the Opera, about 1718, and led the orchestra for many years. When he grew old, Handel wished to displace him for a younger man, John Clegg. Castrucci, who was in needy circumstances, and not in the least conscious of any failure in his hand, was unwilling to relinquish his post, when Handel, in order to convince him of his inability to occupy it, composed a concerto in which the second concertino was so arranged as to demand an equal degree of skill with the first; the second concertino he gave to Clegg, who, when the piece was being performed, afforded such proofs of his superiority, that poor Castrucci was forced to yield up his place, not to Clegg, however, but to Festing, another member of the orchestra. Castrucci detested the very name of Festing from that time; he would grow nearly insane on hearing it. A gentleman, for fun, used to address him in conversation by the name of his rival, 'Mr. Festing—I beg your pardon, Mr. Castrucci, I mean;' when Castrucci would fall into a perfect paroxysm of rage. Old, poor, and half silly, Castrucci immediately sank into oblivion, and at the age of eighty was obliged to supplicate the public for a benefit, on the score of his past services. Soon after this he died. It is Castrucci who is immortalized by Hogarth in his celebrated picture of the 'Enraged Musician.' Hogarth, previous to making his drawing, was cruel enough to collect all the noisiest street musicians and hawkers he could find, and beset the house of the poor Italian, bringing him to the window in a state of distraction

at the clamour and discord. While he was gesticulating in a perfect agony, the caricaturist made his sketch. Clegg's fate was a very terrible one. Through intense application and incessant practice, his mind became so deranged that he was confined in Bedlam. During his stay there, he was at intervals permitted to play on the violin, and attracted crowds to hear him.

Francesco Maria Veracini was born at Florence about the close of the seventeenth century. He and his contemporary, Tartini, were regarded as the greatest masters of the violin that had ever been known. They were equally skilful and scientific as executants and as composers; but whatever parallel might have been drawn between their genius, it would have been impossible to find two men of more totally dissimilar personal character. Tartini was so

VERACINI.

humble and timid that he was never happy save in obscurity; whereas Veracini could not be content unless he was in the full glow of public homage. A story is told of him, which gives such a happy illustration of his character, that, although the incident did not occur in England, it may be mentioned. It was the custom at Lucca, during the Festa della Croce (held every year on the 14th of September), for the leading professionals of Italy, vocal and instrumental, to meet. Veracini put down his name for a solo concerto; but when he entered the church where the performance was to take place, he found the post of honour occupied by Padre Girolamo Laurentii of Bologna, who, not knowing him, as Veracini had been absent some years in Poland, asked him 'where he was going?' 'To the place of first violin,' answered Veracini, haughtily. Laurentii then said that he had always been engaged to fill that post, but that if Veracini wished to play a concerto, either at vespers or during high mass, he should have a place assigned him. Veracini, without condescending to reply, wrathfully turned his back, and went to the lowest seat in the orchestra. In that part of the service in which Laurentii performed his concerto, Veracini did not play

a note, though he listened with profound attention; and being called upon, would not play a concerto, but asked the old father permission to play a solo at the bottom of the choir, desiring Lanzelli, the violoncellist of Turin, to accompany him: when he played it in such a manner as to excite the most extraordinary enthusiasm and cries of 'E viva!' in the public church. Whenever he was about to make a close, he turned to Laurentii, with an ironical smile, and called out, 'Cosi si suona per fare il primo violini!'—'This is the way to play the first fiddle!' Many absurd stories of a similar nature are related concerning the arrogance of this eminent violinist, who was usually complimented with the title 'Capo pazzo' (Crack-brain). He had travelled all over Europe, and gained a perfectly original style. The peculiarities in his performance were his bow-hand, his learned arpeggios, and a tone so loud and clear that it could be distinguished through the most numerous band in a church or theatre. He had been for some years in the service of the King of Poland, and was for a considerable time at different courts of Germany. He had visited England when Farinelli was here, when he had composed several operas. Burney heard him lead the band at a concert in Hickford's Room, in a style he had never before witnessed.

Veracini composed an opera, 'Roselinda,' which Lord Middlesex produced after the eighth performance of 'Alfonso.' The music, wild, awkward, and unpleasant as it was, carried this work through twelve nights. As a composer, he had a certain degree of whim and caprice; but his freaks were built on a good foundation. He then composed another opera—'L'Errore di Solomone'—which was represented only twice; and 'Aristodemo,' a pasticcio. This was succeeded by another opera ('Alceste') by Lampugnani, which concluded the season.

Festing, who led the orchestra alternately with Veracini during Lord Middlesex's management, was a German violinist, and composed for his instrument. He was a pupil of Geminiani. His works are little known, having been originally sold by private subscription. To Festing belongs the principal merit of establishing the fund for the support of decayed musicians and their families. This society was founded in 1738, and took its rise from an affecting incident. Festing was seated one day at the window of the Orange coffee-house, situate at the corner of the Haymarket, when he noticed a very intelligent-looking boy, driving an ass and selling brickdust. The child was in rags, a miserable object: Festing made inquiries, and discovered that he was the son of an unfortunate musician. Filled with the deepest grief that the child of a brother professional could be reduced to such destitution, Festing determined to spare no effort to rescue the unhappy little vagrant. He consulted his friend Dr. Morice Green; and these worthy men soon succeeded in establishing a fund towards the support of decayed musicians and their families. Handel took a great interest in the society: he gave a benefit for it in 1739, when 'Alexander's Feast' was performed, and he not only gave the house gratis, but composed and played a new concerto. Heidegger made a present of twenty pounds to defray incidental expenses on this occasion.

Handel, finding the theatre in the Haymarket unoccupied in November, 1744, engaged it for the performance of oratorios, which he began November 3, and continued, with heavy loss, till the 23rd of April, 1745.

Soon after this, Veracini quitted England. He was shipwrecked, and lost all his effects, including his two Steiners, esteemed the best in the world. In his usual light way, he called one of these instruments St. Peter and the other St. Paul.

The rebellion in 1745 caused the Opera-house to be shut up. A popular prejudice existed against the performers, who, being foreigners, were chiefly Roman Catholics. An Opera was opened, April 7th, at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, under the direction of Francesco Geminiani. Prince Lobkowitz, who

was at this time in London, and who was passionately fond of music, attended all the rehearsals, with the celebrated and mysterious Count Germain. Pasquali led; 'and I remember,' says Dr. Burney, 'at a rehearsal, Geminiani taking the violin out of his hands, to give him the style and expression of the symphony to a song, which had been mistaken when first led off. And this was the first time I ever saw or heard Geminiani.' The opera was a pasticcio, called 'L'Incostanza Delusa.' Signora Frasi, and Signora Galli — a bold, masculine-looking woman, who performed the first male part—were the principal singers. Count St. Germain composed several new songs for the piece, one of which, 'Per pietà bell' idol mio,' sung by Signora Frasi, was encored every night.

Geminiani—a little man, about sixty-five, with a pleasing face, sallow complexion, black eyebrows, and always dressed in blue velvet richly embroidered with gold — was perhaps one of the most singular personages ever heard of in musical history. He was a native of Lucca, and had come to England in 1714; in a short time he had become known to a large circle of amateurs, who were captivated by his exquisite performance, remarkable more particularly for tenderness and pathos. Many noblemen desired to have the honour of being his patron; but he seemed to attach himself most closely to the Baron Kilmansegge, who had been chamberlain to George the First when Elector of Hanover. In 1716 Geminiani published and dedicated to the Baron twelve solos for the violin. His patrons and pupils were so delighted with this work, that they averred it was impossible to decide whether Geminiani was more to be admired as a skilful performer or a fine composer. 'With a due attention to himself,' observes Hawkins, 'there is no saying to what degree he might have availed himself of that favour which his merits had found in this country.' Baron Kilmansegge was so impressed with respect for his abilities, that he endeavoured to obtain for him the patronage of the King. He mentioned Geminiani to his Majesty, as an exquisite performer, and the author of a work, which he placed before the King, who looked over it, and was so pleased with the music that he expressed a wish to hear some of the pieces performed by the composer. The Baron immediately communicated the King's pleasure to Geminiani. The eminent violinist, though glad to obey such a command, told the Baron that he should like to be accompanied on the harpsichord by Mr. Handel, as no one else could play to satisfy him. Baron Kilmansegge, anxious to give his *protégé* every advantage, respectfully intimated this wish to the King, who ordered that both masters should attend at St. James's. The Baron was very much pleased by this, for he had been watching for an opportunity to reinstate Handel in the King's good graces ever since the performance of the celebrated Water Music, when his Majesty had slightly relented towards his former favourite. The two musicians attended at the palace, when Geminiani justified the praises which had been lavished on him by his kind-hearted friend, and Handel succeeded so far in allaying the anger of King George that he obtained a pension of two hundred a year, in addition to one for the same amount which had been settled on him by Queen Anne. Geminiani was obliged to rely for his income on the bountiful patronage of his friends among the nobility, and the presents and the profits which he gained by teaching, being, fortunately for himself, held in such esteem that he always fixed his own terms. He was seldom heard in public during his long residence in England. He was never engaged to conduct at the Opera, because, from some curious lack of steadiness, and from being so wild and careless a timist, he threw a band into the utmost confusion whenever he attempted to direct. The absorbing passion of his life was painting. To indulge his enthusiastic love for pictures, he neglected his proper studies and the exercise of his talents, involving himself in straits and difficulties

which the slightest degree of prudence would have taught him to avoid. To gratify his taste, he bought pictures, and to supply his wants, he sold them. The result of this irrational system was that he suffered from continual distress and poverty. With the object of securing immunity from arrest, poor Geminiani was fain to avail himself of the protection which the nobility were privileged to give their servants. Being on a visit at the house of the Earl of Essex, one of his pupils, he persuaded his lordship to enrol his name in the list of his domestics. He soon had an opportunity of testing the validity of his claim to security; for he was arrested by a creditor for a small sum, and thrown into the Marshalsea. Geminiani sent a note, through one Forest, an attorney, to a gentleman in Lord Essex's family, who showed the message to the Earl, and was directed to go to the prison and demand Geminiani as the servant of the Earl of Essex. This was done, and Geminiani was set at liberty. It might be imagined that, being perpetually in debt, and harassed by duns, he would have been glad to accept a regular situation, with a fixed income, on any terms; but, although careless and prodigal, Geminiani was not without principle. In 1727, the place of master and composer of the state music in Ireland was vacant by the death of John Sigismund Cousser, a German musician of eminence. The Earl of Essex, by the influence of Lord Percival, obtained a promise of the place from Sir Robert Walpole, which he offered to Geminiani, telling him that his difficulties were now at an end, for that they had provided for him an honourable employment, suited to his profession and abilities, and which would afford him an ample provision for life. Unfortunately, on inquiring into the conditions of the office, Geminiani found that it was not to be held by a Roman Catholic; he therefore declined it, alleging as the reason that he was a member of the Romish Church, and that though he had never made any great pretensions to religion, the thought of renouncing, for the sake of worldly prosperity, the faith in which he had been baptized, was what he could in no way answer to his conscience. As Geminiani thus positively refused the place, it was bestowed on Mr. Matthew Dubourg, a young man who had been one of his pupils, and who was a distinguished performer on the violin. At this period Geminiani was at the height of his fame. He had in 1726 published his opera terza, consisting of six concertos for the violin, the last of which was looked upon as one of the finest compositions of the kind in the world. He was considered to be without a rival in his profession; but he benefited very little by the profits that accrued from the publication of his works. The manuscript of his opera secunda was surreptiously obtained by Walsh, who was about to print it, when the notion struck him that it might be an advantage to have the corrections of the author. He wrote to Geminiani, giving him the alternative of correcting the work, or having the mortification of seeing it appear before the public with such faults as would seriously injure it. At first Geminiani was in a passion at this insult, and rejected it with scorn; he instituted a process in the Court of Chancery for an injunction against the sale of the book, but Walsh compounded the matter, and the work was published under the supervision of the composer. The opera terza he parted with for a certain sum to Walsh, who printed it, and in an advertisement gave the purchaser the satisfaction of knowing that he had come honestly by the copy.

The speculation into which Geminiani entered at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket was a complete failure. He was utterly ignorant of the business of the orchestra, and had not the least conception of the labour and unwearied attention required to instruct vocal and instrumental performers, nor did he understand anything of the practical details of operatic business. The performances did not continue more than nine or ten nights; and this was Geminiani's first and last attempt at playing the perplexing part of Opera

Director. It is difficult to conjecture what could have suggested to him the idea of undertaking it.

About fifteen years later, Geminiani visited Ireland, to pass some time with his pupil and friend Dubourg. He went for a sojourn of some weeks with another pupil, Squire Coote (afterwards Lord Bellamonte), at Coot-hill, in the north of Ireland. Here a ridiculous adventure befel him. Mr. Joseph Younger, an actor, was then on a summer excursion with a company of itinerants, who were in a very impoverished state, and he informed Mr. Coote of their pitiable condition, when that gentleman ordered a play to be performed in a stable the next evening for their benefit. Geminiani was persuaded by Mr. Coote to attend the entertainment at the rural theatre. When the little company assembled they found, to their dismay, that they were without a musician, and they were consulting as to what should be done, when, to their joy, a little girl appeared, leading a blind man, who carried a 'crowdy'—a species of rude violin—under his coat. He was immediately engaged, and placed on a stool behind the scenes. After twanging his instrument, to put it in tune, he drew from the strings a series of horrible discords. All eyes turned instinctively to Geminiani, who stopped his ears, and even then writhed and groaned with torture. The poor fiddler, being informed by some wags behind the scenes that the greatest violinist in the world was in the pit with Squire Coote, and was in raptures with the excellence of his playing, became more energetic. The great musician sprang from his seat, his features distorted with convulsive agony at the harsh grating 'torn and rasped from the vilest of instruments,' and implored Mr. Coote to order the carriage to take him away. The young squire, in ecstacies with the fun, refused to comply with his request; and the fiddler, hearing the shouts, the clapping of hands, the roars from every part of the house, fancying that he was creating a marvellous sensation, played the louder, especially when he was told that the squire was delighted with his performance. At last the squire's fits of laughter became so alarmingly violent, that his mother commanded the fiddler to terminate his performance, on pain of her weighty displeasure; so Geminiani was relieved. The bell rang, the curtain drew up, and Younger, in the character of Lord Townley (in the 'Provoked Husband'), was discovered seated at a table. His soliloquy being finished, Lady Townley entered, when he should have said, 'Going out so soon this morning, madam?' but an unforeseen accident broke the thread of his discourse. There was no raised stage, in consequence of the place not affording space for such a convenience, and the ground was a new-laid malt-house floor. When the actor attempted to advance towards his lady, the high heels of his theatrical shoes stuck in the new-made floor, and so tenacious was the clay, that although he extricated himself, 'he was obliged to leave his shoes fixed in the mire, until with might and main he compelled the earth to yield up his property.' In utter confusion he ran off the stage, so furious that he said he would have had the greatest satisfaction and pleasure in kicking Lady Townley out of the stable, horsewhipping his sister, the mild Lady Grace, and in pulling his friend Manly by the nose. This ludicrous accident caused the performance to be suspended for some time. Even Geminiani forgot his own misfortunes, and joined in the shouts of laughter. When Younger returned he was so irate that every smile he detected on the countenances of the audience appeared to be specially directed against himself.

On returning to Dublin, a fatal mishap befel Geminiani. He had devoted some years to composing an elaborate treatise on music; but a female servant—recommended to him, it is said, for the purpose—treacherously abstracted the manuscript from his chamber and it was never recovered. Unable to repair his loss, Geminiani pined away, and soon after died.

The arrival of Gluck was the principal event which distinguished the season of 1746. His father was

master of the chase to Prince Lobkowitz, and as the prince was at this time in London, it is probable that he partly induced Gluck to come over in 1745. January 7, 1746, was produced the 'Caduta de' Giganti,' which was performed before the Duke of Cumberland, in compliment to whom the piece was written and composed. Gluck was then thirty-two. He was not very prepossessing in aspect, being terribly pitted with small-pox, and exceedingly coarse in figure and face. At rehearsal he was perhaps one of the most curious-looking gentlemen imaginable. In character he was frank and open, but hot and choleric. His impatience knew no bounds when his airs were not executed in the style and expression in which he composed them. 'You sing that air very *loud*,' said he one day bluntly to a prima donna, 'but don't flatter yourself that you sing it very well.' He was thoroughly obstinate and unyielding, and always pursued his way amid difficulties which would have been insuperable to anybody else. During his residence in London he associated much with Dr. Arne and his wife—formerly Miss Brent, a popular opera singer—who exercised a most beneficial influence on the simplicity of

FELICE GIARDINI.—(Page 411.)

his productions. The singers in his 'Caduta de' Giganti' were Monticelli (who left England at the end of this season), Jozzi, and Ciacchi, with Signore Imer, Frasi, and Pompeati, afterwards better known under the name of Madame Cornelie. The company was an excellent one, yet the new dances by Auretti and the charming Violetta were much more applauded than the singing. Violetta, afterwards Mrs. Garrick, was born at Vienna, but she looked infinitely more of an Englishwoman than a German. She was exceedingly dignified, and had a peculiarly graceful walk. Gluck's genius, naturally so great, was yet immature; the piece was not a very good one, and it ran only five nights. He then brought out one of his former operas, 'Artamene,' which was performed ten nights. An opera rarely ran more than ten or twelve nights at that period. When 'Artamene' was withdrawn, Gluck arranged a pasticcio, 'Piramo e Tisbe,' a selection of the most ad-

mired airs from his other works; but as the pieces, when thus collected, were totally inapplicable to the scenic representation, they inevitably lost all their beauty, and the public were greatly disappointed. Soon after the production of this pasticcio, Gluck quitted England, much astonished to find that those airs which had been most effective in the operas for which they were originally composed, were tame and flat when reproduced with other words. Gluck had hitherto followed the then fashionable style and taste of the Italian opera; yet he was conscious of its defects, and felt how little his music, as a whole, could lay claim to real dramatic merit. Indeed Handel declared that his works were detestable. The chief obstacle to the attainment of true dramatic perfection by the composer was the empty and disconnected character of the poetry. It was not till he accidentally made the acquaintance of a man who had the boldness and energy to strike into an independent path as a librettist, that Gluck was inspired to do the same as a musician.

In the autumn of 1746, Reginelli first appeared on the London Opera stage, in a pasticcio called 'Annibale in Capua.' He was an old but great singer; his voice, as well as person, was in ruin. He was now over fifty years of age; his voice, a soprano, was cracked, and in total decay; his figure was tall, raw-boned, and gawky; yet there were fine remains of an excellent school in his taste and manner of singing. He had some refinement in his embellishments and expression 'which cannot be described,' says Dr. Burney, 'and which I have never heard from any other singer. In a cantabile his taste, to those who had places near enough to hear his riffioramenti, was exquisite.' Unfortunately, the numerous imperfections of his voice and figure disgusted those who could hear only the worst part of his performance. The rest of the singers this season were very indifferent, consequently there was nobody to supply Reginelli's deficiencies. The singers were Borosini, Triulzi, and Ciacchi, with Pirker, a German woman, of small abilities, and Signore Casarini and Frasi, then in an inferior class.

Two new composers came to England at the close of 1746, Paradies, a pupil of Porpora, and Terradellas, Terradeglas, or Terradeglias. They were very unfortunate in not finding singers capable of performing their works. Terradellas was especially clever, and so sensitive about his productions, that he died at Rome in 1751, of grief at the bad success of one of his operas.

The Earl of Middlesex, who, till the winter of 1747, had been patentee and sole director of the Opera, was then joined by several noblemen at the beginning of that season. They opened a general subscription: the first in November, for six nights only; the second in December, for ten; the third in January, for seventeen; and the fourth in March, for fourteen nights. The season was commenced with 'Fetonte,' or Phaëton, a new opera, set by Paradies, the drama being written by Vaneschi, afterwards manager, to which was prefixed a Discourse on Operas, inscribed to the Earl of Middlesex. November, 1747, the Little Theatre in the Haymarket was opened by some unemployed or discontented performers, who brought out an opera entitled 'L'Ingratudine Punita.' After the second night, however, the speculation was abandoned.

Reginelli was still first male singer, and Signora Galli, who had made a favourable impression in Handel's 'Judas Maccabaeus,' was leading female performer. Early in 1748, during the last year of the reign of Lord Middlesex, Gaetano Guadagni arrived in England. He was a wild and careless singer, though he had a full and well-toned voice. He attracted the notice of Handel, who assigned him the parts in his oratorios of 'Samson' and the 'Messiah' originally written for Mrs. Cibber. He remained for several years in London, during which time he was more remarkable for singing English than Italian. When he played in an English opera called the 'Fairies,' Garrick took much pleasure in forming him as an actor. He had a

noble-looking, elegant figure, and a handsome and intelligent countenance; his attitudes were so full of grace and dignity that they would have been excellent studies for a sculptor. He had a delicious voice and irreproachable taste. His temper, unfortunately, was capricious, obstinate, and unyielding; he was perpetually quarrelling with the manager, his fellow-singers, and the public, and involving himself in difficulties, though he was lavishly generous and very good-natured towards those whom he liked. Soon after his arrival, Cuzzoni, now grown old, poor, and miserable, worn down with infirmities, her once magnificent voice grown thin and cracked, reappeared upon the scene of her former triumphs. She was engaged at the King's Theatre to sing in the opera of 'Mithridate,' composed by Terradellas, but she disgusted those who came anticipating pleasure.

The noble directors found themselves considerable losers by their speculation in the Opera, and obliged to make up all deficiencies in the shape of salaries and general expenses. The season wore on heavily, and the Earl of Middlesex was again a loser to a large amount. May 14 the house was shut up, although three popular operas had been tried.

When the Earl of Middlesex relinquished the Opera management, Dr. Croza came into possession. Like his predecessor, he has left no records of his life.

In the spring of that year there arrived in England a young musician, who was destined to mark a new era in the history of instrumental music in this country. This was Felice Giardini. He was then thirty-three, and he had acquired a splendid reputation on the Continent. His first appearance in public was at a benefit concert for Cuzzoni, May 18, at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket. There were very few people present, as nobody cared about the dilapidated old ex-prima donna, who had besought public assistance in her distress; yet when Giardini played a solo of Martini of Milan's composition, 'the applause was so long and loud,' says Dr. Burney, 'that I never remember to have heard such hearty and unequivocal marks of approbation at any other musical performance whatever.' The doctor had met him the night before at a private concert, with Guadagni and Signora Frasi, at the house of an amateur named Franks, who was himself one of the best dilettante performers on the violin at that time. 'We were all equally surprised and delighted with the various powers of Giardini, at so early a period of his life; when, besides solos of his own composition, of the most brilliant kind, he played several of Martini's in manuscript, at sight, and at five or six feet distance from the notes, as well as if he had never practised anything else. His tone, bow, execution, graceful carriage of himself and instrument; playing some of my own music, and making it better than I intended, or had imagined it in the warm moments of conception; and, at last, playing variations extempore, during half an hour, upon a new but extraordinary kind of birthday minuet, which accidentally lay on the harpsichord; all this threw into the utmost astonishment the whole company, who had never been accustomed to hear better performers than Festing, Brown, and Collet.'

After her unprofitable concert, the wretched old singer—poor Cuzzoni, erst the flattered and admired prima donna, who had received the homage of all Europe, had defied Handel, thrown London into a fever, beheld the rank and fashion of the haughtiest country in the world at her feet, seen the dress of one of her favourite characters adopted as a uniform by the fair and youthful aristocracy of England, insolently refused to accept princely salaries, and who had recklessly flung herself into all kinds of extravagancies and eccentricities and audacities—poor improvident Cuzzoni retired to Italy, there to drag on a pitiable existence by making buttons, until she expired in a public hospital.

Giardini led the Opera band, into which he introduced new discipline, and a new style of playing, far superior in itself and more congenial with

the poetry and music of Italy than the languid manner of his predecessor, Festing. A dramatic composer named Ciampi came almost immediately after Giardini's arrival. His works were indifferent, and full of commonplace passages. During the season nothing of any importance was produced, nor were there any singers of distinction, with the exception of Guadagni and Signora Frasi—and the former was still young, and to a great extent unfinished, while the latter was not held in much estimation. At the beginning of the next season, November, 1749, there was a schism at the theatre, and the composer, with the principal singers, quarrelled with Dr. Croza, quitted his establishment in a huff, and erected their standard at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, where they performed a new comic opera, set by Ciampi, called 'Il Negligente,' nine times. Dr. Croza, with his remaining staff, brought out a burletta at the end of January—'Madama Ciana,' composed by Latilla in 1744 for Venice, where it had achieved a brilliant success; but here it was so frigidly received that it did not survive the second night. Almost all the comic operas of that period, when transplanted from Italy to the colder clime of England, failed. Dr. Burney ascribes the reason to 'our natural aversion to being told what we should admire;' but it is more probably to be found in the simple cause that the light, local fun of one country is not to be understood or appreciated by the natives of another, as is proved by the almost utter impossibility of conveying a just idea of the jokes and good sayings of a foreign nation; for when translated or explained they are either given in a different form or lose their zest.

Several other pieces were produced; but, although Guadagni and Frasi sang in them, they failed one after another.

Dr. Croza, finding that the dark cloud which had obscured the operatic atmosphere for four years would not disperse, determined to rid himself of his responsibilities in a very summary manner. April 7, 1750, he took a personal benefit, and then ran away, leaving the performers and innumerable tradespeople and others largely in debt. He disappeared altogether; and an advertisement was inserted in the 'Daily Advertiser,' May 15, signed by Henry Gibbs, a tea merchant in Covent Garden, offering a reward of thirty pounds to any one who would secure his person. This event put an end to operas of all kinds for some time.

Among fashionable musical entertainments then in vogue was the Ridotto, first introduced in 1722. It consisted of a selection of songs—sung chiefly by Senesino, Baldassari, Salvai, and Mrs. Anastasia Robinson. On the conclusion of the concert, the performers on the stage joined the company in the pit by means of the bridge that connected the two, which was the signal for the commencement of a ball: this terminated the amusements of the evening. Ranelagh Gardens at Chelsea were built and opened for musical performances in 1742. They were the original speculation of Mr. Lacy, joint patentee with Garrick in Drury Lane Theatre. They were prettily planned, and extended down to the Thames; a superb orchestra, from which concerts of vocal and instrumental music were given, was erected in the centre of a capacious rotunda, with boxes for refreshment in the interior, in which part of the company sat, while the rest promenaded in full dress before them.

E. C. C.

NOTES DRAWN ON THE AVON BANK FOR GENERAL CIRCULATION.

WHEN these pages first meet the public eye, the festivities with which it is intended to celebrate the completion of three hundred years from the birth of Shakespeare will be at their height. Thousands of visitors will—if the inhabitants of Stratford be not grievously disappointed—have poured into that quiet town, intent on demonstrating their reverence for the memory of our national poet by all manner of loud talking, by earnest eating and drinking, by play-acting, music, and dancing,—in short, by availing themselves of all those means of making merry and enjoying themselves which are being carefully provided, after the fashion in which from time immemorial the English people have worshipped the objects of their adoration, burning grateful incense always in the proportion of one to the idol and two to themselves.

But of all those who by road or rail, afoot or mounted, will thus go pilgrimaging to the poet's land, it is not probable that any one will reach Stratford by the mode of transit which first conveyed me there; for Stratford at that time had no railway, or at least if it had one the people of Stratford refused to admit the fact, or to call it anything but a tramway. And by this tram from the village of Moreton-in-Marsh, some fifteen miles away, the present writer first made his way to the Shakespearian shrine. His recollections of that ride are a curious combination of the impressions made by travelling by coach and travelling by rail. The journey was performed outside an ordinary railway carriage which had been adapted to the necessities of horse-traction. It was fitted with box for driver, and seats beside him for passengers. Attached to the carriage in front was a platform, on which the sagacious horse (the only locomotive used on the Stratford and Moreton Railway) mounted when it had drawn our carriage to the top of an incline, thus escaping being tripped up as we descended at a rattling good speed. The Inspectors of the Board of Trade not having discovered this tramway, the occurrence or non-occurrence of accidents was left chiefly to the goodness of Providence. When we came to the foot of the incline the guard applied his break as tightly as he could, we all, to the best of our individual capacities, held on to our seats, and if we had taken firm hold we thus managed to avoid being pitched off head-foremost. When the carriage came to a stand, the horse dismounted and drew us along as before. There was a tunnel too, on approaching which the driver was kind enough to suggest that such of the outside passengers as thought it likely they would have any further use for their brains should duck their heads as low as possible, and carry their hats in their hands. And thus, following chiefly the course of the river Stour, we wound very pleasantly through shady lanes where the high hedgerows, forming a grateful screen from the hot sun, could be reached by the hand on either side. Or we ran along the public highway, not separated from it by any fence, stopping now and then to take up or set down a wayfarer or to refresh our thirsty selves with beer. At what pace we went, or whether that pace would be most approximately calculated in miles to the hour, or hours to the mile, we hardly know. It was all so very pleasant, and seemed to last so long,—we are of opinion that, except on the break-neck inclines, no great despatch was either sought after or obtained, and it would generally have been quite safe to get down and walk a little. There was always pleasant matter for speculation, too, as to what county we were in at that particular moment. For, starting in Gloucestershire, we found ourselves presently in Worcestershire, forthwith in Warwickshire, then for another breathing space in Worcestershire, anon again in Gloucestershire, back

into Worcestershire, thence once more into Gloucestershire, until at last the graceful spire of Stratford rising before us, we trundled across the beautiful Avon, and ended our journey in Warwickshire,—the shires in these parts being intermixed very singularly, and we having in our short journey made no less than seven changes of this kind. Since then we have visited Stratford many scores of times, having, in fact, come to be almost a townsman of that place, but never again have we journeyed, or shall we journey there so pleasantly. The tramway, it is true, still exists, and is worthy the attention of all archæologists; but passengers to Stratford no longer pass over its ancient, perilous rails. It exists only as a superseded idea. Its modest glories have paled before those of the modern and quite uninteresting railways which have pierced Stratford from the north and from the south.

So that our visitor does reach Stratford, however, it matters but little in what way. We take it for granted that he, coming amongst us as a stranger at this special time, has in reality but one idea connected with the place he is visiting. With him 'Stratford-upon-Avon' is not so much a topographical name as a personal one. To him Stratford and Shakespeare are convertible terms, as they are to nineteen-twentieths of the people who read books. All that we know of Shakespeare the man is so dim and shadowy that after we have put together all the items of knowledge which the research of centuries has been able to amass, we seem to have got but one great central fact by which to hold firmly,—that it was here, namely, here in this very town, that Shakespeare lived, and wrote, and died. And it is certain that all who go to Stratford with this one fixed idea will be likely to depart with it more firmly rooted than ever. They will, it is true, have realized to themselves that Stratford is demonstrably something more than a name;—that it is an actual place still existent on the face of the earth, with latitude and longitude of its own;—a real English town made up of streets and houses extremely like those of other English towns;—nay, that it is blessed even with a mayor and corporation, with a local board of health, a vestry, a tax-gatherer, a bellman, a policeman, a pair of stocks,—with all, in short, that marks an advanced stage of civilized society and stamps the town a substantial prosaic fact, with no more of myth about it than there is about Hackney or Brentford. But over and above all this we venture to predict there will be the old feeling stronger than ever that Stratford is not the name of a place but the alias of a man. All that the visitor sees around him,—all that he hears,—all that he reads,—all that is done will have relation more or less directly to this man. He will observe how the people of this little town have exerted themselves to erect an elegant pavilion to seat five thousand people,—have built it surely with credit to the town and to the local architects,—have abandoned all other pursuits for the sake of celebrating with the greater honour, according to their lights and to the degrees of wisdom with which they are blessed, this great national festival. Behind this fact, and serving as an effective background to bring all into bolder relief, he will remember that Stratford, viewed in relation to this festivity, is the centre, not of England only, not even of Europe only, but we may say without magniloquence, of the whole world. That in all the busiest cities of England there are gatherings more or less enthusiastic in celebration of this tercentenary day;—that in Germany, in France, in America, in far-off India;—wherever the English language is read or spoken, companies of men are assembled, proud to call themselves countrymen of Shakespeare;—proud, if not his countrymen, of their power to read his words,—and that in all these places, and amongst all these men, there is a disposition to turn and look in one direction, and that, as the Moslem turn and bow towards Mecca, these are saying from time to time how they wish they could look in upon the doings at Stratford.

And if the stranger be of a sanguine, enthusiastic disposition he

may persuade himself that here at last he has come upon an intellectual Utopia, where he has found a prophet who has honour amongst his own people, and a people who rightly appreciate and glory in the distinction that attaches to their home. Let him attemper these beautiful ideas, however, before he leaves. They are too pleasing to be enjoyed without some alloy. 'We people of Stratford-upon-Avon are not, as a rule, more effusive or sentimental than you people of 'Stratford-atte-Bowe.' We pass the birthplace itself without so much as looking up at it. When we meet over our glass and our pipe our talk is of heifers and tegge, of the price of beans and oats, of the prospect of a railway being made through the neighbouring parishes, of anything, in short, rather than of Shakespeare. From the Forest of Arden, from Wilmcote, from Snitterfield, from Welford (where there is to this day an actual may-pole still to be seen), from 'drunken Bidford,' from 'haunted Hilbro',' from 'dancing Marston,' we jog to market at Stratford, never thinking that these are classic names. Charlcote, with its fine old house, with its river flowing tranquilly as it flowed three hundred years ago, with its park (scene, as is so persistently and agreeably believed, of the apotheosis of poaching) —with all its associations, is no ground of romance to us. It is merely the seat of Squire Lucy, who drove past just now, and whose mare we thought was going a little stiff on the off leg,—who is not at all ashamed to bear the name and to be of the family of him who has with one consent been identified as the justice who is best known by a name evidently not given him on account of his wisdom. When the tourist joins us at our market dinner we know him at once. And when he attempts to turn the conversation into a Shakespearian channel his failure is often signal. 'Known to Americans as Washington Irving's hotel,' he will say, reading the headline of our host's hotel bill. And then he asks us how it comes to be so known. We tell him 'Because Washington Irving once stayed here for a week,—you will see his room on the other side the passage,—you will see a fire-poker on which is engraved "Geoffrey Crayon's sceptre," —you will see old William the waiter, who will tell you all about it.' And then he withdraws to the other side of the passage. and the conversation reverts to the subject of crops or cattle. Nay, here are even those amongst us who speak irreverently of the coming celebrations. 'Well, Mr. B——,' we said but yesterday, 'and what do you think of all these preparations; — taken all your tickets?' And Mr. B——'s reply was one which we fear will move England to indignation—'Tom-foolery,' he said, 'a lot of tom-foolery.' But of course Mr. B—— is in a minority, though hardly, we believe, in a minority of one.

Nor, indeed, are all the strangers who look in upon us, strangers who come thinking of Shakespeare only. Frequently there are cheap trips to Stratford. Such a one, on Easter Monday just now passed, brought us from Birmingham and Staffordshire about a thousand people. Of these but little over a hundred visited the house in which Shakespeare was born, and only about half a hundred went to look at his tomb. It should be explained, however, that there were unusual counter-attractions. It happened that on this particular day the basins of the canal were empty and a number of workmen were engaged clearing them of mud. To watch so interesting an operation from two to three hundred of the visitors stood on the wharves for hours. They rewarded with vociferous applause the lucky captor of any eel or other fish which had not succeeded in burying itself. They were not deterred even by the pelting rain from supporting with their presence these industrious labours and researches. It is quite possible, therefore, that if the basins had not happened to require mudding, or if there had been fewer little fishes for the boys to hunt, more of the visitors might have found time for Shakespeare.

During the tercentenary festivals it is not likely that similar distractions will arise. Visitors will be free to surrender themselves to the more

legitimate attractions of the town and its neighbourhood. In the intervals of banqueting, theatricals, and concerts, they will pay due oblations at the local shrines, and make patient pilgrimages from scene to scene. Lest they should not be provided with a suitable guide-book, we make quotations from the 'Visitors' Guide to Stratford-upon-Avon,' as it appears week by week in our local newspaper, 'The Stratford-upon-Avon Chronicle;'—for we are to this day a literary people, and support two weekly papers here. The principal points of attraction are described as follows:—

'Shakespearian Relics at Mrs. James's, corner of High Street.

'Visitors are invited by the proprietor to inspect the curious and invaluable relics of the immortal Shakespeare, removed from his birthplace in 1820, where they had been shown for a century previously, including a plaster representation in relievo of the Battle between David and Goliah, together with the First Visitors' Book, commencing in 1812, to the present period, including autographs of George IV., William IV., Duke of Wellington, Lord Byron, Louis Philippe, Sir Walter Scott, Hogg, Kean, Washington Irving, and other eminent individuals.'

[It is not on the face of it quite clear in what way a 'plaster representation of the Battle between David and Goliah,' or even an autograph of the above-named 'first gentleman,' are 'curious and invaluable relics of the immortal Shakespeare,' nor how many of these autographs could have been 'shown for a century previously' to 1820. But no doubt this will be all explained at the corner of High Street.]

'Shakespeare's Hall, corner of Chapel Street.

'Here may be seen an admirable full-length painting, by Wilson, of Shakespeare in the attitude of inspiration; the one by Gainsborough, of Garrick reclining gracefully upon a pedestal, idolizing the poet's bust. Both these paintings were presented by Garrick and his wife o the corporation.'

[This is especially worthy the attention of youthful poets, as it will show them what is precisely the proper 'attitude of inspiration,' and the position which it is right to assume when 'idolizing' a bust.]

'Jones's Phusiglyptic Museum, Bull Lane.

'A cursory visit may be made to this person, who is a connoisseur, and a self-taught carver of grotesque figures of the creation, made from nature's curious roots and branches, and contains also, portraits of many eminent men.'

[One cannot but feel the most profound respect for any gentleman who keeps a phusiglyptic museum, 'who is a connoisseur, and contains also, portraits of many eminent men.' We are astonished that the editor should speak of him as 'this person.' We commend Mr. Jones to the immediate attention of the committee of the National Portrait Gallery.]

'The Falcon Tavern, opposite the Guild Chapel.

'Mentioned by Dr. Drake, in his "Noontide Leisures," as having been kept, in Shakespeare's time, by one Julius Shaw; also, in Ireland's "Avon," Brewer's "Warwickshire," and other works. In the smoke-room, where there is no doubt the immortal bard has oft been heard to say "Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?" is the wainscoting from New Place.'

[It is not pleasant to learn that Shakespeare was in the habit of spouting his own works at a public-house; but no doubt the editor speaks with authority. We must be content to take our great men as we find them.]

The Birthplace of Shakespeare, Henley Street.

'This national property has recently undergone considerable improvement, both in the house and the garden that surrounds it. The garden in which the house stands is laid out, and planted with trees and shrubs, all of which have a Shakespearian association, by being selected from those mentioned by the dramatist in his works.'

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.hhood.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

[To which it may be added that the bricks with which the house has lately been repaired have also 'a Shakespearian association,' bricks being no doubt somewhere mentioned by the dramatist in his works, although the present annotator has not time to look out a passage.]

'*Site of New Place, the end of Chapel Street.*

'This was the retired residence of the Bard of Avon, and the scene of his last hours. Also the spot where he planted his celebrated mulberry-tree, which was ordered to be cut down by the Rev. F. Gastrell, to the great annoyance of the inhabitants and the numerous admirers of the matchless bard. It was converted into goblets, boxes, tobacco-stoppers, &c.'

[We do not observe that the tercentenary programme provides for the utterance of a solemn groan in memory of the Rev. Francis Gastrell. This seems to be an omission.]

'*Ann Hathaway's Cottage, Shottery, three-quarters of a mile from the town.*

'Shakespeare's wife, the daughter of a substantial yeoman, was born at this rural village in 1556, the house being still in a good state of preservation. Anne Hathaway (eight years older than her husband) married Shakespeare in his nineteenth year, with whom she passed some years of her life in domestic obscurity, till an extravagance that he was said to have been guilty of, forced him out of Warwickshire, and he sought refuge in London, where being thrown into the company of theatricals, first gave him a taste for the drama, and thereby produced those works which have immortalized his name.'

[Visitors could hardly choose a pleasanter walk than that across the fields to Shottery. It will afford them a charming view of Stratford church. They will find, too, that Anne Hathaway's cottage was not only, as the above extract implies, 'in a good state of preservation,' when she was born there, but that it is so to this day.]

The 'Visitors' Guide' does not mention the Church of the Holy Trinity. But this also is thought by many to be well worthy of a cursory inspection. By not a few, indeed, it is thought better worthy of inspection than anything else in the way of a shrine within the bounds of Europe. For it is here, in front of the altar, that we see the stone which covers all that is mortal of Shakespeare—the stone which bears the famous inscription which has probably been oftener quoted than any other epitaph ever written;*—here, side by side with that of Shakespeare, are, as every one knows, the tombs of his wife, his daughter, and others of his family. There from above looks down the bust, addressing the reader—

'Stay, passenger; why goest thou by so fast?'†

Around are the tombs of the Combe family, the Cloptons, not a few others of unusual interest, the church being surprisingly rich in its epitaphs and monuments. In the vestry the parish register opens of itself at the pages which record the birth and death of 'Gulielmus filius Johannes Shakspere.' The birth is

* The other day a German gentleman, type, we suppose, of the 'intelligent foreigner' of whom we frequently hear, after haranguing with much enthusiasm, though not in very good English, on the excellences of Shakespeare, asked the writer to recite to him this inscription, which he wished to take down in writing. He had been in the church, but had forgotten to copy it, perhaps forgotten to look at it, and, now he had got back to the hotel, he wanted it. He took it down from our dictation, and when he had finished we looked at his note-book. The memoranda which he had made for his own misguidance ran thus:—

'Good fren for Jesus sake for bare
To dig dust enclose a tear
Blest be the man what spare these stone
And cursed be he what move my bone.'

He said his wife would be delighted with it. (We assure the reader this is not exaggerated, and we are sorry for it.)

† We don't like foot-notes, but we must make another. It is curious to notice how this word *passenger* has altered. Any one who had missed his train, and arrived foot-sore at the end of his journey, would now feel it satirical if he were addressed, 'Stay, passenger.'

entered in Latin as above, but the quality of this Latin not being first-rate, a laudable economy of it has been exercised in subsequent years, and when we come to the entry of his death, it is in English.

The visitor who goes much about in Warwickshire can hardly fail to notice that Shakespeare is still one of the commonest names in that county. The writer paid his poor's-rates, a little while ago, and has got a receipt signed 'William Shakespeare.' Indeed there is a certain set of names which are continually turning up in the neighbourhood. Shakespeare's house is in Henley Street. His mother's maiden name was Arden. At Henley-in-Arden, eight miles from Stratford, there are three or four Shakespeares. One of them, we see, appears to glory in the old uncertainty as to the way in which the name ought to be written. He describes himself as Shakspear on the door of his house, and Shakespeare on the sign above the door. The name of Hathaway, and Hathway, is still a common one in the district. The occupant of the cottage at Shottery does not bear that name, but claims to be a descendant of the original Hathaways, and says the cottage has never passed out of possession of her family.

Finally, to complete our guidance, let us earnestly advise the stranger not to leave Stratford without having, if possible, a short excursion on the river Avon.

One word more, and that in as earnest a tone as we can give it, before we dismiss this subject. Let us remember—all of us who take part in any shape in this tercentenary celebration, that it is not what we do, be it little or be it much, but only the spirit in which we do it, that can do any honour—we will not be so bold as to say to the memory of Shakespeare, for that can be no more affected either by praise or dispraise—but simply to ourselves. It is surely a good thing that a people should thus lay aside for a while the cares of the world that 'is too much with us, late and soon,' and do homage with a prostrate heart to what we have found greatest amongst all our race. The memory of this celebration will live through many generations when all the small squabbles and heartburnings, and professional discords which heralded and attended it will have long been forgotten and forgiven. And the names of some who have laboured hard, not seeking any short-lived notoriety to themselves, but in a spirit of true reverence, will be read hereafter with grateful respect.

PICTURESQUE LONDON.

NO. III.—HYDE PARK.

www.libtool.com.cn

NOT a patch upon it, Mossoo, pretty though I allow your Bois to be; wonderfully improved from the barren old scrap that I remember it, though the new Bois de Boulogne is, with its admirably-kept gardens, its pretty lakes, its trim walks, its bits of boskage and greenery—grand though you imagine it, with its swell company, its sombre-faced, waxed-moustached Emperor, with the pretty woman by his side (a little strained and faded now, that pretty woman, and showing what a long course of difficulties between luxuries and priestcraft will do!), both reclining in their elegant carriage environed by *mouchards* and police-agents, who manage somehow to get rid of that awful stiffness of demeanour which affects everything connected with our English police; with its grand troops of *nouveaux riches* whirling here and there in elegant equipages, and showing in every item of extravagance the recent fortune made haphazard through Bourse speculation; with its crowd of equestrians, *jeunes dandys*, with high shirt-collars, horse-shoe pins, tight trousers, and mutton-chop whiskers, like bad imitations of third-rate men about London ten years since; with its white-capped *bonnes* and precocious children already in full flirtation, and dreary old men spitting into red cotton pocket handkerchiefs, and drearier old ladies taking snuff and looking after their Spitz dogs, and *toulourou* soldiers, with very short hair and large ears sticking out of their heads like handles to mugs, and short-tailed jackets, and balloony trousers and tiny feet;—not with all these adjuncts, and a great many more which I have neither the time nor the space to enter upon, Mossoo, is your Bois de Boulogne to be mentioned in the same breath with our Hyde Park. Your place is too new, to begin with. Our little establishment has its history and can point to its ancestors—real, not Brummagem! We were Hyde Manor, belonging to the Church of Westminster, until the reign of Henry the Eighth, when we were exchanged—what is vulgarly termed 'swopped,'—for some Crown property. An ambassador from your sprightly nation hunted in us with our King in 1550; in 1578 the Duke Casimir 'killed a barren doe in Hyde Park from among three hundred other deer.' They started horse and foot races round our Ring in Charles the First's time; and when the gloomy season of the Protectorate was over, and the King had come to his own again, mad-cap Charley made us celebrated for our drives and promenades, a reputation which we have maintained ever since, and will maintain at all hazards, against all comers!

'Of all parts of England, Hyde Park hath the name
For coaches and horses and persons of fame!'

Hath, hath had, and shall have, for ever! What historical memories, what stores of anecdotes are connected with the name! Evelyn going to see a 'coach race in Hide Park,' and afterwards 'collationing' in Spring Garden. Bustling, chatting, active little Mr. Pepys, entering in his note-book that he had gone 'thence to the Park, my wife and I; and here Sir W. Coventry did first see me and my wife in a coach of our own, and so did also the Duke of York, who did eye my wife mightily.' Hither was brought Kynaston, an actor who played female parts, and who was 'so beautiful a youth' that the ladies of quality prided themselves in taking him with them in their coaches to Hyde Park in his theatrical habit after the play: 'Which,' says Colley Cibber, 'in those days they might have sufficient time to do, because plays were then used to begin at five o'clock, *the hour that people of the same rank are now going to dinner*.' Here Oliver Cromwell, attempting to drive six horses which had been recently presented to him by the Earl of Oldenburgh, acting a little too freely with his whip, caused

the team to take fright, and the coach upsetting, was flung to the ground and somewhat severely injured. Here took place that lamentable duel between the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun, in which both were killed, and which is so admirably described in Thackeray's 'Esmond;' and here, just a century ago, took place a duel between John Wilkes, of 'North Briton' celebrity, and Samuel Martin, M.P.

Vede Napoli e poi mori! See Naples and die, if you like, but do not die without having seen Hyde Park! The country cousin who spends a fortnight in London, wearying himself and his friends with that fourteen days' hard labour, has seen nothing until he has visited Hyde Park in the height of the season, and gazed upon the crowd of carriage occupants, equestrians and pedestrians constantly pouring in under Decimus Burton's triple archway with the Ionic screen which faces that triumphal arch on the top of Constitution Hill, now surmounted by Mr. Matthew Digby Wyatt's hideous bronze equestrian effigy of 'the Dook,' which cost a grateful public sixty thousand pounds. In the whole world there is probably no such sight, no such lavish display of wealth dispensed with such exquisite taste, no such show of elegant equipages and splendid horseflesh, no such gathering of high-bred men and lovely women. Nothing else in London pretends to compete with it. At the Opera and the Horticultural and Botanical fêtes you may see the same men and women, but they are without the horses and carriages, which have a great effect in the *ensemble*. Moreover, at those places you have to pay for admission, whereas, brother of mine, though your name be Lazarus, and though your coat be ever so patched, though your pockets be coinless and your boots cracked, you shall take your place against the iron rails by the Marquis of Montserrat, and calmly criticise to your friend Sans-sous the 'turn-out' of the Duke of Sennacherib. Let the green and gold park-keeper eye you superciliously, not to say suspiciously, oh my friend (and to tell truth they are a haughty race these park-keepers, and combine the *fierté* of a private soldier with the arrogant exclusiveness of the beadle), but do not mind! so long as your behaviour is circumspect, and your language not obnoxious, these persons cannot interfere with you; and you have the satisfaction of knowing that, from your casual contribution to the levied taxes of the kingdom, you feel to a certain extent towards them in the light of an employer.

But the country cousin on his first visit, the neophyte first making acquaintance with the mysteries of the Park, should have an introducer, some one well acquainted with its ways, else will he be fain to lose himself, and pursue what Mr. Carlyle would call 'mere vain gropings.' Nowhere is the fickleness of Fashion, the mutability of Taste, more seen than in this, their chief resort. Five-and-twenty years ago the place of resort for equipages, horsemen, and pedestrians was that portion of the Ring between Hyde Park Corner and Great Cumberland Street, as it had been for a hundred and twenty years. 'The next place of resort,' says the 'Spectator,' 'wherein the servile world are let loose, is at the entrance of Hyde Park, while the gentry are in the Ring.' And Pope, addressing lock-raped Belinda, says—

> 'Know, then, unnumbered spirits round her fly,
> The light militia of the lower sky:
> These, though unseen, are ever on the wing,
> Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.'

But before the writer of these pages, during brief holidays snatched at intervals from school, was permitted to look on at the dazzling crowds, Fashion had changed the *locale* to the straight stretch of road between Achilles' statue and the powder magazine, known by the name of the 'Ladies' Mile.' Ah me! these changes in Fashion's quarters, when reflected on, are as melancholy as the crows' feet seen in the dressing-glass creeping slowly round the eyes, or the dropped voice in which your tailor mutters to his assistant the number of inches round your waist — a measure which at one time he would announce in so cheery a tone!

My earliest recollection of the 'Ladies' Mile' extends to a period when it was not thought bad taste to ride or drive on a Sunday; when Lady Blessington, in the evening of beauty so soft and charming as to give one an idea of the resplendent loveliness of its dawn, drove in a very noticeable carriage with the largest of footmen in the most striking of liveries; when Count D'Orsay,—ah! how well I recollect his straight profile and black hair! he was handsome, certainly, but of the hairdressers' dummy order of beauty—drove an admirably-hung dark-green cabriolet, with a high-stepping horse, in very highly plated harness, and with a gin-stunted 'tiger,'—a little wretch in boots and breeches, like a groom seen through the wrong end of an opera-glass, swinging on the footboard behind; when the bystanders would turn from Louis Napoleon (then merely regarded as a thick-headed, silent, brooding, disagreeable exile) to gaze with wonder at poor Lord Cantilupe lounging, in a Sybaritic fashion, along his horse's back; when a whisper would pass round among the strangers that the red-faced merry-looking gentleman in the dark-blue cab was Lord Dolly Fitzclarence, while his friend and charioteer was his invariable companion, Sir George Wombwell; that the tall man in spectacles on the stout cob was Thackeray, a writer in 'Punch;' and that the gigantic man with the handsome face and the keen eye was Jacob Omnium, who had just exposed the abuses of the Palace Court. In those days broughams and clarences were only just commencing to be used, and the Park was filled with banging, swinging chariots in all the glory of gorgeous hammercloth, bewigged coachmen, powder-headed footmen, and plum-pudding-spotted carriage-dog. In those days no man wishing to be well thought of would have been seen walking on the Achilles-statue side of the 'Ladies' Mile,' would have been seen smoking, would have been seen without stiff stand-up gills (a turn-down collar was facetiously supposed to indicate a poetic temperament), without straps which buttoned under the soles of his Wellington boots, and without—if he were facial-gymnast enough to accomplish it—an eyeglass stuck in his eye. Boats were unknown on the Serpentine in those days, save the mimic fleets sailed by boys; and any one indulging in such athletic exercise as rowing would have been looked down upon as a sad vulgarian. Those were the days when the Coventry Club was the great resort of the dandies, when crowds used to assemble round Apsley House (originally a piece of ground granted by George the Second to an old soldier named Allen, who had fought at the battle of Dettingen, and who kept an apple-stall on it), to witness the mounting and dismounting of the great Duke of Wellington, and to receive the forefinger salutation of the blue-coated, white-trousered veteran, and to cheer the Queen and Prince Albert (the favourite head covering of the latter being then a white hat with a black band), and who drove as frequently in the Park in the season as the Prince and Princess of Wales are now in the habit of doing.

Mais, nous avons changé tout cela—we, and Time the avenger! Lady Blessington, D'Orsay, Lord Cantilupe, Lord Dolly Fitzclarence, Sir George Wombwell, Thackeray, 'the Dook,' and Prince Albert are dead; the flowing whiskers of Omnium are white; carriage-dogs are seen no more; and straps, eyeglasses, and Wellington boots are ostracised; and Fashion, led by Anonyma and her compeers, has removed the line of carriages and horsemen to the ground between Apsley House and Prince's Gate. There has been no alteration in the position of Rotten Row—that long strip of ground dedicated to horse exercise alone, and into which no carriage, unless appertaining to Royalty, is ever allowed to enter—which stretches from Hyde Park Corner to Kensington, and which is supposed to derive its unsavoury appellation from a corruption of 'Route du Roi,' or the King's way. Here are to be seen horses and horsemen of all kinds. Sheridan in his prologue to 'Pizarro,' thus describes it—

'Horsed in Cheapside, scarce yet the eager spark
Achieves the Sunday triumph of the Park;
Scarce yet you see him, dreading to be late,
Scour the New Road, and dash through Grosvenor Gate:
Anxious, yet timorous too, his steed to show,
The hack Bucephalus of Rotten Row.
Careless he seems, yet vigilantly shy,
Woos the stray glance of ladies passing by,
While his off-heel, insidiously aside,
Provokes the caper which he seems to chide.'

And so it has continued to this day. From early morn till dewy eve the Row has a certain complement of visitors, for during certain hours of the day it is most thronged, and its frequenters feel it *de rigueur* to be seen there. These hours used to be in the evening, an ante-prandial promenade from half-past five until seven; but some of the leaders of fashion felt that these hours were not sufficiently exclusive—that people from the City, horrible vulgarians engaged in the debasing pursuits of commerce, law, literature, or even trade, might come between the wind and their nobility, enjoying themselves after the day's labours were at an end. This was too terrific, and must at once be rectified; so the exclusives changed the fashionable time to the two hours preceding lunch—between twelve and two—when all the low persons engaged in getting their daily bread would be confined to their counting-houses, law-courts, chambers, desks, or counters, as the case might be; and this rule still continues. So thoroughly has it carried out its intention that all the visitors at the 'swell time' might now be denizens of the Castle of Indolence. They are all drones, among whom the presence of a working bee is never to be found. There you may see the best types of that great creature the British 'swell'—tall, stalwart, strong-limbed, fair-haired, blue-eyed, soft-bearded, not particularly bright, but covering his natural pleasantness with an absurd mask of *insouciance*. There are lovely girls, and plain girls who almost approach to prettiness on horseback, so well are their figures set off by the trim habit, their faces by the neat chimney-pot hat and becoming half-veil. Search the world through, and you will find nothing like these English Amazons, so healthy, yet so delicately formed, fearless, yet entirely modest, so bright and fresh and happy in her one healthful and natural recreation in the entire round of the season's amusements. Here they come in broad cavalcades, some eight or ten strong, escorted by husbands and lovers, brothers and friends, the fresh summer air blowing out of them all the heat and dust and gaseous atmosphere of hot nights' crammed opera or crowded ball-room, and bringing back for the nonce the roses into their cheeks and the light into their eyes—such roses and such light as fade only too quickly under the life they are leading, and are only renewed by a long course of continual quiet and fresh air. Ah, Mossoo! my foreign friend, whom I apostrophized in the first sentences of this little essay, these young English ladies constitute our crowning triumph over your Bois! You acknowledge it, I know. Often have I seen you wag your little beard and grind your teeth in an ecstasy of delighted animation as the cavalcade whirled by you! the cavalcade in such close-fitting dark-blue habits as none but Poole yet have accomplished, and in the coquetry of those chimney-pots and half-veils, which beat the wide-awakes (once tried, but proved failures) into fits! Sometimes among these cavalcades are to be seen children on ponies—pretty little girls with their Shetland's leading-rein in charge of some steady old family groom; boys, knickerbockered and gaitered, galloping along by the side of papa's far-stepping hunter—all riding fearlessly, and thoroughly at home in their saddles, as only, in Europe at least, we English people are.

Among the crowd of banded cavalcades you will notice many solitary riders steering their way in and out in lonely self-sufficiency. Some of these are females, generally mounted on showy screws, and riding them at the top of their pace, followed by very doubtful-looking grooms, under whose shabby livery one seems to recognize a being of a

kindred though slightly different stamp. In most of these instances, *grattez le groom et vous trouverez le flyman* of some Brompton livery-stable, unless, indeed (shame to say!), the servitor in question be, as he very often is, the father of the young woman after whom he rides. The demeanour of these miserable women exhibits the recklessness impelled by shame—the intention of 'facing it out;' and as they ride tardily along they stare with closed lips and insolent glance at all, male and female, whom they meet. These are the Anonymas whom certain writers like to patronize in print, and the 'pretty horsebreakers,' whom some distinguished painters select for the subjects of their brushes. A rencontre with them causes a great deal of curiosity on the part of lady amazons, and a great deal of confusion on the part of gentlemen cavaliers—caused rather: the past tense, not the present. Thanks to the genial criticisms of a free and enlightened press, the subject is now fully understood in the most retired and innocent classes of society. One would like, however, to see some letters of Mrs. Chapone on this topic; or to read what 'Little Burney' would have written about it in her 'Diary;' or what Dr. Johnson would have remarked thereanent to Topham Beauclerk or Bennet Langton.

Besides the youth of both sexes, all degrees of age are represented among the equestrians. Here may be seen pursy gentlemen of five-and-forty, who laughed and grew fat before the light of Banting dawned upon the world, and who are endeavouring by regular horse exercise to keep down corpulence without depriving themselves of any of the table's luxuries. They bestride strong, thickset, handsome little cobs—that class of horse advertised by dealers as 'up to twenty stone—a drayhorse in miniature;' and go pounding away with the full intention of getting as much jolting as possible into a given quantity of time. And there, too, may be seen really old men, fine old boys who in their time have been great across country, and who still retain a look of sporting, in their tight blue body-coats and high muslin cravats, but who are no longer capable of much equitation, and are seated on steady old hunters incapable of making a stumble or a mistake, and cantering along at the easiest of ambles. Here, too, may occasionally be seen the Church equitant in the person of a rosy-coloured bishop, with his episcopal legs covered with black gaiters, mounted on a safe, clever cob, and closely followed by a well-fed groom in very sober livery.

Until the last few years there were very few pedestrians in the Row, and these principally friends of the riders or connoisseurs in horseflesh, who would hang negligently over the rails and discourse to each other in those mysterious whispers which sporting men so much affect of the merits or demerits of the passing cattle. But the introduction from the Champs Elysées and the Bois de Boulogne of the light and elegant wire chairs, expressly adapted for out-of-door use, has entirely changed the fashion, and 'the thing' is now to hire a chair and sit and watch the passers-by, both horse and foot. Nothing can be pleasanter than this. You sit amongst the best-dressed people in town, the prettiest women and the greatest swells, and see the whole panorama of London out-door life unrolling itself before you. Year by year these chairs have increased in number, until they are now a recognized institution of the Park, and afford a very fair summer livelihood to their proprietors. One row, sometimes a double row, stretches from Hyde Park Corner far up Rotten Row, and in the bright sunlight the colours of the bonnets, parasols, and dresses, harmoniously mingled, give the effect of a brilliant and extensive bed of tulips. In front of these sitters wanders a perpetually varying crowd, men and women of all ages, but all belonging to the richer classes, and all bent on relaxation and amusement. Nothing can be pleasanter than this stroll, provided you have a companion, but the man who would attempt it alone must be bold indeed. To walk

quietly under the fire of a thousand pair of eyes, the handsomest and wickedest in London, requires an amount of moral courage which few possess: the unfortunate cynosure, once started, dare not retreat; but no sooner does he see or fancy he sees some one bend forward to whisper her neighbour, than he immediately considers himself the subject of the remark, is haunted by the horrible idea of a lump on his nose, a crack in his boot, a crease in his coat—'Quelque chose ridicule ou bouffonne' (to use Théophile Gautier's favourite phrase), in his appearance, and, colouring to brightest crimson, he pursues his way amid the ill-suppressed titters of the crowd.

Once past the Serpentine Bridge, which was designed by Rennie, and erected in 1826, and we are in quite a different scene. We are, as Tickell says,

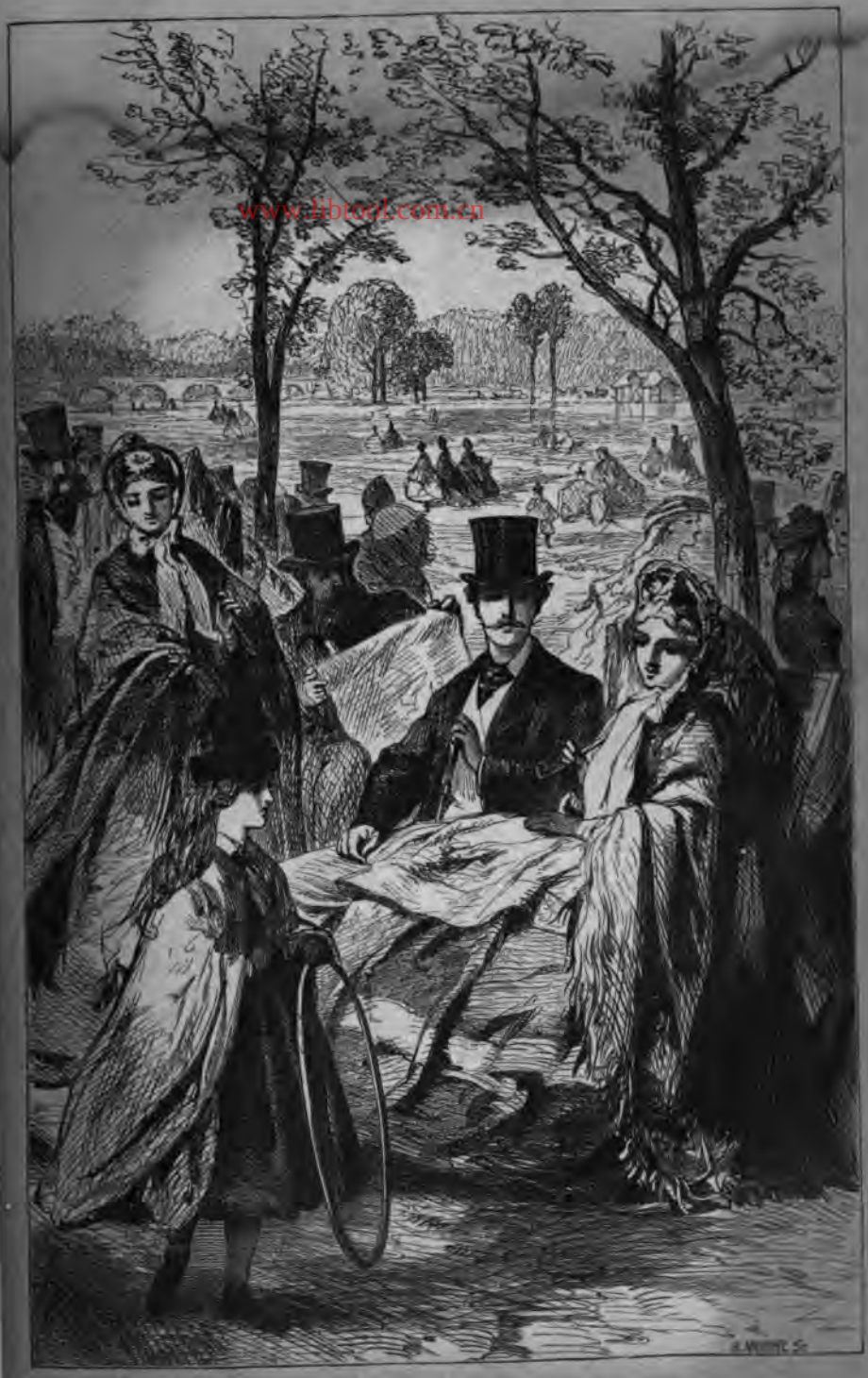
'Where Kensington, high o'er the neighbouring lands,
Midst greens and sweets a regal fabric stands,
And sees each spring luxuriant in her bowers,
A snow of blossoms and a world of flowers;
The dames of Britain oft in crowds repair
To gravel walks and unpolluted air.
Here, while the town in damps and darkness lies,
They breathe in sunshine and see azure skies;
Each walk, with robes of various dyes bespread,
Seems from afar a moving tulip bed;
There, rich brocades and glossy damasks glow,
And chints, the rival of the showery bow.'

But save twice a week, and when the band of the Guards plays on Sundays, you would not find the brave show of company which old Tickell so pleasantly describes. On the contrary, the grand old gardens are still and solemn. Lying in the verdant boskage, stretched supine under the shadow of some of the giant elms and oaks, one could fancy oneself a hundred miles from London: the eye lights on nothing but greenery: from afar the hum of wheels and voices breaks upon the ear with a pleasant and soothing monotone; and were it not for the occasional flitting by of a lengthy Life-Guardsman exchanging sweet nothings with a dumpy housemaid, one might imagine oneself in a wood—such a wood as these gardens must have been in 1798, when a man was accidentally shot while the keepers were shooting foxes here! and his widow received a pension of 18*l.* a year from the Board of Green Cloth.

Here may be met, wandering idly among the trees, painters mooning over the subjects of their pictures, and authors thinking of the elaboration of their plots; and here, too, may be found close-shaved gentlemen with little rolls of paper in their hands, to which they now and then refer, and who, from their writhings and gesticulations, you would take to be lunatics, if you did not know them to be actors who had walked over from Brompton or Kensington, their favourite resort, and were studying their parts in the quiet shades. Here are children playing on the greensward, and idlers—doers of nothing doing it well—extended on their backs, calmly gazing up to the sky. Happy the metropolis that has such a large and healthy lung! Good for all—for the rich to flaunt and flirt in, for the poor to take quiet rest and ease—is Hyde Park.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn



Drawn by F. J. Skill.

MAY IN "THE PARK."

See "Picturesque London

www.libtool.com.cn

THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

By the Author of 'The Morals of Mayfair.'

www.inbtool.com.cn

CHAPTER XV.

THE STUDY OF ASTRONOMY.

'NO, child, you must never express any of those strong opinions again. Men don't admire decision in young girls of your age.'

'But Mrs. Strangways *is* bold-looking, Aunt Thalia, and I did not like to hear Jane Dashwood named with her.'

'Mrs. Strangways not only looks, but is, bold, child. That is just the reason you should not have said what you did. The truer such remarks are, the more reason for young persons abstaining from making them. Mr. Chichester may be *au mieux* with Mrs. Strangways, for anything you know to the contrary; but, at all events, the fact of his having called her pretty, and of her bowing to him in such a friendly manner, were reasons enough to seal your lips. It has a very bad effect for one woman to dispraise another before the man who admires her.'

'But Mr. Chichester is engaged to Jane Dashwood. What can Mrs. Strangways' beauty, or my opinion of her, matter to him?'

'Ta, ta! child, don't be so simple and sentimental. What does a man of thirty—a man of the world like Chichester—think of Miss Dashwood when he is fifty miles away from her? As to the engagement, I don't believe in it. He has not the air of an engaged man at all. Barring his want of means, it would be a very good match for one of Colonel Dashwood's daughters, if they could catch him. He is of better birth and breeding in every way than themselves.' And Mrs. Tudor scrutinized her niece's appearance carefully, and made up her mind, if Paul had only more money, that it would not be a bad thing for Esther to supplant Jane Dashwood if she could.

Esther had never looked better than on this evening, as she stood beside the window waiting for their guest to arrive. She had, with considerable inward upbraiding, put on her white muslin dress, and braided her hair back from her face in that way poor Oliver liked. She was altogether looking unusually flushed, and well, and handsome; and reading this opinion of herself upon Mrs. Tudor's face, her uneasy conscience began supplying fine casuistic reasons to itself for having dressed so much and for having gained such a colour. 'I had nothing clean but my gingham, which looks so heavy by candlelight, and this white muslin. It is only the frock I danced in at school, Aunt Thalia; I hope Miss Whitty won't think I am too much dressed out. Indeed, I have made myself quite hot and miserable thinking whether I don't look too grand, as it is.'

'White muslin without an ornament is always in good taste,' said Mrs. Tudor, mildly. 'You dress your hair very well, Esther. Your face will bear that severe style till you are twenty-one, and white becomes you.'

'Oh, Aunt Thalia! I think it makes me look very dark. Do see how brown my hands are!'

She held out one of her arms, which the loose-falling sleeve displayed nearly to the shoulder, for Mrs. Tudor to analyze. It was a beautiful arm; slight, as yet, for the girl had not herself reached to the fulness of womanhood; but with delicate curved lines, full of promise for the future, and with a hand, tanned, certainly, by the sun and wind, but lithe and delicately moulded as a painter's heart could desire. 'I had a great mind to put on gloves, Aunt Thalia, only they would have made me look more dressed still.'

'And as Mr. Chichester is only your friend's lover, your brown hands don't signify,' said Mrs. Tudor, drily. 'He will just deliver the Miss Dashwoods' messages and go away in half an hour, I have no doubt.'

A suggestion which made Esther retire to the window and gaze out in silence at the sea until a feeble apologetic knock at the front door heralded Miss Whitty's arrival.

'Just run out and take her into my bed-room, Esther,' said Mrs. Tudor, quickly. 'Wilson is much too fine a lady to wait upon Miss Whitty, and I don't like her going alone to my dressing-table. I wouldn't for worlds think anything really bad of the poor creature, but I *have* doubts about the pins. Pretend you wish to show her the way, and don't leave her alone for a minute. Do you hear?'

'Yes, Aunt Thalia, I hear.' And very hot and ashamed of her office, Esther went out to watch over the rectitude of poor Miss Whitty, whom she found disrobing herself, in quite a cheerful and good-tempered state of mind, upon the top of the stairs.

'It's a little weakness of your aunt's, dear Miss Fleming,' she whispered, 'a little weakness of dearest Mrs. Tudor's, not liking any one to be alone in her dressing-room, and so I am taking my things off here. Perhaps we shall all feel the same some day. Elderly people require artifices, you know, don't they?'

From which observation Esther gathered that it was latent, even in Miss Whitty's shallow little soul, to be occasionally spiteful if she dared. 'Mrs. Tudor sent me out to show you which was her room, Miss Whitty. Surely you would like to arrange your—your—' her hesitation was caused by the very doubtful nature of the Whitty coiffure—'your curls at the glass.'

'Well, I *will* just take a peep, then,' said Miss Whitty, girlishly, 'if you're sure it's no trouble. Pray don't think of getting a candle. One look is all I want.'

But the look, even in the fading twilight, seemed to disclose many and unexpected deficiencies to Miss Whitty's mind. 'Perhaps it would be as well regularly to settle oneself, after all,' she remarked, putting her head on one side and looking plaintively at Esther. 'I did up a little parcel ready, you see, but not knowing where I was to undress, I didn't untie it at first. You wouldn't mind waiting a few moments here for me, would you?'

'Oh, not at all,' said Esther, who was every moment nervously expecting to hear Paul's knock at the door. 'There will be no one but ourselves and Mr. Chichester, though, and—and—I am sure you look very nice already, Miss Whitty.'

'But I am showing my frizzes! Yes, indeed I am. Why, I can feel them quite bare on each side of my head. Nothing looks so bad, so indelicate indeed, as to show one's frizzes before gentlemen.' And then Miss Whitty unfolded her brown-paper parcel, and drew forth her shoes, and her brushes and comb, and her knitting, and a bow for her neck, and her bracelets, and various other small articles of promiscuous adornment. 'How do I look, dear Miss Fleming?' she inquired, after at least ten minutes' preparation. 'Would you kindly look, and tell me if my hair is right behind? Really there is nothing makes me so fearfully nervous as the thought of showing my frizzes.'

Now, but for Miss Whitty herself vouchsafing the information, no human eye would have detected the existence of 'frizzes' at all, the whole head having an extraordinarily flat, denuded aspect, save where irregular forests of little black satin bows, with strange pendant ladders of chenille rings, and other odds and ends of millinery, covered it away from sight at the back. Having heard as a girl that she had a good profile, Miss Whitty, at forty-nine, continued to show a great deal of cheek-bone and neck; the latter wound round with different devices of velvets and hair-chains, as foils to the complexion. She was dressed in a barége gown of large pattern, but faded colours, suggestive of having been bought in a remnant at the end of a very remote Bath season; which dress, being of home make, hung rather irregularly about the skirts, and displayed, whenever its

wearer chanced to move inadvertently, strange glimpses of precarious slate-coloured hooping about the ankles. Shoes, known in the trade and to Miss Whitty as 'prunella,' with sandals that habitually came untied; rusty-black mittens, rather gritty to the touch; frequent garnet rings, and a brooch containing the photographic portrait of a general officer in field uniform, were the finishing points of Whitty's toilette, together with such minor accessories as a bag worked in beads for her knitting; a China crape scarf, in case of sudden modesty, upon her arm; and a very raggy-looking laced pocket-handkerchief, smelling hard of bad lavender-water, in her hand.

'I thought you had gone home again,' said Mrs. Tudor, pleasantly, when they entered the room. 'What, in the name of everything ridiculous, have you been doing to yourself all this time, Miss Whitty?'

'Only just changing my shoes and doing my hair, Mim,' answered Whitty, feeling herself turn hot and cold as Mrs. Tudor's great black eyes travelled with malignant composure over every poor item of her dress. 'Miss Fleming was so kind as to ask me into your room, Mim, and I thought, as a gentleman was coming, it would be as well to settle myself.'

'Ah! I see. As Mr. Chichester is an engaged man, however, you young ladies need not be so very particular in dressing for him, need you, Esther? Draw my chair to the table, my love, and get the cards out: we will begin our game at once. I am ordered to be in my bed at ten, Miss Whitty, and we have lost half an hour of our time already.'

When Mrs. Tudor was once well launched into cards, even though she played for nothing, she required no further attention from any of her company; and finding this, Esther stole out through the partially-closed Venetians and gave herself up, deliberately, to the pleasure of gazing at the sea and dreaming upon the balcony.

It was a sultry autumn night, not moonlit, though a white new moon was showing faint above the line of downs beyond the bay, but light with countless stars, and with the dusky red of sunset yet haunting the pale sky. Esther Fleming was still at an age when merely to breathe the air of a hot summer night can stir the blood with a thousand vague sensations of delicious unrest. She forgot Mrs. Tudor and the sounds of capote and re-pique which occasionally reached her from within; she forgot that she ought to be miserable away from Oliver and looking at the moon; she forgot—did she quite forget Paul Chichester? and was she thinking only of the old Vandyck upon the wall at Countisbury, when Paul's own voice, close at her side, startled her suddenly from her dreams?

'I am disturbing you, Miss Fleming, but I had Mrs. Tudor's permission to do so. I hope you were not thinking of anything very important.'

'Important! oh, not at all. I—I expected you!' And in her desire to be quite unembarrassed, Esther gave her hand to him. 'My thoughts are never of any importance, Mr. Chichester,' she added quickly. 'I was only enjoying this delicious warm air from the sea for a few minutes.'

'Then I am sorry I interrupted you. Nothing can be of greater importance to oneself than to be conscious of enjoyment.'

'I don't agree with that creed at all,' cried Esther. 'I think enjoyment is just the least important thing we have any of us to do with.'

'You believe you think so,' remarked Paul, laconically.

'I know that I feel so, Mr. Chichester.' And then, finding that the fading light, or some other circumstance, had hindered Mr. Chichester, up to this point, from perceiving that her hand was still in his, she withdrew it rather abruptly. 'I have a horror of even looking at one's life as a thing only to be enjoyed. I like to feel how good a thing it is "to suffer and be strong."'

'Oh! what does that mean? It sounds like verse.'

'*Sounds* like verse! Don't you know that it is from one of Longfellow's most lovely little pieces?'

'I don't think I appreciate lovely little pieces. I certainly never read verses.'

'You never read poetry?'

'Not much; I am too old. When I was your age I used to read a good deal of it.'

'In those days, perhaps, you would have been able to see the beauty in those lines of Longfellow's.'

'Will you repeat them again?'

'"Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong."'

'No, I should never see any beauty in them, because I should never think the sentiment of them strictly true. To do what lies before one is desirable, of course, but it is a great deal better if the duty happens to be pleasant. Suffering, as suffering, is no more sublime than self-denial, as self-denial, is virtuous. However,' —he interrupted himself—'it sounds pretty in rhyme, and repeated, as you repeated it, Miss Fleming.'

'In other words, I am not capable of arguing, but can be put off with a compliment, Mr. Chichester.'

Mr. Chichester laughed. 'You said that so like Jane Dashwood!' he remarked. 'I can easily see that you have both been to the same school.'

'Which, unfortunately, is not the case,' cried Esther, promptly, and with an irrepressible impulse of pique that Paul should have been first to mention Jane's name. 'It was Milly that was my schoolfellow; but I should be very glad to be like Jane in many things,' she added, after a minute or two.

'Poor Jane! she really has some excellent points!' said Paul, deliberately. 'Her faults show more on the surface, and her good qualities, such as they are, lie deeper than Miss Milly's. If Jane fell into good hands, I believe she might turn out well, even yet.'

'Mr. Chichester!'

'Miss Fleming!'

'You are talking of Jane Dashwood?'

'Certainly.'

'And she is engaged to you?'

Paul laughed again; a low, rather short laugh he had. Esther believed at first she did not like it. 'I had no idea Miss Dashwood had been disclosing all her secrets. Really it would have been only right of her to tell me.'

'And so have prevented you from giving your opinion too freely?'

'Oh, not at all. I was not thinking of that. Because two persons happen to be engaged is no reason that they should not see and speak of each other's faults.'

'Oh, Mr. Chichester! love sees no faults at all.'

'Miss Fleming, you are awfully sentimental. This comes of reading poetry and gazing at the moon from balconies. Has not an engaged man, or, to go a great deal further, has not a man in love a brain and sight and hearing just like other men.'

'Yes, but love sways them all!'

'That depends chiefly upon the man's own strength of character. Now, imagine yourself——'

'Oh, no, thank you,' she interrupted him quickly; 'I don't want to speak about myself at all.'

'You don't know what I was going to say. Imagine yourself so unfortunately placed as to be engaged, then separated from the person to whom you are engaged. When you were together, perhaps, you had not much time for analyzation of character, but you have plenty, too much, indeed, apart. You see some one else, who teaches you what the first one should have been, and——'

'I should never change where I had once given my word,' Esther cried, warmly. 'Never!'

'That is another question. We are not talking of changing, but of being able, although in love, to see faults of character truly.'

'I would blind my eyes to them deliberately, Mr. Chichester. I would not acknowledge them even to myself.'

'But you would be conscious of their existence, notwithstanding.'

'I would never talk of them to any one else, at all events. I would never speak as—as——'

'As I did of Jane Dashwood just now. No, I suppose no one would do so who looked upon an engagement as a real one. You know, of course, that Miss Dashwood and

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

THE STUDY OF ASTRONOMY!

See "The Ordeal for Wives," Chapter XV.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

myself look upon ours as nothing of the kind.'

'Mr. Chichester!'

'It is part of our compact that we both may speak of it as it really is at any time we think proper. I have a fancy for doing so at this present moment. Miss Dashwood finds a nominal engagement to myself a matter of some convenience in the present state of her own affairs.'

'And you?' exclaimed Esther, as Paul hesitated slightly.

'Oh, I don't find my position a disagreeable one, exactly. It allows me to enter into a great many feelings, experimentally, which otherwise would never have come within the range of my own observation, and that has made up, in some measure, for having to go through a good many vastly stupid balls and parties in my attendance upon Miss Dashwood.'

'And when it is over—when you have both acted your parts through—how will you and Jane ever be able to look back upon it all, or upon each other's conduct?'

'I shouldn't suppose Jane would ever think of anything connected with me again. I shall always think of her with pleasure and gratitude. She is lovable in many ways, although I am not happy enough to be the man who has gained her love.'

'Oh!'

'Your tone is depreciating, Miss Fleming. Is there anything I have said that shocks your sense of right?'

'I can't enter into the subject, Mr. Chichester. I don't understand the world. I have very old-fashioned ideas.'

'Let me hear them, please.'

'It would be quite useless. We should never think alike. I hold an engagement to be a very solemn thing indeed, and I think it nearly as bad to act one as it would be to play at religion.'

'But if one acquires a knowledge of an entirely new class of sensation, from which, except as a spectator, one is, perforce, shut out! Is that no gain to oneself, do you think?'

'I cannot say. I am sure you ought not to do wrong merely to add to your experiences.'

'Miss Fleming, do you ever read novels?'

'Yes, when my cousin Joan lets me.'

'And you like them?'

'Yes, I like some of them extremely.'

'Have you ever been to the theatre?'

'I have been to the Opera twice and once to the Princess's. My cousin David gave me the money for the tickets when I went to school.'

'And don't you see that novels and plays yield just the same kind of knowledge that can be gained, at first hand, by oneself acting, for a while, as the hero of the piece?'

'Novels and plays are not real, Mr. Chichester.'

'Miss Dashwood's engagement to myself is not real, Miss Fleming.'

'Novels and plays deceive no one.'

'Nor do I.'

'But Jane deceives her father.'

Paul was silent.

'Jane deceives her father and she deceives herself, too, in thinking that she will not one day repent of all this folly. Although I have only seen her once, I know that Jane is much too good for the people she lives among. I am sure of that.'

'Do you include me in that sweeping anathema?'

'I don't know enough of you to say, Mr. Chichester. I was thinking of such companionship as that lady we saw to-day—that person you thought so handsome, you remember.'

'I don't know whom you mean. I have seen no handsome person to-day who could be considered an evil companion for Miss Dashwood.'

'Oh, that is a matter of opinion.'

'I think that a fresh, honest, although somewhat sentimental nature, is just one that it would do Jane immense good to come in contact with.'

'And is Mrs. Strangways frank, and honest, and rather sentimental, then?'

'I am not speaking of Mrs. Strangways, Miss Fleming.'

'Oh!'

And then Esther found she had nothing more to say, and she list-

ened with great attention to Mrs. Tudor's scoring quatorze to a king, and began playing with her fingers upon the rail of the balcony; and, finally, suggested, rather faintly, that the air was growing cold, and she thought perhaps it would be better to go in.

'Not at all,' answered Paul in his decisive way. 'What should you go in for?'

'Because it is getting cold.'

'I will bring you a shawl, then. And without being heard by either Mrs. Tudor or Whitty, he made his way softly into the room and brought out a light shawl of Mrs. Tudor's from the sofa. 'Will you let me put it on for you? Thank you, you need not stoop. I am tall enough to reach your shoulders when I hold myself very upright.'

'Oh, Mr. Chichester, how can you talk such nonsense? You are taller than me by three or four inches.'

'No, Miss Fleming, I am not. I am as inferior to you, physically, as I am mentally and morally.'

The words, although Paul's tone was jesting, hurt Esther with quite a sharp pain. What woman is not pained by an allusion to her intellect from the man she is prepared to love? 'You mean that I set myself very high, Mr. Chichester,' she cried; 'but you are just as wrong in that as you are about my size. Stand close to me, please, and you will see what a mistake you have made.'

He stood by her side, but not close. Something in her eager childish face would have withheld even a different man than Paul from misinterpreting her meaning.

'Now which is the taller, Miss Fleming?' he asked, when Esther had gravely held her head as high and majestically as possible.

'You, by a great many inches,' she answered, glancing up at the graceful outline of Paul's figure, as it cut, sharp and clear, against the evening sky. 'I am sure, although I did not think so at first, that you are nearly as tall as——'

'As——?'

'A friend of ours, Mr. Chichester. Some one I was thinking of——'

'Your cousin David, in short.'

'No, not exactly.'

'I understand. The person you were thinking of when I first interrupted you just now.'

'Oh dear no. I was thinking then of—of my old home in Devonshire. Don't you think the sky is looking clearer, Mr. Chichester?'

She knew, even in that dim light, that Paul's eyes were upon her face, and that he had seen her blush, 'Don't you feel a colder air coming up from the sea?'

'I feel sensible of a great chill, Miss Fleming. It has come on me suddenly—in the last few seconds.'

'And we had better go in, then?'

'As you will. Yes; probably it is better, for me, at all events, to go.'

Elsewhere I have disclaimed for Esther every quality belonging to a coquette. She had, however, enough instinctive vanity to catch at the meaning of Paul's tone. 'I think you must be very sensitive, Mr. Chichester,' looking up at him with her shy half-smile. 'You must be in a very delicate state of health if you are so dreadfully afraid of getting a chill.'

'Afraid? No, that is not the word. The effect cannot by any possibility be serious to me, but the immediate effect is unpleasant. You understand?'

Esther leant forward across the railing of the balcony, and made some remark again upon the beauty of the night. Those broad circles of gleaming light on the calm sea betokened fine weather. She had no doubt Mr. Chichester would have a pleasant day for his journey tomorrow.

'And I shall carry with me a pleasant remembrance,' said Paul, coming a step closer to her. 'Yes, in spite of that sudden chill I got just now, Miss Fleming, I shall remember this hour that you have allowed me to talk to you with gratitude. It is mine, you know! Although, I dare say, you will never think of me again, you have thought of me now, and I shall remember this one hour out of your life as belonging to me exclusively. Are you offended?'

'Oh, Mr. Chichester!' and she turned to him with that serious

smile that at times made her face absolutely beautiful; 'why should I be offended? I am glad you have cared to talk to me. I wished so much to meet you and know you —for Jane's sake.'

'And for Jane's sake you will not forget me?'

'No.'

I cannot take upon myself to say what answer or what equivocation that 'no' of Esther's was intended to convey; but Paul seemed satisfied with it; and it took him very nearly another hour to exhaust the subject of Miss Dashwood's messages, and to impress upon Esther's mind the extreme improbability, even if they should meet, of her ever giving him her full and undivided attention again. 'I believe I must go away now,' he remarked, at last. 'I hear sounds of Mrs. Tudor's being about to win her last game, and it will be wise of me to escape before Miss Whitty requires an escort home. Don't come in, thank you. I will say good-bye to you here.'

'Good-bye, Mr. Chichester.'

'Does myrtle grow on these seaside balconies, Miss Fleming? A subtle sense of its presence has seemed close to me all this evening. Really, if I could see where it grows I would ask you to give me a piece. One doesn't get myrtle in London at this season of the year.'

'There is no myrtle here but this little piece I have in my belt. It is fading already. I brought it yesterday with some other flowers all the way from Devonshire. It is not worth your having.' And she gave it to him.

'Thank you, Miss Fleming. You are very kind; and I do not misinterpret your kindness. Thank you. Good-night.'

He held her hand closely for a second, then left her, and in another minute had got through his compliments to the ladies in the drawing-room, and left the house.

'The Miss Dashwoods seem to have sent long messages,' remarked Mrs. Tudor, when Esther at last made her appearance. 'If the young man could really remember stories that took him over an hour and a half to deliver he must be a more devoted lover than I thought him.'

'And I think I must get you to show me that way of turning back the hair, Miss Fleming,' whispered Miss Whitty, as she was preparing to depart. 'It gives a soft, pensive look to the face that is really most interesting.'

www.libtool.com.cn

CHAPTER XVI.

SCRUPLES.

When Esther found herself alone for the night her first action was to unlock the little box in which she kept those priceless treasures Mr. Oliver Carew's letters, and spread them out, lovingly, before her sight.

She felt (in her profound ignorance of human nature, her own especially) as though the very touch of these letters would do her good: as though she had but to read them over to feel how marvellously superior their writer was to Paul Chichester and every other man living. And yet she knew, instinctively, that she dared not, in her present state of mind, open the last. One or two terribly ill-constructed, not to say ungrammatical sentences, rankled too freshly in her memory yet for that: the earlier letters, all full of warmth and truth and tender recollections of their walks at Countisbury, those were what she needed to calm, to refresh her in this strange fever in which she found her thoughts! And so, after going duly through the initiatory rites always performed upon the opening of that sacred repository, the letters were brought forth slowly, one by one, and read.

She wished she had left them alone: she wished, at least, she had not read them till to-morrow. Never before had they seemed so trite and schoolboy-like as at that particular moment, when she would have given all for them to prove clever, or, at least, decently well-expressed. She could have written better letters when she was eleven; Joan, David, anybody could write better letters. Why, some of the sentences began in one tense and

ended in another; and some, if you investigated them strictly, had no very immediate meaning at all; and some, which should have been long and overflowing with feeling, were bald and curt; and others (full of such interesting details as the excellent dinners on board, or the price he had settled to give for a grey mare) were involved and lengthy; and all were in the style of the 'Polite Letter-Writer:' and all—very bitterly she reiterated this—were worse in thought and style, too, than she herself could have written when she was eleven years old.

And what if they were? Is it not proverbial that English lads, fresh from public schools, can scarcely spell their own names? that all young men are bad correspondents? that Oliver had, himself, asked her indulgence for his letters? And was she in love with Oliver Carew, or with his letters? Were his generous, manly qualities to be outweighed by defective syntax and doubtful orthography? He had never assumed intellect: she had chosen, of her own free will, to fall in love with him simply as he was. This very night she had told Paul Chichester that she would deliberately shut her eyes to all faults in the person she loved; and here she was carping over the one very small demerit that it was possible for her to find in her poor absent Oliver. Paul Chichester: she wished she had never seen him. In some way or other he was the cause of her taking out those letters, and seeing mistakes in them, and being bitter over them. Did she think him so immeasurably superior, then, in intellect to the man who was to be her companion for life?

Quite in a flush of indignant denial at the suggestion Miss Fleming sprang up, and, after tenderly storing away the letters, but wisely abstaining from reading another word of them, locked up her little desk and put it away out of her sight. Paul Chichester superior to Oliver! the idea was monstrous. To reflect upon its enormity at her ease she hid her candle in the further corner of her room, then seated herself on the floor by the window, bent down her face upon her knees, and began to look out at the night.

The moon, that was showing faintly across the downs when Paul first spoke to her, had now travelled far away southward, and was shining, high and alone, on the pure purple of the midnight sky. Involuntarily Esther felt that she too had travelled far in the short space of the last few hours—that she had quitted for ever the land of dawning dreams—had stood and looked, for the first time, upon the wide sea of actual life and actual passion. Her engagement to Oliver had never made her feel thus. . . . What had made her feel it now?

Paul Chichester?

She wished again she had never seen Paul Chichester. That chance accident of likeness to the picture at Countisbury gave her a kind of foolish interest in his face which she was far from extending to Mr. Chichester himself. What was there, if one came to reason calmly, that was superior about him? His appearance? why, most people, no doubt, would think Oliver, with his fine broad shoulders and ruddy face, a vast deal better looking. And what mattered looks, too? Was a man better for having an intellectual forehead and refined cast of features? Could not a good, round, Saxon head and face express just as many excellent moral, if not, perhaps, intellectual, qualities, as any sombre, Vandyck countenance in the world? She was not sure, now, that she thought Paul Chichester at all good-looking. And his manner? abrupt and fitful; reserved one moment, and then suddenly advancing to the most intimate confidences the next! Had he behaved rightly in speaking as he had done of Jane? Had he not confessed to acting out a systematic course of deception simply for the sake of the pleasant sensations which his moral experience might occasion to himself? And was not [another still, small voice, *loq.*] was not all that he had said about Jane and about his engagement half a jest? Had she, Esther Fleming, caught, in fact, one glimpse of Paul's true

character? Did not his face and voice tell of qualities widely different to any that their brief conversation had called forth? Had he not talked down to her—as men do to foolish girls of eighteen? Oliver had not talked down to her, because—because—he was so young himself, not yet one-and-twenty, and Paul Chichester was quite old—thirty, she should think, a dozen years older than herself.

Still, she would certainly like to know something more of him than what he was when he was talking nonsense and asking for bits of myrtle;—that myrtle rankled in Esther's conscience, so she tried to make quite light of it in her meditations. It would, she was convinced, be pleasant to be intimate, for once, with some one altogether stronger and cleverer than herself. Joan, perhaps, was cleverer; but then Joan was not agreeable; David was book-clever, but a child in knowledge of life and of human beings; and as to Oliver—well, of course he was intensely agreeable, and had seen a great deal more of the world than she had; but Oliver only saw on the surface, and had a habit of opening his blue eyes wide in rather a discouraging way if she tried to engage him in any little speculations on those subjects of right and wrong, and of the necessity of right and wrong existing, which to her own mind had been quite familiar problems since the time she was twelve years old. Oliver, in short, continually got out of his depth. She would prefer getting out of her own depth, and being upheld and set right again by a stronger mind than her own.

Then she preferred Paul as a companion to Oliver. The desolating conclusions at which she seemed fated to arrive on this evening overcame Esther with quite a sharp pain. Although strong enough to analyze her own new emotions, she was weak enough to feel shocked at the result of her own self-questioning!

'Oliver, you are first with me—Oliver, I will never, even to myself, allow that any other person can be superior to you!'

She made this exposition of faith aloud, for greater solemnity, as she took one more look at the sea after putting out her candle; and then she went to her rest, poor child! and dreamt, not of Oliver Carew, but of the little old Vandyck upon the wall at Countisbury.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TRIALS OF TOAD-EATING.

A month at the seaside was the utmost limit which Mrs. Tudor's regard for health, or even for fashion, could enable her to live through. She missed her whist, she missed her enemies, she missed her doctor, she missed her friends: she almost missed her accustomed pew in church. And then Wilson was so dissatisfied. Wilson averred that her bed had lumps like bullets in it: Wilson never found the seaside agree for long together with her head: the lodging people did not prepare buttered toast to Wilson's taste. How was it possible to remain more than a month in a place where Wilson could not get properly-arranged buttered toast for her tea?

'I really don't know what we should have done without you, Miss Whitty,' said Esther, kindly, as, on the morning of their departure, Whitty was fastening on labels and tying up parcels for Mrs. Tudor. 'Aunt Thalia would scarcely have lived through each day as it came round if it had not been for the prospect of your game at piquet in the evening.'

'Oh dear, no! Miss Fleming,' answered poor Miss Whitty, humbly. 'It is very good of you to say so; but I am sure playing with me for nothing must have been dull work after all your aunt is accustomed to at home. If I have afforded my little quota of amusement, it is, of course, very gratifying to reflect on—very gratifying indeed. I can never do enough in return for all dear Mrs. Tudor's great benefits to me.'

Esther had never yet been able to find out what were, in real, solid fact, the benefits accorded to Miss

Whitty by Mrs. Tudor. She knew that Whitty occupied the parlours beneath Mrs. Tudor's drawing-rooms in Bath, and that she was always ready to play double-dummy or piquet when required, or to prepare the rooms for a party, or to make tea in the back drawing-room, or to put away the plate again in silver-paper, or clean the vases, or wind up the time-piece, or perform any other office for which Mistress Wilson was either too high or too low. But none of these things appeared sufficient, to Esther's untutored mind, to constitute a debt of gratitude on the part of Miss Whitty. She could never hear of any benefits more substantial than a rare tea, or rarer dinner, or occasional present of mouldying jelly, disclaimed, no doubt, by Wilson, after a party; and, ignorant of the thorough spaniel qualities inherent in persons of the Whitty tribe, she began to think her a very amiable woman indeed for putting up with all Mrs. Tudor's tempers, and persisting still in regarding her as her own especial benefactress.

On this occasion of their journey home to Bath, Miss Whitty was to accompany them, Mrs. Tudor, from motives hereafter to be unfolded to Esther, generously paying the difference between first and second class, to enable her to travel in the same carriage with herself. And so, from very early in the morning, Miss Whitty had been packing and unpacking, and cording and uncording, with a ready subservience to all Mrs Tudor's caprices that called forth many withering smiles on the face of Wilson.

'Loto's not to come with me, ma'am,' that potentate announced with true autocratic abruptness, at a very early period of the day. 'I've had her once, and I'm not going to have her again, not on any account, Mrs. Tudor.'

'Oh, but Wilson,' expostulated Mrs. Tudor, aghast.

'I'm not going to have Loto again, ma'am,' Wilson repeated, with an inexorable sniff of resolve. 'I know my own place, and I travel in my black silk. I had quite enough of such disgusting *un*delicate works when we came, and I wouldn't have them over again if I was paid for it.'

And she glanced at Miss Whitty, who, hot and patient, was sewing up the parrot's cage for the third time, as though to indicate a fitting person—though not paid for it—to fulfil the office that was so much beneath herself.

And then it was, when Wilson had left the room, that Mrs. Tudor made the generous offer to Miss Whitty of accompanying them first class. 'It wouldn't be agreeable for you, my dear, to be getting in the same set of carriages with Wilson, and my niece and myself will be very glad of your company.'

Esther thought the offer exceedingly kind for Mrs. Tudor, as it really involved an expenditure of several shillings in hard money. But poor Whitty looked rather red and hesitating as she tendered her gratitude; and then, in a very weak suggestive voice, remarked, that of course Loto would go with the other dogs.

'Loto will not go with the other dogs, Miss Whitty,' said Mrs. Tudor in a fierce manner, contrasting forcibly with the humble one she had used towards Wilson. 'Loto is not going with the other dogs, to get bitten and worried, or catch the distemper. Esther, my dear, *you* will have no objection to my little favourite being in the same carriage with us?'

'Oh dear, Mrs. Tudor! Oh my dear Mim!' exclaimed Whitty, in a moment, 'I shall be very glad to take charge of Loto, very glad indeed. I'm sure it's the least I can do, after your kindness in paying for me. I only—only meant, you know, that perhaps the railway people might not allow her in the carriage.'

'Loto must be wrapped up, Miss Whitty,' remarked Mrs. Tudor, with slightly relaxing severity. 'I am perfectly aware of that. Loto must be wrapped up.'

'In my shawl!' cried Whitty, with exultation. 'In my shawl. Dear little creature! so she must, of course. I wonder I didn't think of it before.' And, under the prospect of this new favour, she seemed more perseveringly amiable, and desirous

of being made use of, or in any way trodden under foot, than usual, during the rest of the morning.

'Mrs. Strangways leaves Weymouth to-day,' she informed Esther shortly before they left. 'I heard it from my lodging-girl, who knows the chambermaid's sister at the York. She goes by the two-twenty train as we do. Wouldn't it be a remarkable coincidence' (Whitty thought everything was a remarkable coincidence) 'if we were to travel in the same carriage? She's going back to Bath to join her husband. He's a queen's messenger, you know, and returned from St. Petersburgh last night. The telegraph—the telegram, I mean to say—arrived quite late in the evening, and she sat up packing half the night. Most devoted, wasn't it?'

'Devoted to return to her husband? Well, Miss Whitty, I really can't see it quite in that light. Besides, as she is not leaving till this afternoon, she might have deferred it till the morning, and so have spared herself the trouble of being devoted at all.'

Esther had been conscious, before ever seeing her, of an instinctive dislike to Mrs. Strangways; and that bow and smile she had once seen her accord to Paul Chichester, strangely enough, had not dispossessed her of the prejudice; so she was by no means warm in her manner when Mrs. Strangways came up, an hour later, as they were waiting upon the platform for the train, and proffered a very friendly renewal of acquaintance with Mrs. Tudor. Mrs. Strangways had seen Mrs. Tudor several times on the beach, but had not known whether Mrs. Tudor had recognized her or not. Sometimes people did not care for the trouble of making or renewing acquaintance by the seaside. She had met Mrs. Tudor at old Mrs. Bradshaw's last winter, and at Mrs. Kennedy's too. The general was laid up with the gout again. Mrs. Tudor had heard it, no doubt?

'And this,' turning composedly, and staring straight in Esther's face, 'this is Miss Fleming, I am sure. I have often heard of Miss Fleming from my friend Jane Dashwood.'

The words and manner were, of course, irreproachable; yet Esther felt that Mrs. Strangways implied, 'This great, raw, country-looking girl *must* be Miss Fleming. There can't be two such persons in the world as the Miss Fleming I have heard of.' And with that inborn dignity of hers, which was fully equal to all Mrs. Strangways' artificial assurance, she turned away as soon as Mrs. Tudor had introduced them, and began quietly asking Miss Whitty as to the disposal of the luggage.

'Oh, it's all right, I think. I'll just look at my card again. Six cases of Mrs. Tudor's and yours, and four of Wilson's, and my own box, and the parrot's cage, and umbrella, and air-cushion, and handbag, and basket. It's all quite right; but, oh dear, Miss Fleming, how much I wish it was safe for Loto to go with the other dogs! he's so very strange, and I think I must say disagreeable in his temper to-day.'

If poor Miss Whitty had an aversion in the world it was for dogs; if there had been anything she could have refused to a person with an income of more than six hundred a year, it would have been to carry a dog wrapped up in her shawl. And then Loto, even for a fat old lapdog, was so superlatively disgusting! Loto made asthmatic noises as she breathed; Loto had a disagreeable filminess over her eyes; Loto was vicious, and treacherous, and snapping, and odious in every sense. The sufferings of the celebrated young Spartan with his fox were scarcely greater than what Whitty endured as she pressed Loto to her heart in her endeavours to screen her from the porters at that Weymouth station.

'Keep her head covered, Miss Whitty, keep her head covered,' said Mrs. Tudor, when they had taken their places in the carriage. 'Don't mind her trying to bite, it's only a playful way she has. Keep her well covered up, and seat yourself back. The guard will be coming in directly to see the tickets.'

'And if I should be found out! cried Miss Whitty, who, between her exertions with Loto and the

fears incident to her sex and age, that some one had taken her luggage, was in a state of most remarkable heat. 'If they find the dog out at the last, what am I to do?'

'Please don't raise such absurd difficulties, Miss Whitty,' said Mrs. Tudor, tartly. 'If you let the creature be seen, of course I shall have to pay for it. But, remember, if you do, make no application to me. Discussions with common people destroy me. For the time being Loto is yours; I wash my hands of her. Esther, my dear, come and sit with me at my end of the carriage. It is necessary for Miss Whitty to have a window to herself, in case poor Loto requires air.'

By dint of incessant feeding with sandwich and biscuits, to say nothing of occasional sharp nips round Loto's throat, Miss Whitty actually succeeded in evading all the official vigilance of Weymouth, and Esther was just hoping that they were to travel without Mrs. Strangways for a companion, when, at the last moment, a clear ringing laugh announced that lady to be still waiting upon the platform.

'Empty carriage here,' drawled a tall, silly-looking lad of eighteen, glancing superciliously for a moment, with very elevated eyebrows, across poor Miss Whitty's shrinking figure. 'Room here, Mrs. Strangways, if you don't mind being so near the engine.'

'Oh, I shall be quite safe, thank you. Minnie will take care of me, won't you, Minnie? Good-bye, Edward. Now mind, we are to see a great deal of you in town next spring. I shall never forgive you if you don't come and see me at once. Good-bye.' And then there was a very warm leave-taking, and, as it seemed to Esther, a rather conspicuous affectation of tenderness on 'Edward's' face, as he whispered parting compliments in the ear of this lady, who, in spite of her tiny hat, and turned-back hair, and manner of girlish heartiness, was still very nearly old enough to be his own mother.

'Edward' continued to stand by the carriage, carrying on an inaudible conversation with Mrs. Strangways until the train started; and then, and not till then, could Mrs. Strangways' eyes disengage themselves sufficiently from the fastening of her glove to perceive that there were other occupants besides herself in the carriage. 'Mrs. Tudor how very glad I am! You are going to Bath, of course? We shall be fellow-travellers for the remainder of the day, then! And Miss Fleming. I had not perceived you before; these horrid walls in the centre divide the carriages so completely in two.'

'I think those walls are the great advantage of the Great Western and its branches,' said Esther. 'They enable one just to see as much as one chooses, and no more, of one's fellow-passengers.'

It was unlike Esther Fleming to make so rude a speech; but some invincible desire seemed to propel her towards being disagreeable to Mrs. Strangways. Her Aunt Thalia heard her with complacence. It was a decided impertinence for a woman like Mrs. Strangways to pretend she had not seen *her*, Mrs. Tudor, sooner; a woman in a doubtful set, with a questionable reputation, and an income dependent upon her husband's services as queen's messenger! Mrs. Tudor was glad to see that Esther, young as she was, knew how to set people down, on occasion, and also what kind of people it was right to set down.

'I think I know that little lad's face you were talking to, Mrs. Strangways; he's one of the Stantons, just the same silly white face as his mother. I suppose he and your young people are friends. Has your eldest son left school yet? I forget.'

'My eldest son, dear Mrs. Tudor! my children are quite little. Minnie, darling, come and say how do you do to Mrs. Tudor.'

But Mrs. Strangways' eyes flashed. The ages of her three eldest children were bitter drops in her cup, thorns in her side, weapons of cruel sharpness, ever ready to the hand of all female friends who chanced to stand in need of any extraneous weapon of attack. Dates of all other kinds may be falsified; but what can put back the living, tangible at-

tatestion conveyed by children of eleven, twelve, and thirteen years of age? Children tall of their age, too. The only way, and that a precarious one, of suppressing such evidence is to keep any unpleasantly-old children as much as possible at school, and out of sight; and this Mrs. Strangways did, reserving for her own companion her youngest child, Minnie, who, by reason of being pretty, and like herself, and small of her years, and considerably younger than the others, absorbed very nearly all the maternal instincts which Mrs. Strangways' scantily-endowed nature could supply.

The results of alternate, unbounded indulgence and absolute neglect, want of exercise by day, and sitting up late at night, did not seem to be very happy ones on Miss Minnie Strangways, whose small face was sallow and pinched, and, even at five years old, already wore a good deal of the anxious, restless look of her mother's. 'I don't want to change my place, thank you, ma,' was her answer to her mother's request. 'I don't want to come by you. I like to stop here and look at this woman and her dog.' And then Minnie perched her small feet up on the opposite seat, and recommenced staring poor Miss Whitty out of countenance with an air of cool superiority and *aplomb* that was good to see.

'Your daughter appears used to have her own way,' said Mrs. Tudor, 'like most of the other young people of this generation.'

'Oh, poor little thing! she is shockingly spoiled; so much with me, you see, and no companion of her own age. I believe, really, I ought to get her a governess, but it would take her so much out of my hands, I can't make up my heart to it.'

'And you would find a governess a very heavy expense, Mrs. Strangways, as you travel so much. I believe I have heard that you frequently join Mr. Strangways when his services carry him abroad?'

'Oh, yes, Tom will have me go to meet him whenever I can. It is a great pity—it obliges me to part from the other children. Minnie and I had to rush off to Austria last Christmas, and when we got to Vienna, Mr. Strangways had left for somewhere else, and I had to stay there in all the horrid, cold, German winter by myself.'

'So I heard,' remarked Mrs. Tudor curtly: the world, in general, had not been behindhand in making many kindly surmises as to that last Viennese expedition of Mrs. Strangways. 'Esther, my love, come and sit by me. Do you remark that little village to the left? That is where your Aunt Engleheart and I once lived in our young days.'

Mrs. Strangways leant her head back quickly in her corner, and the expression of her face told Esther that Mrs. Tudor's manner had taken effect. After expressing due interest in the two farm-roofs and half a church spire that could be seen through the trees, she began to reflect what kind of life this woman's opposite her must be: this woman, in the prime of life still, with children, sufficient means, all the things that go so long a way towards making up happiness; but whom, in spite of all her cool assurance, so many chance shafts from alien hands had power to wound, and upon whose handsome face unrest and discontent were already written in handwriting not to be mistaken.

Mrs. Strangways was very handsome; perhaps it would not be too much to say that she was beautiful. She had taken her hat off now, and was leaning her head back with her eyes closed, so Esther was able to scrutinize her closely. The delicate blue-veined temples, off which the blonde, luxuriant hair was braided back, the straight fine brows, the full rich lips, the graceful lines—though slightly shrunken now—of cheek and neck, all belonged to a higher class of beauty than anything Esther had seen before. Her own opinion might be that Mrs. Strangways' eyes, in spite of all their blue, were cold and hard of expression; that the mouth was sensual, the whole beauty too Cleopatra-like. The beauty itself was indisputable. No man would stop to ask himself what kind of mind or soul looked out from so per-

fectly fair a face! No man would think herself, Esther Fleming, anything but a dark, heavy-looking girl, beside Mrs. Strangways, although one was eighteen and the other two or three and thirty at least. What did Paul really think of her? Esther wondered. He had evaded the subject; he had implicated opinions the reverse of favourable of her as a companion for Jane. But then, how sweetly Mrs. Strangways had smiled upon him! Whatever else his sentiments, any man receiving a sweet smile from such a mouth could have no other opinion than that Mrs. Strangways was one of the most beautiful, the most fascinating women in the world!

Just as she reached this point in her meditations, Mrs. Strangways opened her eyes. 'You know Paul Chichester, Miss Fleming, don't you?' she asked, abruptly.

'I know him slightly,' answered Esther, and she felt thankful that she possessed self-control enough not to colour before Mrs. Strangways. 'His engagement to Jane Dashwood has, of course, made me hear a good deal of him.'

Mrs. Strangways laughed, and her laugh had a very bitter ring in it. 'Paul Chichester's engagement to Jane Dashwood! How simply you said that, Miss Fleming! Has Jane really made you believe Mr. Chichester will marry her?'

'Miss Dashwood has said very little to me on the subject. I believe the engagement is considered an open one.'

'Open, but none the less sure of ending in smoke! Why, every one knows that poor Jane Dashwood is over head and ears in love with some one else. And as to Paul—as to Mr. Chichester, I mean—he never makes any concealment of his fixed intention of not marrying at all."

Miss Whitty, from her corner, heard this and looked up, quite excited. 'Mr. Chichester never means to marry! What a remarkable, what a very remarkable thing, and such a young man, too! There must be something in the background, for certain; better not inquire, perhaps! Miss Fleming, who would ever have thought, that moonlight night when he was giving you Miss Dashwood's messages on the balcony behind the curtains, you know, that he was not a marrying man? I don't know that I have been so surprised by hearing anything for a long time. If one was intimately acquainted with Colonel Dashwood, now, it would be positively one's duty to acquaint him of the circumstances.'

'Of what circumstances, Miss Whitty?' asked Esther, with a quiet smile.

'Why, of Mr. Chichester giving out he does not intend to marry, and yet continuing to court Miss Dashwood all the time. It is just the kind of thing to break a young girl's heart: really I have no patience with such men.'

'I don't think you need have any fears for Miss Dashwood. She is not a girl at all likely to break her heart, nor I should think was Mr. Chichester a man to act dishonourably.'

'You speak with warmth, Miss Fleming,' said Mrs. Strangways. 'Paul Chichester should be indebted to you for your kind defence of him.'

It was with great difficulty Esther could restrain herself from resenting the implied impertinence of the speech; but she did so: and probably her cool silence irritated her antagonist more than the bitterest retort she could have made. It was evident to Mrs. Strangways that the girl knew more of the whole matter than she either said or intended to say; evident that Paul was not a stranger to her, and that, while she professed to believe in his engagement, she was not one whit surprised to hear of his intention of not marrying. Was there more still than this? Could Paul, who professedly never admired any but fair, refined women, be taken by the rude hearty good-looks, the mere country flesh-and-blood comeliness of a face like that?

Mrs. Strangways leaned her head back in the corner of the carriage, after curtly desiring her daughter to come and sit beside her at once; Miss Fleming commenced a cheerful conversation with Whitty upon the probabilities of Lota's sleep lasting

until they reached Bath—and possessed, I suppose, by that sort of magnetic influence which communicates itself to any two women who are, or ever shall be, rivals—not another word, not another look was exchanged between them during all the remainder of the time that they continued in enforced companionship.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN UNKNOWN RIVAL.

A friend was waiting on the platform at Bath to receive Mrs. Strangways when they arrived—a tall and handsome friend; older, and very different looking to the Edward of Weymouth; but who, apparently, stood quite as high as that young gentleman himself in Mrs. Strangways' regards.

'Is that her husband, Aunt Thalia?' Esther asked, as she and Mrs. Tudor were standing waiting for Whitty and the luggage. 'Is that very good-looking person who is talking to Mrs. Strangways her husband?'

'That very good-looking person is Arthur Peel,' answered Mrs. Tudor. 'Whatever man you see beside Mrs. Strangways, at any time, or in any place, you may feel very safely assured is not her own husband. That woman is outstepping all bounds. I shall desire you to be careful in recognizing her until I have made out, exactly, at what houses she is received at present.'

Esther had not time then to trouble herself further about either Arthur Peel or Mrs. Strangways, but the next morning, during an early visit that she received from the Dashwoods, she mentioned the twilight meeting which she had seen the night before on the platform. 'Is it necessary for Mrs. Strangways' safety that some one should always receive her and see her off when she travels, Miss Dashwood? or do you suppose that "Edward" and Mr. Peel were both what poor Miss Whitty would call "happy coincidences?"'

'Coincidences! not a bit,' said Jane; and her face turned rather red. 'The little wretch you saw at Weymouth was one of her boys, no doubt, the fearful boys that she always manages to get round her in the country or at the sea-side—*faute de mieux!* (and as Mrs. Strangways grows older it is an undoubted fact that her worshippers grow younger); as to Arthur——'

'As to Arthur, Jenny?' asked Miss Millicent, somewhat maliciously.

'Well, I don't mind saying, deliberately, that Mrs. Strangways writes to him—I have seen her notes numbers of times—writes and asks him, in that sort of way she has, to meet her at such an hour on such a day. "It would be quite a kindness to Mr. Strangways, who has another engagement," *et cetera*. Then, of course, Arthur goes. How could he refuse to go, even if he wished?'

'And with what object does she ask him?' said Esther. 'What can be any woman's object in compromising her own self-respect for so very slight a reward as Mr. Arthur Peel's companionship?'

'I suppose when we are past thirty we shall know,' replied Jane, petulantly; 'that is to say, if we are still eager and athirst for attention, and willing to cast our reputation away with our own hands, sooner than not be spoken of at all, as she is. Wait till you have known her longer before you try to analyze Mrs. Strangways' motives, Miss Fleming. If you have a turn for moral dissection, like Paul, I can assure you her character is well worth attention. I used to study her, myself, until, one day, the thought struck me that most probably she was what I should be, myself, in another dozen years, and then I gave up the whole investigation in disgust. You have seen Paul, by the way? he told me all about you in a letter—oh yes, he *does* write to me—such queer love-letters—I must show you some of them! Do you like him? He was very guarded, and didn't say whether he talked to you for five minutes or five hours, or alone or before your aunt. Do you think him handsome? do you think I have chosen well?'

'Esther thinks him too good for

you, Jane,' said Milly, as Esther hesitated, visibly. 'You know you always predicted that they would like each other amazingly at first sight—elective affinity, and all that. Don't be jealous, now, if your own prophecies turn out to be true ones. Esther thinks him a great deal too good to be wasted on such a very remarkable description of engagement as yours.'

'I think I know scarcely anything of Mr. Chichester,' said Esther. 'I should say he was not a man to be judged of after a single day's acquaintance.'

'Nor after many days' acquaintance,' added Jane. 'I have watched him pretty closely through a good many of his moods, and I verily believe I know him less now than I did on the first day I ever saw him.'

'And yet you must have had singularly good opportunities of judging of his character,' remarked Miss Fleming, with emphasis.

'Yes, better than if our engagement had been a real one. I see you know all about it; and I must say it was base of Paul to be the first to tell you. When people are really engaged, they, of course, never speak or look at each other without acting—their state necessitates it. Now Paul with me has been as open as with an ordinary friend—more so, perhaps, from the very fact of our sham engagement shutting out the possibility of misconstruction on either side.'

'But surely Mr. Chichester must be the last man living to fear misconstruction, Miss Dashwood. As he openly proclaims the impossibility of his ever marrying, there cannot be danger for any one, however intimate with him.'

'Who told you that Mr. Chichester was never going to marry?'

'Mr. Chichester himself.'

'On my word, Miss Fleming, he seems to have made the most of his time at Weymouth, short though it was!'

'He said nothing at all decided upon the subject—I mean'—for Esther here recollected Paul's vague hints to her on that moonlight night whose merest recollection still had power to stir her heart so strangely. 'I mean, nothing that could be put into actual words. It was Mrs. Strangways who said so.'

'Mrs. Strangways! what an excellent, disinterested authority! Did she know, I wonder, that you were acquainted with Paul?'

'Oh, yes! She saw us speaking to him on the parade one morning and then, I believe, Miss Whitty told her about his talking to me on the balcony that evening—I mean——'

'Oh! pray don't explain. It is quite evident the flirtation has commenced in good earnest. I wish you joy of it, Miss Fleming, and I will promise you never to feel jealous; but still, as you have already reached the balcony stage, I think it my duty, as a friend, to state that Mrs. Strangways' information, though spiteful, is quite correct. Paul Chichester will never marry.'

'Oh!'

'He told me so once, perhaps with a man's true vanity, thinking I might be in danger if he did not; and there was something in his face when he said it that made me feel him to be sincere—painfully sincere. Milly entertains all sorts of wonderful theories of her own as to the real cause of his intentions in this matter.'

'And of his moodiness and oddness too,' interrupted Milly. 'I don't know what you mean by "theories," Jane. I judge by facts; and I am sure the extraordinary things we know about Paul are quite enough to make any one think as I do.'

'The extraordinary things being that, when I was in town, I happened twice to meet him in Covent Garden with a bouquet of white flowers in his hand, and that here, in Bath, papa frequently sees him buying white flowers in the market. Miss Fleming, what supposition do you imagine Milly grounds upon this foundation?'

'That Mr. Chichester is fond of flowers, I should think,' said Esther, with a little laugh: but, in spite of herself, her spirit sank somewhat as she spoke.

'Fond of flowers! what nonsense!'

cried Miss Millicent, indignantly. 'As if men were ever fond of flowers or ever bought them for themselves! Besides, what was the time when you met him in Covent Garden?—ten o'clock in the morning. Is it likely he would go out at such an hour to get flowers for himself? Would he, here in Bath, be seen out in the market before breakfast, and then walking away with his flowers across Combe Down in a pouring rain if they were for himself? The thing speaks for itself!'

'Then whom are they for, Milly?' And, having had time to prepare herself, Esther believed that she now spoke very calmly and collectedly. 'Who is the happy recipient of Mr. Chichester's white bouquets?'

'Ah! there is the mystery. Jane suggested that he might be privately married, perhaps; but that supposition could not possibly hold good. Who ever heard of a man getting up early to buy flowers for his wife? and the most expensive ones, too! Papa took it for granted they were all coming to Jenny, and brought us home such a description of them—roses, and azaleas, and everything that was hardest to be bought. Do you remember, Jane, you borrowed my last five shillings, and went out and got some like them at once, for fear papa should begin making inquiries, and get to hear more than was convenient?'

'Yes; and those I saw him with in town were just of the same expensive kind,' Miss Dashwood replied. 'Moss rose-buds, and white heath, and rhododendron, early in May.'

'Then, whoever it may be that the flowers reach, she has good taste,' said Esther, rather shortly. 'And, as none of us have any real interest in Mr. Chichester, I don't see why we should trouble ourselves by speaking of things that can only concern him.'

'You are quite right, Miss Fleming!' cried Jane, starting up suddenly, in her impulsive fashion. 'Milly, we ought to be ashamed of ourselves for giving way to such undignified curiosity. I shall never speak about those flowers of Paul's again.'

'But I shall,' cried Milly, who was not at all prone to sudden revulsions of delicacy. 'Nothing is greater fun to me than routing out a mystery; and I have long determined to come at the meaning of Paul's flowers, and his oddness, and his stealthy comings and goings, and everything about him. I have had a capital scheme in my head for some time past; and you, and Esther too, although you may be too high-minded to give me any assistance, will both be just as curious as me to hear the news, when I have got it.'

'What should you say if I made a right guess about it all, now, Milly, and so saved you your trouble? Mr. Chichester may have been getting flowers all this time for Mrs. Strangways. She is a person who, I should imagine, would not mind receiving those sorts of small attentions, and he mentioned having been acquainted with her in London as well as in Bath.'

Now I fully believe that Esther said this to turn aside the tacit reproach which she felt her former remark must have conveyed to Jane; at the same time, and giving her credit for any amount of honest simplicity, I cannot help thinking she had also some desire, some latent curiosity herself, to hear Mrs. Strangways' name mentioned by the Dashwoods in connection with Paul's.

'You dear, verdant old Esther!' cried Milly. 'So like you to fix upon the one wicked thing in the world that will never come to pass! Paul Chichester won't have Mrs. Strangways' goodwill at any price, will he, Jane?'

'I think it a great pity you try to talk slang, Milly dear; you do it so badly, and it doesn't become you.'

'Oh! that's very fine, Miss Dashwood. I have heard you say the same thing a dozen times, at least; but you always want us to seem better than we are before Esther.'

'What is it that you have heard me say, Milly?'

'That Paul won't have Mrs. Strangways at any price.'

'I am sure I never said it in those words, which, putting aside their vulgarity, don't mean anything whatever.'

'Then you have said it in others quite as expressive,' persisted Milly. 'I remember, perfectly, one night at the Strangways' (that night papa did not go, and you would sit out half the dances with Arthur Peel), just as we were leaving the cloak-room you congratulated Paul upon Mrs. Strangways' attention to him, and he said——'

'My dear Milly, it is time for us to go,' interrupted Jane; but she reddened somewhat guiltily. 'You have talked quite nonsense enough for one occasion, I am sure.'

But Milly was not to be silenced. 'And Paul shrugged his shoulders, and said, "No, Miss Dashwood, I must really disclaim the happiness you assign to me. Mrs. Strangways is not at all likely to take any trouble about so insignificant a person as myself. 'Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle.'" I remember it so well because I asked you what that meant in English as we were driving home.'

'Then all I can say is that it's a great pity you have not better things to remember, Milly. Any man living might be excused for making a stupid remark at the fag end of one of Mrs. Strangways' stupid "At Homes;" but it is really too bad that such speeches should be chronicled.'

And then Miss Dashwood so resolutely changed the subject by discoursing about the gaieties that they were to have during the ensuing winter, and her hopes that Miss Fleming would be induced to join in them, that Esther (whatever in her heart she might desire) had no further opportunity of hearing Paul Chichester's name that day.

PARISIAN PROMENADES.

THERE is one radical difference between the rides, drives, and promenades of London and of Paris. Here, true British Brahmins that we are, we preserve our caste even out of doors—there, both the world and the people choose the same spots for air and recreation. Here, the upper classes keep aloof from the middle classes, and the middle classes from the humble. There, marquis, millionaire, merchant, shopkeeper, and ouvrier mingle as naturally, and sometimes as agreeably as the ingredients of a salad. Socially and personally, every Englishman is a human island, every Frenchman only a portion of continent—not that the Gaul's nature is more adhesive than the Briton's—but his climate makes him more gregarious, and he must either chatter constantly or die.

The term 'London Society' carries with it a distinct meaning. A man is either in society or out of it, or on its threshold or its staircase. He may be in it and not of it; but there are not two opinions as to what the term means. Now in Paris, society is both more divided and more conglomerated—more exclusive and more open—more accessible and more hermetically sealed.

There is the ancienne, composed of the old historic names, feudal seigneurs who have not trilled syllable on political affairs since 1830. To the rest of France, their salons are closed and their concierges are respectfully forbidding: foreigners they will welcome with that grand old pre-revolutionary French politeness that neither the overthrow of the monarchy, the destruction of that charming safeguard of the honour of families the Bastille, decapitation, exile, senatorial self-annihilation, and Zouave uniforms, has ruffled one marabout feather. As Brummel 'cut' the Prince Regent, so have these highly-bred cavaliers and stately dames 'cut' France. She is unworthy of them—they will fight for, dance for,

legislate for, and trample on her no more. About the time that breeches went out, and trousers came into fashion, France expired, and the Faubourg St. Germain plunged itself into perpetual mourning. But they are society, these grand old nobles, and whether the political part they play be pitiable or imposing, they are still the crême de la crême de la crême.

Following up the lacteal metaphor, the nobility of the Empire, even from the Legitimists' point of view, may surely be considered the very best fresh milk, capable, when it has 'stood' long enough, of producing the very richest cream. The statesmen, field-marshals, engineers, and authors, who, since the beginning of this century, have done so much towards ruling, conquering, improving, and delighting the whole world, are society, and very good society; but would the dwellers in the tall houses of the grim old aristocratic faubourg recognize them? Sooner shall the white lilies be grafted on the tricolor, or the lilies themselves change hue, blush red, and blossom blue.

There is another sort of society that goes to court and gives receptions. It is of inferior pasture, and was called by Balzac the new noblesse of the Chaussée d'Antin. It must be remembered that the great novelist spoke of the Chaussée d'Antin of forty years ago. The speculators and entrepreneurs who compose it no longer live in their old quartier; but wherever they pitch their tents, there is crimson and cloth of gold, there champagne sparkles, and foie gras is rich in the mouth. The young men of this metallic nobility are the viveurs of Paris, and are known at the Café de Paris, the Maison Dorée, and Madrid. Their dress is stentorian, their waistcoats and shirt-fronts being especially complicated, gorgeous, and arabesque.

Poets, authors, painters, and journalists are of society, for the world of Paris is so benighted as to think a writer or an artist of distinction fit company for a kaiser. They are much behind us in that respect, these unfortunate Parisians!

The promenade, as they call it, or the ride or the drive, as we should call it, most frequented 'du monde,' and least by les bourgeois et les ouvriers, is the Bois de Boulogne. Thackeray has sung in his famous song of Drummer Pierre:

> 'You all know the Place de la Concorde,
> 'Tis hard by the Tuileries wall;'

And the Elysian Fields, on a bright clear day, present a sight seldom forgotten by the man who looks towards the Arc de Triomphe for the first time. And how charmingly laid out is this small celestial prairie! What facilities are afforded for that 'distraction' for which all Parisians of all degrees are seeking! There are the Cafés Chantants, and the little toy-houses, that are neither mosques, nor pavilions, nor conservatories, nor arbours, nor Chinese josses or junks, but have a painted, picked-out panel flavour of them all. Then there are all sorts of conveniences for small gambling, the favourite game being a compound of croquet, billiards, and the familiar schoolboy pegtop, and roundabouts such as the childhood of our cold clime never dreamt of, even under the influence of a Christmas indigestion—roundabouts where, for the small charge of two sous, a jeune monsieur or a jeune dame can ride anything, from a low-backed car to a fiery dragon. To the practised eye of a gamin, a hippogriff is a commonplace animal, and Pegasus a circulating medium of every-day occurrence.

But these sights are stationary, and it is the panoramic effect of the many moving equipages that gives most pleasure to the looker-on. There are plenty of carriages, but few horsemen; and that most graceful of female gear, the long flowing breezy riding-habit, is seldom seen. The gandin prefers driving to the saddle. En cavalier, he is subject to the rude remarks of urchins. It is a charming thing for those very young men, who are sensitive to street-pleasantry, to know that the dirty little boys of one great capital exactly resemble the dirty little boys of another. There is a family likeness in gaminerie, and the Pa-

risian variety of the species have a quick eye for a bright spot of costume, or any external peg whereon to hang a ludicrous conceit. On the race-course, at Longchamps, a highly-dressed young gentleman was caracoling on a prancing steed. A gamin caught sight of his well-fitting gloves, which were of a brilliant yellow. 'Pierre,' shouted he, 'this gentleman there has been and shoved his hands into a pair of omnibuses!' The reader will perhaps better appreciate the joke when reminded that in Paris the omnibuses are yellow.

Although the ride to the Bois is charming, the majority of Frenchmen are not happy on horseback—they seem on duty rather than on pleasure, when followed by un groom. Un groom is generally so emphatically un groom, and not *a* groom!

In the carriages, the men sit sternly upright, and the ladies lean back majestically. The pace is pleasant but slow, and is kept up during the drive. There is none of the dash and gallop of our equipages when they find an open space, nor of the crawl and dawdle when the 'Row' is packed. As has been remarked in a former paper, the vehicular 'turn out' of Paris has wonderfully improved since 1851, and 'les dog-carts' look quite knowing and turfy.

The good folks on foot sit down very much during their walk. It is their way of enjoying pedestrian exercise; for your Parisian is so inveterate a flâneur one would think he would flân during a bombardment. He seldom goes beyond the Arc afoot; and the carriages, as they roll through that charming piece of vainglorious sculpture, into the Avenue de l'Impératrice, have it all to themselves. A pleasant trundle over a well-watered road, and the beautiful gates of the beautiful Bois admit you to its leafy serried ranks of foliage—for a large portion of the park is laid out with military rectangularity. The lower branches of the trees are lopped off, and they stand in the earth stiffly, like soldiers at the word 'Attention!' There are broad roads for carriages, and narrow alleys, or *columns*, of verdure, under which equestrians can canter.

The pedestrian who prefers trunks of trees to street-lamps, is permitted to wander from the paths to a thick, umbrageous solitude, where he may, if he please, indulge himself with reflections, like Jacques, but must not, like Orlando, carve any name on any tree. C'est défendu! as all mischief ought to be.

In one of these well-kept jungles we met an Orlando and Rosalind of 1863: Orlando in bottes vernies, and lemon-coloured kid gloves· Rosalind in a piquant and provoking little hat and feather, and the sauciest of abbé collars. She kept her eyes upon the moss as young Mr. O. into the porches of her pretty sea-shell-looking ear did pour his lover-like attachment. As they neared us their eyes met ours, but they did not start, or seem confused, or affect an indifferent manner, after the fashion of billers and cooers of Britannic parentage; but went by as if we had no existence, Orlando bending towards her, his eyes fixed upon her cheek; Rosalind with half-averted head, but listening body. They were not ashamed of being seen, or of each other; and so they threaded the glistening stems and were soon lost in a silver verdant distance.

Out again into the open on the borders of the Lakes, and by the Cascade we see empty carriages. Messieurs and mesdames have descended, and are watching the waterfall, the flood, and the pleasure boats. Messieurs stroll away a short distance to enjoy a cigarette, and mesdames enjoy a good mutual stare, and make mental memoranda as to each other's costume. What a wonderful thing is that gaze of a well-bred woman! that sees everything, while it seems to look at nothing. The riotous gymnastic exercises of smoking and staring exhausted, messieurs and mesdames reascend, and the cocher is ordered to drive to the Jardin d'Acclimatation, or the Pré Catelan, or the Plaine de Longchamps—that smooth, well-shaven sheet of moss, with its white cardboard houses, and dry-land junks

and josses dotting its green surface, as daisies dot an unpicked lawn—and so home either by the dusty Avenue de Neuilly, or airy Auteuil and picturesque Passy: the former of these charming suburbs, by the way, is rich in literary associations, for there dwelt Boileau, Molière, Chapelle, Baron, Racine, and La Fontaine. The celebrated Madame Helvétius too resided there, that devoted widow, who, to remain true to the memory of her lost husband, refused offers of marriage from Turgot and from Benjamin Franklin. Passy was the pied-à-terre of a celebrity of our own day, Béranger.

Where is there a route more charming than that from Paris to Versailles, with the view of the valley of Sèvres, the road leading to the Arc de Triomphe, and the heights of Montmartre crowning the distant city? The pretty little maisons de campagne, and the drying-grounds of the blanchisseuses are picturesque as a scene at the Opéra! and then Versailles itself! Not to be commonplace, its associations, memories, and old historical renown rush through the brain and fill the mind with a vague wonder, as a railway train tears over a landscape and leaves a track of fleecy smoke behind it. Monsieur Vatout, in his 'Souvenirs historiques des Résidences royales de France,' describes Versailles—and we will not weaken the force of his description by translating it—in these words:

'Le génie de l'homme luttant contre la nature, les fleuves détournés de leurs cours pour apporter leurs eaux dans les lits de marbre, une armée occupant ses loisirs à ces immenses travaux, tous les arts à la fois rivalisant de zèle pour égaler la grandeur de la pensée qui les avait convoqués, un palais plus splendide que tous les palais des rois, s'élevant sur les plans de Mansart, et se décorant des trésors du pinceau de Lebrun, des jardins merveilleux dessinés par Le Nôtre, et ornés des chefs-d'œuvre du Puget et de Girardon, une maison souveraine prodiguant par millions les riches tributs de ses conquêtes, une cour fastueuse ajoutant par son luxe à l'éclat de ce royal séjour; enfin, ces premières fêtes ordonnées par Colbert, animées par Molière, célébrées par La Fontaine, et présidées par un demi-dieu, rayonnant de jeunesse, d'amour et de gloire: tel fut le spectacle que présenta la pompeuse création du palais de Versailles.'

Bating the 'demi-dieu'—which we think an inappropriate compliment applied to little periwigged King Louis—this is not an overcharged description. Our own lovely Sydenham has rendered us fastidious in our judgment of gardens; but those of Versailles—if we consider the means at the disposal of Louis XIV., and of Napoleon I., the absence of steam power, and the appliances of modern science—will bear comparison. And à propos of steam and history, this question is suggested: Had locomotives and iron-plated Monitors been invented in 1800, would the Little Corporal have died a prisoner at St. Helena? Perhaps not. Perhaps he might—but it is useless to enter on the question of what he might have done. It would only lead us into that leviathan labyrinth of mental bewilderment and cerebral chaos suggested by the words of the Ethiopian melody, 'Supposing I was you? Supposing you was me? *Suppose we all were somebody else?*' Here the faculties refuse to budge one conjecture further—and even the poet himself, who opened this enormous flood-gate of probable possibility, was compelled to conclude his quatrain with: 'I wonder who we should be!' True, O poet! who, indeed!

Mais revenons à Versailles—to its green alleys, cool fountains, chiselled statues, and cut hedges. Such is the fickleness of man that we have ceased to wonder at its waterworks, once the pride and envy of surrounding nations. Our own Grandes Eaux at Sydenham surpass them. Now-a-days compressed vapour is paramount—and there can be no question that the Genius of the Ring, in the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments,' has long been an overrated architect—the secret of

his instantaneous erection of Aladdin's palace was steam. It is steam that makes the world go round, and enables us haughty Britons to look coldly and critically on the splashing and spouting sea-horses of Versailles!

The bold and turbaned Zouaves guarding the gates look strikingly Asiatic at the portals of the palace of a Christian king; and the presence of three or four old ladies, guardians of as many stalls heaped up with cakes, lollipops, syrups, and lemonade, is not in keeping with this manufactured magnificence. But what would you? All sorts of folks come here, marchionesses, milliners, and masons, princes, pawnbrokers, and piemen—we will not pursue the alliteration further; and when one has thirst, one must drink, and one can obtain nothing spirituous or vinous in the gardens—the liquors are all pastoral as elderberries, and apparently, from their treacly consistence, not much nastier than elder wine.

The society on the terraces and in the alleys, in April last, was of a mixed description. It is a wonderful word that 'mixed,' as applied to men and women. How can human beings '*mix*?' Towering in height and dignity was the inevitable British tourist, happy in the possession of a catalogue and a strapped sac de voyage. The British tourist is in great request at Versailles. No sooner does he alight from the omnibus or cab, look at the palace depreciatingly and say, 'Pouvez-vous?' than the guides and touters are upon him, and mark him for their own. He is not affable, the British tourist, but perhaps he makes up in liberality, in which case he must be very liberal indeed.

Scattered over the grounds are dozens of young mulattoes, dressed in the costume of the Ecole Militaire. If it be a holiday with them, they seem to bear it composedly and almost sadly, as if they would prefer being of a fairer complexion, not to afford so strong a contrast to the statues near and around them. In the Bosquet d'Apollon, half a dozen young men are climbing and endeavouring to hurt themselves with every prospect of success. 'Aie!' cries a gardien, 'Descend!'

'Why?' ask the young men.

'You will break your legs,' says the gardien.

'We are used to it!' is the reply of the climbers, who continue escalading with increased enjoyment.

All the world, his wife and family, have seen Versailles, which is fortunate for those who have to attempt to describe it—for it is indescribable. The eye in kindred action with the mind wearies with the embarras des richesses: the Salon des Pendules, the Cabinet des Chasses, the salle à manger where Louis XIV. welcomed Molière as a guest, and helped him to the wing of a fowl, to the intense indignation of the astonished courtiers, the Salle des Croisades, the Salle des Etats Généraux, the Salon d'Hercule, the Salle du Sacre, the Salon de Diane, the Salons de Mars, Mercury, Apollo, the Salon de la Guerre, the Salon de la Paix, the Salon de la Reine, and the Grande Galerie des Glaces, though they have been 'done' over and over and over again, are always wonderful—but they are to be seen, not spoken of. And it is in these gorgeous halls that the British tourist, who has a catalogue, begins to hate that ingenious instrument of torture, for it compels him to look upon its stereotyped pages, instead of absorbing the wealth of art around him.

The fourteenth Louis is so often represented in paint and marble, that after an hour's slide over the polished floor, you begin to detest that potent monarch with the intensity of a sans-culotte. Surely his whole existence must have been passed in 'posing' to various artists—and what a mercy for posterity that photography 'wasn't then invented!' He must have been a strange man, that high-souled, high-heeled little great one! In one of the ballets in which he disported himself, Night summoned the Twelve Dark Hours, who appeared with the sleeping Aurora as a prisoner. Aurora woke, and wherever she ran, was obstructed by the Dark Hours; the Twelve Hours of Day came to her rescue

and chased away the Hours of Night. At the back, an arcade fermée opened, and the king himself appeared, *dressed as the Sun, and wearing the cordon bleu over his coat of rays*—Glory behind him, and the Muses and Graces on his right and left. The Gloomy Hours fell upon their knees before the Great Cause of Light, Heat, and Vegetation, and the admiring court formed an industrious claque. By this allegorical arrangement, Louis kindly complimented Nature, and decorated the Sun. His favourites fooled their 'domi-dieu' to the top of his bent. Clouds were shaped like camels, weasels, and whales, if he thought so. Nay, an if he chose, they *were* camels, weasels, and whales, whales spouting verses in his honour.

No river is spanned by so many beautiful bridges as the sparkling Seine; no flood washes the banks of so many royal residences. Close to magnificent Versailles, arid, glaring, white, and stony on the one side, as green and glassy on the other, is St. Cloud, with its snug château, and cool, umbrageous Parc. Versailles is to St. Cloud what Windsor is to Osborne. Versailles is for receptions, levees, ambassadorial compliments, state balls, and pageants. St. Cloud is a royal home, where royalty may hide, domestic and unseen. Its deserted alleys, lonely walks, and solitary glades speak with a mournful hush of past grandeurs and present neglect. It has but one sign of interest in the new Paris of 1864: Near the famous cascade is planted, in proud scarlet, green and yellow lustre, a *roundabout*. For a small sum, the lieges of the Emperor may turn and turn and turn again, and still go on to the music of an organ. This is the only concession mossy, velvety, leafy, lovely, old St. Cloud makes to the modern appetite for ignoble amusement.

By the borders of the silver Seine, as we have said, palaces are as plentiful as turnpikes near the Thames, and the approaches to them are so delightful that it is strange the equestrian and vehicular classes do not pass more of their time in the saddle or on the box; but, despite the Emperor's patronage of races, the French will never be a 'hossy' or a 'trappy' people. They have more in their environs to tempt them than poor Londoners. There is St. Germain, with its triple attraction of town, château, and forest; St. Denis, for those who wish to be severely and sepulchrally historical, and find a pleasure in the end of a drive that permits them to see the famous caveaux where royal corpses are classed chronologically, from Clovis to Louis the Eighteenth. There is Neuilly, with its blackened ruins—a recollection of the revolution of '48; Montmorency, fresh, fertile, and delicious, with its valley, lake, and literary memories of Jean-Jacques Rousseau; Fontainebleau, where the first Napoleon made his adieux to his Guard: and here again we may quote the Chronicle of the Drum:

> 'He called for our old battle standard,
> One kiss to the eagle he gave,
> "Dear eagle," he said, "may this kiss
> Long sound in the hearts of the brave!"
> 'Twas thus that Napoleon left us,
> Our people were weeping and mute,
> As he passed through the lines of his guard,
> And our drums beat the notes of salute.'

We defy even the British tourist—and for flesh and blood he is moderately impassive—to stand in the Cour du Cheval Blanc, and not feel that in France the cocked-hat is a representative institution.

By the side of every road that leads from Paris, there is a sight that we do not find in our own suburbs. The broad well-kept path is provided with seats, whereon congregate comfortable-looking bonnes, round whom cluster children of all ages, from the infant of two months to the comparatively elderly young lady and gentleman of six years. The bonnes have an especially maternal manner and appearance. Black of eye, brown of tint, broad of shoulder, and kind of tongue, they are the centre of that domestic solar system, round which toddle and tumble in eccentric orbits those wondrous planets, little children. Nowhere can be found a pleasanter picture than a family group of that lively people, so erro-

neously supposed to hold domestic ties in disregard. Three generations of the same blood, with the bonne as a connecting link, will sit beneath the shade of trees, and talk, and laugh, and amuse each other, with a feeling of home enjoyment that we, in this colder climate, think inseparable from the fireside. There will be madame the grandmother, tending the youngest born but one; madame the mother knitting, her eldest son watching her black eyes with a pair of visual organs of exactly the same pattern and colour, and thinking what a wonderful person is 'maman,' and how, as soon he grows up, he means to marry her, in order to have her always by his side. The bonne holds the latest arrival, and now and then the mother takes her eyes from off her needles to feast them with a sight of her sleeping child. A few yards further on, a grandfather will conduct his little granddaughter by the hand —the child an infinitely graver person than her grandsire, for it is a strange thing that in France, where adults are lively, children are sombre even in their play. When they dig up sand with little wooden spades, they dig not as digs the British urchin, for the sake of worms, or to break the spade, or make a letter, but with the gravity of a geologist, and the intensity of purpose of a digger. Perhaps they dig, as the nation fights—for an idea!

In Paris, says a modern social proverb, Il n'y a que des vieux qui sont jeunes, et des jeunes qui sont vieux; and certainly men on the other side of forty-five are more agreeable than the young fellows who affect the English manner, and engraft the eyeglass of to-day upon the stick-up collar of fifteen years ago. Hippolyte, Auguste, and Edouard must learn to play as boisterously as Jack, Tom, and Harry, to wear out the knees of their trousers with as much facility, to be as unconscious of their neckerchiefs, and as indifferent to wet feet. At the same time, Jack, Tom, and Harry may derive some excellent hints from Hippolyte, Auguste, and Edouard. They may be more submissive to their elders, less sheepish before strangers, and not so addicted to throwing stones. The high tone of our public schools has abolished the cat-skinning, frog-pelting, and dog-tormenting villany of former days, and we hope to see our best sort of boys perfect little Bayards, as gentle as courageous, and as amiable as determined.

Adieu, or rather, à bientôt, charming high roads round Paris! By your own population, your delightful views, crisp houses, beautiful air and blossom-scented breezes are neglected for the lazy cushions, hot oil, and engine smoke of the luxurious railway.

T. W. R.

THE MERCHANT PRINCES OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER V.

THE GRESHAMS OF LONDON.*

www.libtool.com.cn

COSTUME OF ENGLISH, FLEMISH, PRUSSIAN, AND VENETIAN MERCHANTS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.
[From Vecellio's 'Habiti Antichi Moderni,' Venice, 1590.]

* A paper entitled 'The Favourites of Fortune; or, The Greshams,' appeared in 'London Society' for November, 1862. For the completeness of the present series of sketches it is necessary that the subject should be treated again; but in doing so we have here spoken as briefly as possible of the incidents there detailed, and drawn our illustrations from comparatively new sources.

'BECAUSE,' said Cardinal Morton, Lord Chancellor of England, in his opening address to Henry VII.'s first Parliament, assembled in November, 1487—'because it is the King's desire that this peace, wherein he hopeth to govern and maintain you, do not bear only unto you leaves for you to sit under the shade of them in safety, but also should bear you fruit of riches, wealth, and plenty, therefore his Grace prays you to take into consideration matters of trade, as also the manufactures of the kingdom, and to repress the bastard and barren employment of moneys to usury and unlawful exchanges, that they may be, as their natural use is, turned upon commerce and lawful and royal trading.' That advice, excellent in the main, and coinciding exactly with the temperament of the people to whom it was addressed, found plenty of followers. Englishmen had learnt from the example of such men as William de la Pole and Richard Whittington that commerce, wisely pursued, could not fail to bring honour and wealth, both to each individual trader and to the nation at large; and as soon as the firm rule of the Tudors was established they applied themselves to it with notable zeal. The miserable period of the Wars of the Roses, if it did nothing else, served to rid the country of many restrictions introduced in the age of feudalism, and to make fresh room for the development of free thought and independent action. The supremacy of the barons was brought to an end, and the supremacy of the towns—that is, of the merchants and manufacturers who made the strength and wealth of towns—initiated. Many causes led to this result. Under any government, the commercial spirit would have shown itself in unprecedented force, but in no way, perhaps, could it have received much greater encouragement than from the prudent and energetic government of Henry VII. and his successors. The example of foreign adventurers, moreover, the seamen who opened the way to India, Southern Africa, and America, and the traders who followed in their track and turned their discoveries to practical account, had a marked effect on English trade.

Englishmen, however, now foremost in the dominion of the sea and possessors of by far the greatest portion of colonial wealth, were behindhand in the race of maritime enterprise led by Columbus and Vasco de Gama. For a time, the merchants who stayed at home, or, at any rate, within the long-established boundaries of European trade, took precedence of the merchants who went far away to find new sources of wealth, and to use them in new methods. Hence the Greshams, representatives of Tudor domestic commerce at its noblest, claim our notice before the Hawkinses, whose history will show us something of the way in which our colonial empire began.

The Greshams are first found in Norfolk. John Gresham, gentleman, of Gresham, lived in the latter part of the fourteenth century, and inherited a respectable patrimony from ancestors who seem to have given their name to the district.* James Gresham, his son, was a lawyer, living chiefly in London, in attendance at King's Bench in 1443, and apparently a clerk or secretary to Sir William Paston, the judge, whose cause in the civil war he zealously espoused between 1443 and 1471. He became lord of the manor of East Beckham, and transferred the family seat from Gresham to Holt, a bleak and desolate spot on the northern shore of Norfolk, about four miles from the sea. It is likely that in his later years he was something of a merchant, the neighbouring towns, full of Flemish settlers and convenient for intercourse with the coast towns of Flanders, being well adapted for amateur commerce. Certain it is, at any rate, that, whereas of his son John we know nothing but that he married a rich wife, his four grandsons were brought up to trade, having London for their headquarters.

These grandsons, all living in the time of Henry VII. and Henry VIII., were William, Thomas, Richard, and

* See Table of Descent, p. 451.

John.* William, the eldest, is not much known to us. He was a mercer and merchant adventurer of London, and a freeman of the Mercers' Company, but he seems to have lived often at the family mansion, and also to have resided much abroad, besides making journeys in pursuit of his calling. 'It appears,' says Hakluyt, 'out of certain ancient ledgers of Master John Gresham, that between the years 1511 and 1534 many English ships traded to the Levant,' among them 'the "Mary George," wherein was factor William Gresham;' and we find that in 1533 he was appointed governor of the English merchants resident at Antwerp. Thomas was also a merchant trading to the chief towns of the Mediterranean; but being frightened by a ghost story, he gave up business at an early age and became a priest. The commercial interests of England were to be chiefly served by the two younger brothers, Richard and John.

Both were brought up in London as apprentices to Mr. John Middleton, mercer and merchant of the staple at Calais, of whose famous kindred we shall see more hereafter. Richard was admitted to the freedom of the Mercers' Company in 1507, John in 1517. Both strove well from the beginning—the elder brother finding his interest in residing for the most part in London and going occasionally to Antwerp and the other near trading towns on the Continent, while the younger chose a line of business that took him oftener and farther from home. Thus we find that in 1531, while Richard was serving as sheriff of the City of London, John was busy in the Mediterranean. At the island of Scio he hired a Portuguese vessel and filled it with goods to be conveyed to England; but the owner and master of the ship took it instead to his own country, and there disposed of the cargo, worth twelve thousand ducats, on his own account. The theft was brought under the notice of Henry VIII., who wrote an angry complaint to the King of Portugal; but the value of the merchandize does not seem to have been restored. That John Gresham had influence enough to obtain his sovereign's help in this matter, however, shows him to have been already a man of mark. In 1537 he was living in London, and acting as sheriff, his brother being promoted to the office of Lord Mayor at the same time, and both being honoured with knighthood on the occasion of their election. This year, 1537, was a memorable one in London history. Sir Richard Gresham, as chief magistrate, petitioned the King, 'for the aid and comfort of the poor, sick, blind, aged, and impotent persons, being not able to help themselves nor having no place certain where they may be refreshed

* The following table of descent will save the insertion of many dry details in the text:—

John Gresham, of Gresham, gentleman.
└ James Gresham, of Holt, gentleman.
└ John Gresham of Holt, esq. = Alice, daughter and heir of Alexander Blyth, of Stratton, Norfolk, esquire.

- *William Gresham*, of Holt and London, mercer, d. 1548.
- Thomas Gresham, clerk, d. 1558.
- *Sir Richard Gresham* = Audrey, daughter of William Lynne, esq., of Northamptonshire, d. 28 Dec. 1522. — knight, of London, d. 21 Feb. 1549.
- *Sir John Gresham*, of Tilsey, in Surrey, and London, knight, d. 23 Oct. 1556.

Under *Sir Richard Gresham* and Audrey:

- *Sir John Gresham*, knight, b. 1547, d. 1560.
- Sir Thomas Gresham = Anne, daughter of William Fernley, of West Creting, in Suffolk, esquire, and widow of William Read, esquire; d. 23 Nov. 1596. — knight, b. 1519, d. 21 Nov. 1579.
  - Richard Gresham, b. ? 1548, d. 1564.

or lodged at till they be holpen and cured of their diseases and sickness,' that the three hospitals known as St. Mary's Spital, St. Bartholomew's Spital, and St. Thomas's Spital, and the new abbey by Tower Hill, might be restored to their first design. These buildings, he says, 'were founded of good devotion by ancient fathers, and endowed with great possessions and rents, only for the relief, comfort, and helping of the poor, and not to the maintenance of canons, priests, and monks to live in pleasure, nothing regarding the miserable people living in every street, offending every clean person passing by the way, with their filthy and nasty savourings;' and he thinks it better 'to refresh, maintain, and comfort a great number of poor, needy, sick, and indigent persons, and also heal and cure their infirmities frankly and freely, by physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries,' than to support 'a small number' of canons, priests, and monks, for their own profit only and not for the common utility of the realm.'

That was an argument which Henry VIII. was nothing loth to listen to. The three hospitals became city property, and were from this time for the most part wisely governed for the benefit of the poor, the sick, and the insane. Out of the general breaking up of old monastic institutions, Sir Richard Gresham also obtained for his own Mercers' Company a grant of the house of St. Thomas of Acre, since converted into the Mercers' Chapel in Cheapside. Other benefits he procured for himself. Five successive grants of church lands were at different times made to him by King Henry, and in 1540 he was chosen commissioner for taking the value of the various abbeys, monasteries, and the like, situated in and about London. More than consorted even with independence of spirit and love of freedom, he followed the king in his varying course of theological faith and religious persecution. He assisted in the punishing of Papists; he was in 1541, along with his brother, put on a commission for inquiring into repressing the Protestant heresies done in the city and diocese of London.

But work, better and better worth remembering, was also done by Sir Richard Gresham. He laboured hard to obtain for London the great boon which was at last conferred through the hands of his more famous son. In the year of his mayoralty, he wrote an earnest letter to Sir Thomas Audelay, the Lord Privy Seal, to urge the procurement of some lands and houses in Lombard Street, to be used in constructing a Burse or Exchange, on the model of that long established at Antwerp. The whole building, he estimated, would cost hardly more than 2000*l.*, the half of which he could probably collect during his year of office, and, if set up, would be 'very beautiful to the City, and also for the honour of our sovereign lord the King.' In 1538 he again urged the work, sending a full statement of costs and sizes to Secretary Cromwell. But nothing was done for seven-and-twenty years.

In another attempt Sir Richard was more successful. An unwise proclamation, forbidding merchants to barter one commodity for another, on the supposition that the exchequer would lose its due, having been issued, he wrote to Audelay, showing how *every* restriction upon free trade was mischievous, more or less ruinous, in the first place, to the merchants themselves, and in the second, to the Crown, which could only be enriched with a portion of their profits. 'If it shall not please the King's goodness,' he said, 'shortly to make a proclamation that all manner of merchants, as well his subjects as all other, may ever use and exercise their exchanges and rechanges frankly and freely, as they have heretofore done, without any let or impediment, it will cause a great many cloths and kerseys to be left unsold in the clothmaker's hands, if it be not out of hand remedied; for Bartholomew Fair will be shortly here, which is the chief time for the utterance of the said cloths and kerseys. Also there is divers merchants that will shortly prepare themselves toward Bordeaux for provisions of wines; and for lack of ex-

changes I do suppose there will be conveyed some gold amongst them. I am sure, my lord, that these exchanges and rechanges do much to the stay of the said gold in England, which would else be conveyed over. I pray your good lordship to pardon me, for as God shall help me I write not this for none commodity for myself, but for the discharge of my duty towards the King's majesty, and for that I do know it shall be for the common wealth of his subjects, and for the utterance of the commodities of this realm; for the merchants can no more be without exchanges and rechanges than the ships in the sea can be without water.' That sensible and straightforward appeal caused a reversal of the proclamation.

Sir Richard Gresham was too well-informed and clear-headed a man for the advisers of the Crown to despise. Often, during the last dozen years of his life, we find him employed on financial business; sometimes even as an ambassador, or a negotiator with foreign ambassadors, both in Flanders and in England. Nor did he neglect his own. Dying in 1549, he left to his wife and two sons property yielding an annual income, very great at that time, according to the then value of money, of 850*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

Sir John Gresham seems to have been almost richer, and in no respect less worthy than his brother. He assisted that brother in all his benevolent projects, and found others for himself. To him especially, we are told, does London owe the transference from Romish to Protestant hands, and the consequent improvement, of Bethlehem Hospital, long established as a madhouse under monkish government. In 1546 he bought of his eldest brother William the family house at Holt, and turned it into a free grammar-school, richly endowed with funds, which unprincipled and negligent trustees have, to a great extent, diverted from their proper channels. Yet in this same year he was rich enough to lend 40,000*l.*, representing nearly half a million in our money, to the Crown; and in 1547, while holding the office of Lord Mayor, he revived, for the amusement of the citizens, the expensive pageant of the 'marching watch.' He died in 1556, leaving much money to be divided among the London charities, or in ways of his own choosing. A sum of 100*l.*, was left to go in marriage portions to a certain number of poor maids, and nearly twice as much was to be spent in buying broadcloth to be made into gowns for a hundred and twenty poor men and women.

There was another Sir John Gresham, the eldest son of Sir Richard, born in 1518. He was a soldier as well a merchant. For his prowess at the battle of Pinkie, in 1547, he was knighted by the Lord Protector Somerset; and in 1550 he was admitted to the Mercers' Company. In 1553 he equipped three ships on a trading expedition to Muscovy, two of which were wrecked on the way; and under the year 1555 we find his name first on the list of English merchants trading to Muscovy. He died in 1560, at the age of forty-two.

Much more famous was his brother Thomas, the greatest merchant prince, save Whittington perhaps, ever owned by the City of London. He was born, as it seems, in 1519, at one of his father's houses in Norfolk. His mother died when he was three years old, and we know nothing of the early influences by which he was trained to be the conspicuous ornament of a good and noble family. His father, even had the education of one's own children been thought proper work for the fathers of those days, was too busy a man to do very much at home. He was wanted at his counting-house in Lombard Street and at the council-table of the Guildhall. Chiefly resident in London, he was often at Antwerp or Brussels, buying and selling merchandize for himself, and negotiating loans or purchasing stores for his sovereign. Sir Richard Gresham, however, was not unmindful of his son. When he was about thirteen or fourteen, he sent him to Gonville, now Caius, College, Cambridge, where he spent three years under the personal instruction, as it seems, of Dr. Caius, one of the founders of the school.

Then he came back to London, and was apprenticed, in 1535, to his uncle John. In 1543 he was admitted to the freedom of the Mercers' Company, and fairly started in the family calling, to the which science,' he says in a letter written later in life, 'I was bound prentice eight years, to come by the experience and knowledge that I have. Nevertheless, I need not have been prentice, for that I was free by my father's copy; albeit my father, being a wise man, knew it was to no purpose, except I were bound prentice to the same, whereby to come by the experience and knowledge of all kinds of merchandize.' He straightway set about using his experience. In this same year we find him in Antwerp, helping to buy up gunpowder and saltpetre for Henry VIII.'s warlike preparations against France; and henceforth, for the third of a century there seems to have been no flagging to his zeal. As early as the spring of 1545, his name was included with those of his father and his uncle among the wealthiest traders of England. A large quantity of English merchandize having been seized at Antwerp, by the Emperor Charles V. of Germany, great misery was looked for by all the smaller men thus injured; but Richard and William and Thomas Gresham, it was thought, would really be gainers, as their large stocks of silk and other goods would now be sold at a higher price than, but for the seizure, could have been expected.

Thomas Gresham was not, however, wholly occupied with trade. Early in 1544 died William Read, a rich citizen and mercer of London, making his friend Sir Richard Gresham his executor, with a bequest of 10*l.* and a black gown. It was doubtless at Sir Richard's instigation that Thomas took to himself the larger portion of the estate, before the year was ended, by marrying his widow. The choice was not a happy one. Mistress Anne Read was of good family, and aunt, by marriage, of Francis Bacon; it is likely that she brought her husband a good deal of money, and she certainly encouraged him in storing it up; but she seems to have urged him to no worthier pursuit. His letters contain numerous allusions to her, more or less expressive of kindness and sympathy; but there is no good evidence of his liking for her, and none of anything in her that deserved to be liked. One child, a lad named Richard, who died at the age of sixteen, was born of this marriage; and it was a source, we are told, of frequent discord between husband and wife that a daughter of the merchant's, but not of his wife's, was brought up in the Gresham household and treated as kindly and carefully as her brother until she was married to Sir Nathaniel Bacon, elder brother of Francis.

Gresham's marriage did not keep him much in England. For some years he appears to have lived chiefly in Antwerp, with frequent journeys thence to Bruges and London. Antwerp had for many generations been the great meeting-place of the leading merchants of Europe. In a former chapter we have seen Sir William de la Pole residing there as early as 1338, in the capacity of mayor of the English staple and overseer of financial matters on behalf of Edward III. Other men held the ill-defined office, with few intermissions, for more than two hundred years, their business being generally to negotiate loans with wealthy merchants and money-lenders, and also to keep their sovereign informed as to all the important foreign matters known to them. When Thomas Gresham first went out to Antwerp, Stephen Vaughan was thus employed, and he was succeeded in 1546 by Sir William Dansell, a good-natured man, but not much of a merchant, and no financier at all. In 1549 he was reproved for a grievous piece of carelessness, by which, it was alleged, 40,000*l.* was lost to the English Crown. He answered, that he had done his very best—that he could not have done better if he had spent 40,000 lives on the business, and that what he had done was with the assistance of 'one Thomas Gresham.' But the members of Edward VI.'s council were not satisfied. When Dansell wrote to say, 'It seemeth me that

you suppose me a very blunt beast, without reason and discretion,' they did not deny the charge. They thought, and thought wisely, that 'one Thomas Gresham' would act better as principal than as assistant. In the autumn of 1551, says the young man himself—at this time thirty-two years old—'I was sent for unto the council, and brought by them unto the King's majesty, to know my opinion what way, with least charge, his Majesty might grow out of debt. And after my device was declared, the King's highness and the council required me to take the room'—that is, the office—'in hand, without my suit or labour for the same.'

Gresham and his 'device' were certainly needed. At this time the fair interest on Edward's loans to foreign merchants amounted to 40,000*l.* a year; and this burden was increased many times by the greed of the money-lenders, who, at every renewal of a debt, took the opportunity of forcing upon his Majesty some bit of jewelry or other useless article at a fancy price. Here, for instance, is an extract from King Edward's private journal, in 1551, a few months before Gresham became his agent. The Fulcare referred to appear to have been the Fuggers, the richest traders of the day, turned into noblemen by Charles V. of Germany. 'April 25. A bargain made with the Fulcare for about 60,000*l.*, that in May and August should be paid, for the deferring of it: first, that the Fulcare should put it off for ten in the hundred: secondly, that I should buy 12,000 marks weight at six shillings the ounce, to be delivered at Antwerp, and so conveyed over: thirdly, that I should pay 100,000 crowns for a very fair jewel, four rubies, marvellous big, one orient and great diamond, and one great pearl.' Are there many worse bargains recorded in the note-books of spendthrifts, the dupes of conscienceless money-lenders, now-a-days?

It was to put down this abuse that Thomas Gresham was appointed King's Factor in December, 1551, or January, 1552. Personally, or by deputy, he filled the office, with a gap of about three years during Queen Mary's reign, for a quarter of a century. The zeal with which he worked is best shown by his extant correspondence in the State Paper Office, for the most part carefully condensed in Mr. Burgon's 'Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham.'

Over and over again, in these years, but most of all under Edward VI., Gresham was instructed to effect fresh loans, and by the use of soft words and showy compromises to postpone the payment of the debts already incurred. No one knew better how to do this; but he did not like the task. 'It should be no small grief to me,' he wrote in August, 1552, to the famous and infamous Duke of Northumberland, 'that, in being his Majesty's agent, any merchant strangers should be forced to forbear their money against their wills, which matter, from henceforth, must be otherwise foregone, or else in the end the dishonesty of this matter shall hereafter be laid upon my neck. . . . To be plain with your Grace, according to my bounden duty, verily if there be not some other way taken for the payment of his Majesty's debts but to force men from time to time to prolong it, I say to you, the end thereof shall neither be honourable nor profitable to his Highness. In consideration whereof, if there be none other ways taken forthwith, this is to most humbly beseech your Grace that I may be discharged of this office of agentship. For otherwise I see in the end I shall receive shame and discredit thereby, to my utter undoing for ever; which is the smallest matter of all, so that the King's Majesty's honour and credit be not spoiled thereby, and specially in a strange country.'

That was bold language for a merchant to use to the chief advisers—in this case, directors—of the crown. If the members of King Edward's council winced at it, however, they could not deny its honesty and truth any more than they could reject the 'poor and simple advice' offered to them by Gresham. This was, that a certain sum be put by

weekly and sent to him, to be invested in judicious ways, and used in paying off the debts as they fell due. 'If this be followed up, I do not doubt but in two years to bring the King's Majesty wholly out of debt, which I pray God to send me life to see!' Of course the scheme found favour; and of course it was soon discarded. For eight weeks 1,200*l.* a week was sent to Gresham; but then it was stayed, 'because that manner of exchange is not profitable for the King's Majesty.' But Gresham did not desist from his entreaties. Again and again he urged a policy of retrenchment, and suggested several devices—many of them, it must be admitted, quite opposed to the modern views of free trade—for improving the finances of the English crown and people. Sometimes he took the law into his own hands, and adopted hard measures against both home and foreign merchants. 'I have so plagued the strangers,' he said, in a letter from Antwerp to the Council, detailing the way in which he had improved the rate of exchange, 'that from henceforth they will beware how they meddle with the exchange for London; and as for our own merchants, I have put them in such fear that they dare not meddle, by giving them to understand that I would advertise your honours, if they should be the occasion thereof, which matter I can soon spy out, having the brokers of exchange, as I have, at my commandment; for there is never a burse but I have a note what money is taken up by exchange, as well by the stranger as Englishmen.' 'My uncle, Sir John Gresham,' we read in another letter penned in London, 'hath not a little stormed with me for the setting of the price of the exchange; and saith that it lies in me now to do the merchants of this nation pleasure, to the increase of my poor name, amongst the merchants for ever.' Sir John Gresham was in the wrong. By his more patriotic conduct the young man won for himself, amongst the merchants for ever, even a greater name than his uncle could have expected to come from selfish policy. Perhaps Sir John lived to admit this himself; at any rate, he had not long to live before the natural generosity of his temper led him to forget his own great losses and those of his friends, all caused by this new project of his nephew's, in admiration of his pluck and perseverance. 'He and I was at great words,' adds the reformer, 'like to fall out; but ere we departed we drank to each other.'

That was in May, 1553. At about this time the merchant presented his sovereign with 'a great present,'—a pair of long Spanish silk stockings; 'for you shall understand,' says Stow, 'that King Henry VIII. did wear only cloth hose, or hose cut out of ell-broad taffeta, or that by great chance there came a pair of Spanish stockings out of Spain.' Edward was not thankless for either the great or the little favours. In June of this year, three weeks before his death, he gave to Gresham lands worth 100*l.* a year, saying, as he handed him the charter, 'You shall know that you have served a king!'

The merchant also served two queens. 'When the king your brother died,' he said, in a letter to Queen Elizabeth, 'for reward of my service the Bishop of Winchester' (the renowned Gardiner) 'sought to undo me; and whatever I said in these matters' (of finance) 'I should not be credited.' Yet he held his place for some time, laboured hard to maintain Queen Mary's financial credit, and received not only her thanks, but also those of her graceless husband Philip II. Better fortune came to him, however, with the accession of Elizabeth. Hearing of the change of sovereigns, he hurried from Antwerp to Hatfield to render homage, and on the 20th of November, 1558, as he wrote to his old friend Sir William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burleigh, 'Her Highness promised me, by the faith of a queen, that she would not only *keep one ear shut to hear me*, but also, if I did her none other service than I had done to King Edward, her late brother, and Queen Mary, her late sister, she would give me as much land as ever they both did; which two promises made me a young man again,

and caused me to enter upon this great change again with heart and courage; and thereupon her Majesty gave me her hand, to kiss it, and I accepted this great charge.' His first act in fulfilling it was the writing of a letter to the Queen, showing how the nation had fallen into the debt which she found, and how its credit was to be regained. The evil, he said, sprang from three causes: in the first place, the great debasing of the coin of the realm by Henry VIII.; in the second, the wars that he waged on the Continent, which made it necessary for so much gold to be carried to Flanders, and there disposed of; in the third, the protective policy shown to the foreign merchants of the Steel Yard, allowing them to export wool and other articles for a lower duty than that claimed from English merchants. The remedy was fivefold:—'First, your Highness hath none other ways but, when time and opportunity serveth, to bring your base money into fine; secondly, not to restore the Steel Yard to their usurped privilege; thirdly, to grant as few licences as you can; fourthly, to come in as small debt as you can beyond seas; fifthly, to keep your credit, and specially with your own merchants, for it is they must stand by you, at all events, in your necessity.'

Gresham had defrayed Queen Mary's debts to the extent of 435,000*l.*; but, as he said in a letter to Cecil on the 1st of March following, there was a moiety of the Crown's outstanding debts, equal to 30,000*l.*, that must be got rid of in the following April and May. 'And for the payment thereof, and for keeping up of the exchange, the Queen's Majesty hath none other ways and help but to use her merchant adventurers. Wherein I do right well know they do stand very stout in the matter. Nevertheless, considering how much it doth import the Queen's Majesty's credit, of force she must use her merchants. And for the compassing thereof her Highness shall have good opportunity both to bargain and to bring them to what price her Majesty and you shall think most convenient. First, it is to be considered that our English merchants have at least forty or fifty thousand cloths and kerseys lying upon their hands ready to be shipped, which they will begin to ship when they shall know to what point they shall trust their custom. Secondly, this matter must be kept secret, that it may not come to the merchants' knowledge that you do intend to use them, and to lay sure wait, when their last day of shipping shall be, and to understand perfectly at the customer's [custom-house officer's] hands, at the same day, whether all the cloths and kerseys be entered and shipped and water-borne; and being once all water-borne, then to make a stay of all the fleet, that none shall depart till further the Queen's pleasure be known; thirdly, that being once done, to command the customer to bring you in a perfect book of all such cloths, kerseys, cottons, lead, tin, and all other commodities, and the merchants' names, particularly what number every man hath shipped, and the just and total sum of the whole shipping; and thereby you shall know the number and who be the great doers.' When, in this remarkable way, the whole spring fleet of exports from the City of London was in the hands of the Government, Gresham showed it would be easy to compel the merchants to raise the rate of exchange from 20 to 25 Flemish shillings for the pound sterling. 'This,' he went on to say, 'will prove a more beneficial bargain to the Queen's Majesty, and to this her nation, than I will at present molest you withal; for it will raise the exchange to an honest price. As, for example, the exchange in King Edward's time, when I began this practice, was but 16*s.*; did I not raise it to 23*s.*, and paid his whole debts after at 20*s.* and 22*s.*, whereby wool fell in price from 26*s.* 8*d.* to 16*s.*, and cloths from 60*l.* a pack to 40*l.* and 36*l.* a pack, with all other our commodities and foreigners', whereby a number of clothiers gave over making of cloths and kerseys? Wherein there was touched no man but the merchant, for to save the prince's

honour; which appeared to the face of the world that they were great losers; but to the contrary in the end, when things were brought to perfection, they were great gainers thereby.'

www.libtool.com.cn

That letter clearly shows us with what a high hand Gresham served his sovereigns. Tyrannical and unjust was his policy, if judged by modern standards; but then all the financial policy of the Tudors was, in the abstract, tyrannical and unjust. Gresham adopted the crude and very defective system of political economy current in his day—perhaps he had not even as moderately sound an understanding of the principles of free trade as we have seen indicated in the speech of his father; but we can hardly blame him for that. And, on the other hand, he is very greatly to be praised for the consummate skill with which he used his imperfect machinery to the advantage of his sovereigns and their dominions. If he erred, he did that which was no error in the eyes of many of the wisest and best in his day, and he managed his mistaken dealing so that the sufferings of the few were slight and the profits of the many were great. He helped Edward VI. and his government out of what seemed to be insuperable difficulties of finance, and in so doing abolished the grievous scandal by which an English monarch was left to the tender mercies of a crowd of foreign pawnbrokers. He served Queen Mary with equal zeal, until the un-English policy of her Spanish husband made it impossible for him to continue serving her in public. He aided Elizabeth during twenty years of her reign, and, even by the most violent measures which he took with that object, he helped to place the commerce of his country upon a firmer basis, and to win for it unprecedented honour from foreign nations.

We must not follow him through the details of his service as Royal Factor under Elizabeth. To do so would require a volume; and when that was done, but a small part of his busy life would be described. His correspondence shows him to have been full of occupation in a variety of ways. Unfortunately it is least explicit on the two points which we should be most glad to have elucidated—his domestic life and his doings as a merchant on his own account. We but dimly see him in his banker's shop in Lombard Street—the bankers of that time being wholesale dealers in every kind of merchandize as well as money-lenders and pawnbrokers; and we know still less of his conduct and appearance in the privacy of his residence upstairs. But he was not often at home. Early in Queen Elizabeth's reign he left the bulk of his business in Antwerp, both as Royal Factor and as independent merchant, in the hands of Richard Clough, a very clever and very honest Welshman, in whom the prompt and expeditious merchant found only one fault. 'My servant,' he said, in a letter to Cecil, 'is very long and tedious in his writing.' Gresham, however, had repeatedly to go abroad on either his own or the Queen's account. A bill which he sent in on the 22nd of April, 1562, for the first three years and a half of Elizabeth's reign, ran thus:—

	£	s.	d.
Riding and posting charges .	1,627	9	0
House hire	200	0	0
Diet and necessaries . . .	1,819	3	5
Total .	£3,646	12	5

which we must multiply by ten to get the approximate value in the currency of to-day.

Doubtless the money was well spent. Gresham travelled so quickly that once, in 1561, he fell from his horse and broke his leg. He had hard work to do in posting from place to place, borrowing money from one merchant, paying the debts due to another, and conciliating all by feasting them after the fashion for which Antwerp was famous during many centuries. And he was not employed simply on money-matters. Several times we find him going abroad on political errands. Now he is at Brussels, making inquiries as to the merits of the many foreign claimants for Queen Elizabeth's hand; now at Antwerp, ap-

peasing the displeasure of William, the Prince of Orange, offended that the Queen has not yet sent him help in his and the Huguenots' strife against Philip of Spain and the Catholic party; and now again he is in the train of the Duchess of Parma, watching her movements, and sending home reports of them. There are few topics of moment at that period not touched upon in his letters to Cecil. In one, written as early as 1560, he writes to warn his mistress of the treacherous designs of Philip II. against England; let her, he says, 'make all her ships in a readiness, and suffer no mariners to go, no kind of ways, out of the realm;' in another, dated March, 1567, he rejoices in the fact that in Antwerp alone there are forty thousand Protestants willing to die rather than that the word of God should be put to silence; and in the same month he has to write and say that those forty thousand have been vanquished, and the Catholics are masters of Antwerp.

That victory of Jarnac brought to an end Gresham's employment as Queen's Factor at Antwerp. He hurried home from his last visit to give help to Elizabeth's advisers in London, and soon he was followed by Clough, and not a few of the Flemish merchants with whom he had had dealings, now houseless emigrants, though soon to grow wealthy again in England, and to add much, by their industry and honesty, to the wealth of their adopted country.

Henceforth Gresham seems to have lived constantly in England. He had been knighted in December, 1559, and from that time he ceased to reside at his shop in Lombard Street; but his own riches and the favour of the Queen enabled him to erect, or adapt to his use, far more imposing mansions at Fretwood in Norfolk, at Mayfield in Sussex, and elsewhere.

In these years, moreover, he was busy about the building of two much more memorable structures. Fuller sums up his claim to the honour of posterity by saying that he was 'the founder of two stately fabrics; the Royal Exchange, a kind of college for merchants; and Gresham College, a kind of Exchange for scholars.' Gresham House, begun in 1559 and finished in 1562, was used first as a private residence. The Royal Exchange was in course of erection from 1566 to 1569. The idea had been started, as we have already noted, by Sir Richard Gresham in 1537, only six years after the Burse at Antwerp, the first building of the kind, had been opened. Scouted then, it was revived by Richard Clough, who wrote in 1561 one of his pleasant gossiping letters from Antwerp to Gresham, complaining of the London merchants, 'that do study for nothing else but for their own profit.' 'As, for example,' he continued, 'considering what a city London is, and that in so many years they have not found the means to make a Burse, but must walk in the rain, when it raineth, more like pedlars than merchants; and in this country, and all other, there is no kind of people that have occasion to meet, but they have a place meet for that purpose.' Sir Thomas Gresham, remembering his father's project, and himself seeing the urgent need of a proper meeting-place for merchants, readily adopted his agent's hint, and forced it upon the attention of the London traders. It took him four years to do this. At last, early in 1565, the merchants and citizens of London agreed to the building, and by the autumn of 1566, seven hundred and fifty subscribers had set down their names for a total of about 4,000*l.* That sum served to buy the ground, and, as we learn from Stow, 'on the 7th of June, Sir Thomas Gresham laying the first stone of the foundation, being brick, accompanied with some aldermen, every of them laid a piece of gold, which the workmen took up, and forthwith followed upon the same with such diligence that by the month of November, in the year 1567, the same was covered with slate.' How the stone was brought from one of his estates in Norfolk, and the wood from another in Suffolk, while the slates, iron-work, wainscoting, and glass were sent from Antwerp by Richard Clough; how the noble building, with ample walks and rooms for merchants on

the basement and a hundred shops or booths above-stairs for retail dealers, was completed by the summer of 1569; and how it was christened on the 23rd of January, 1571, when 'the Queen's majesty, attended with her nobility, came from her house at the Strand, called Somerset House, and entered the City by Temple Bar, through Fleet Street, and, after dinner at Sir Thomas Gresham's in Bishopsgate Street, entered the Burse on the south side, and, when she had viewed every part thereof above the ground, especially the Pawn,'—the upper part with its hundred shops—'which was richly furnished with all sorts of the finest wares in the City, caused the same Burse, by an herald and trumpet, to be proclaimed the Royal Exchange, and so to be called thenceforth, and not otherwise;' is it not all written in the book of the chronicles of Stow, as well as in every other trustworthy history of London?

SIR THOMAS GRESHAM'S TOMB IN ST. HELEN'S CHURCH, BISHOPSGATE.—(Page 461.)

Familiar also, to readers of this magazine, at any rate,* is the affecting episode of Gresham's life in which, during three years and a half, from the summer of 1569 to the winter of 1572, he acted, much against his will, as gaoler to poor Lady Mary Grey, sister of the Lady Jane whom Northumberland's ambition made sham queen of England for a day. In that episode is included nearly all that is interesting in our extant information about Sir Thomas Gresham's later years. He seems to have lived chiefly at his house in Bishopsgate Street, and quietly to have carried on his mercantile pursuits there and at the newly-built Exchange hard by. We see but little of him in the records of Court festivities or financial history. The work appointed for him he had done, and all the rewards he could hope for were his already.

Honest and enterprising in the path he had marked out for himself,

* See 'London Society' for November, 1862, pp. 398–400.

steadfast in the service of his Queen and his country, and zealous for the dignity of both, he had little in common with the new generation of men just appearing in the prime of life. He had done his work in raising to an elevation never before attained the old-fashioned sort of English commerce, within the narrow limits of European civilization, which he had learnt from his forerunners. In no unfriendly spirit, as we see from the numerous entries of his name as a subscriber to the exploring expeditions of Frobisher and others, but doubtless with the thought that he at any rate had no need to go out of the beaten track in which he had walked so well, he left the chivalrous company of Hawkinses and Raleighs, Drakes and Cavendishes to extend the empire of commerce to far-off regions, and to open up new and boundless sources of trade. And he was wise in doing so.

He died in harness. 'On Saturday, the 21st of November, between six and seven of the clock in the evening,' says Holinshed, 'coming from the Exchange to his house, which he had sumptuously builded, in Bishopsgate Street, he suddenly fell down in his kitchen, and being taken up, was found speechless, and presently died.' On the 15th of December he was buried solemnly and splendidly, at a cost of 800*l.*, in St. Helen's church, hard by, a hundred poor men and a hundred poor women following him to the grave. His greedy wife and her greedy son, born of a former husband, his own son and daughter being already dead, inherited his immense wealth, and the indolence of the Mercers' Company, in the course of generations, robbed of nearly all its good effect the noble bequest, by which he intended to have converted his famous house into a yet more famous college for educating young merchants in those parts of knowledge best fitted to adorn and to improve their positions. But neither avarice nor apathy have been able to deprive the noblest name in the history of Tudor commerce of its place in the heart of every Englishman, or to undo the work of its greatest owner in forwarding the interests of trade and giving dignity to the merchant's calling.

H. R. F. B.

NOTES ON DRESS AT A FANCY BALL.

MANY have been the comparisons by which the dress of our day has been judged. Many have been the arguments for its beauty or for its ugliness. The wide-flowing dresses with the sweeping trains of the ladies, and the straight plain coats and general blackness of gentlemen, all have been often discussed, but not often brought to fair trial. A fair field and no favour is, for once accorded, however, to all the world (who are there) on the nights of great fancy balls.

The glittering dress of the gentlemen, who, debarred from their much-loved black coats, break suddenly into splendour, compressing into one night, as it were, the finery of a lifetime; the marvellous fancies of ladies, who we must now suppose to adopt the style they conceive most charming and most becoming to them, and who make strange blunders sometimes, as people will do always in judging of their own forte; the dresses of ages past, and the dresses that are based only upon some poet's fancy, or on the shining wonders of some fancy ball; the heroes who don't look heroic; the famed beauties who don't look beautiful; the whole thing is a delusion, a burlesque of life and history.

And yet never was there a scene where so many elements joined in adding each their tribute of beauty to the whole. People must be good actors to sustain a historical character; they must possess the features to picture some far-famed beauty. So far, no doubt, they often fail; but the wonder to me and to many, in seeing the throng sweep by, has been to see how very few have not possessed some beauty, some grace or charm of some kind.

Amidst the gayness and brightness, each shared in the whole effect. The scene was a vast moving parterre, and who should call one flower plain?

Of late, too, our liberal fashions have been apt to gather up the pretty things of all times—the open flowing dresses; the long sweeping trains; the high-heeled rosetted shoes; the large and feathery fans; the open, soft, hanging sleeves; the knots of the gayest ribbons. In every age almost we recognize something that we have stolen, and that we now call ours, and with each year apparently more items are adopted.

A few years ago, it is said any accidental revival of the old-fashioned powdered hair was thought supremely becoming; now it is rather remarkable how little this is noticed. It strikes me that the real secret was less in the white powder than in the brushed-off hair, exposing the white forehead, and softening the face wonderfully, as the hair that was raised so lightly fell back in the long *repentir*, or rolled lightly away backwards to be confined with combs. It was the halo of hair that was beautiful, and not the whitewash of powder. The hair, as we see it now, may be as becoming as ever, but now it is very usual to hear abuse of the plastered whiteness. If women *will* wear powder, besides the glittering gold dust that shines in its own coloured tresses, let them at least resolve to merely powder, literally, just in the turned-off hair; then, indeed, it may soften without impairing beauty.

How strange a mistake it is when the beautiful soft white hair, which is one of the charms of age, is dismissed for some darker shade that harmonized doubtless well with some bright young colouring, but which now fails to suit the beautiful soft clear look that the smooth white hair becomes so much always in English faces, with the bright complexion and pretty colour that clings to them in age. Here we see young faces seeking the added charm that they find in white powdered tresses, because of that very softening, and there we see braids and curls that now only harden the face they pretend to shade.

The soft clouds of tulle that are so much worn by every one, falling back from the head and almost

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libook.com.cn

Drawn by Adelaide Claxton.

A MODERN MASQUERADE.

www.libtool.com.cn

sweeping to the floor, are perhaps the prettiest fancy that must become a part of daily dress before long. Gaining ground so fast in Paris as this fashion is said to be doing, it must, for its very prettiness, become more and more universal: the white and the black veils equally becoming their various wearers until we recall the old legend which points to the veil of moss as the last best gift to the rose.

Two things are very evident to all in such scenes as these. How very much easier it is to represent an idea than a character, and how very much more telling is form than colour in dress. The most brilliant combinations were merely grotesque without it, and the darkest and saddest tints possessing it were graceful.

Here we have the denizens of the celestial empire, all in their gold and satin, made in most barbarous shape, and there we have Turkish doctors and Neapolitan sailors, and there are Arab chieftains, and Greeks in their national dress, and there are native Indians all covered with shawls and jewels. In all these many differences, all so un-English and all unfamiliar, the meed of admiration always follows the flowing forms.

The women, too, must be criticized. It is a singular fact how many adhere to crinoline, declining, for one night even, to forego its services. Perhaps that was one reason why the ideal dresses have lately become so numerous. Many there were still dressed exactly as China shepherdesses, their blue and pink satin petticoats being festooned with roses, with little high-heeled boots, and silver crooks laced with flowers. Some are the Watteau groups, others are Dresden figures. Their hair is rolled back and powdered, and their faces are patched and rouged, and they are, in fact, got up to be perfect walking pictures.

The French court is also popular, and Louis Quinze and Seize might quickly have formed a court amongst the many who seemed to have now stepped down from the frames in which they had abided patiently in their court costumes for so long. It is not, however, always that grace will accompany dress; and it really is quite refreshing to turn to the water spirits and their companion elements, and to find in ideals and seasons some relief to our wearied minds—wearied to the last degree by the procession of past ages winding by.

This class is most often very taking. There is a breadth and license that admits of imagination. First, as we sat and watched, dark Night trailed by, with her stars, and the moon on her head, and the owl, and after her came silently the softly-falling Snowdrifts. The snowdrifts were perhaps amongst the things that were best represented. The long and flowing white draperies and the veil that swept on the ground, with its soft-falling flakes of the purest swansdown; the icicles that glittered and sparkled above the snow, sometimes on the holly-sprays that hungry robins pecked at; the atmosphere of haze—you felt cold when they drifted past you. Here is the Morning breaking, with its faint tinge of rose light, and with the flickering star that goes out before the sun.

Here is the Evening grey, with the dusky dim robes of twilight, and with its star, too, glittering the brighter as night draws near. There has been Starlight night, and here comes the deep Midnight, folds upon folds of blackness, and scarce a star appearing. One wonders how such deep black can yet look so unsubstantial: it is the deep darkness which is still to us intangible. But both in the snow and the darkness the multifarious folds of the soft cloudy tulle seem to heap up with natural lightness the real thing that they represent. There is in both of these a true atmospheric influence.

One does not see why 'Air' should be harder to represent. Perhaps, unless we took fog, we can't see the original, and therefore one is puzzled to carry out quite the ideal. To represent air properly I suppose one should be invisible, which seems to me to involve insuperable difficulties. Fire may be very pretty, only I cannot see why people should wear red satin or embroider the flames on black. Surely a cloudy white dress with golden flames play-

ing over it and fastening in the hair, would be a great deal prettier and much more like the element. The only thing against fire is, that it is so often a painful representation to some people who may see it.

The list of unrealities is growing very long, but one cannot pass by silently the Morning Star that shines on us, with pale golden hair unbound, and floating away as the clouds, and with a mist of tulle, over which it shines and sparkles. This is so very pretty for people with pale gold hair. Then there is Flora, too, with her robe all bestrewn with flowers—with flowers that drop from her hair, and that hang on her in bright masses.

Spring, too, is flitting towards us with her dress of pale primrose hue and with her nestling violets and her tufts of snowdrops springing. Certainly these ideals are very pretty indeed. They cannot be called to account for all their pretty fancies; they have a little rule and a very great deal of licence. But if such fêtes as these have thrown open the golden gates and let in a throng of fairies and such unsubstantial sprites—if they have given reins to fancy and permitted aërial flights—so do they also permit us to visit a lower sphere. Already abroad we hear of many an odd device. A bat here flies by night, flapping its wings that glitter with the diamond dewdrops that fall from the eaves of the thatch as it passes. Here we see the well-known 'white cat,' and her blue collar names her Minette. What a soft, pleasant dress to wear that snowy white fur must be! Birds flit about here and there—and here is a cock with red spurs. When animals once come in fashion one never knows what to expect. One has heard already of lizards that glittered in green and gold, and a swarm of brown bees in Paris have welcomed the imperial party, stepping from their straw hives that flew open at a touch, and forming themselves in lines through which the Empress passed.

Butterflies have been personified—no sarcasm being intended—and very graceful insects one can guess that they were in Paris.

But no matter what the dress may be, the great thing to each wearer is, doubtless, its becomingness, its prettiness, and its gracefulness, and its ease to wear in itself. And though it may be said that some people suffer willingly in 'so good a cause' as dress, yet let no one make light of the intimate connection that there is between ease and grace. It seems to run through everything. A woman, dress-imprisoned, can never look at her ease—a bonnet, or a head-dress, or a comb that wearies one—a band of elastic, perhaps, that secures some veil or wreath—a dress that constrains the figure—a mantle or gown too heavy, clothes that are not warm enough, or things, again, that are too warm. How can one think of good dressing in connection with any of these? The acmé of good dressing would seem to be supremely in perfect suitability; each thing should seem the only thing one could wear in such circumstances. Colour, again, is a thing so often considered *alone*. One buys what looks charming on others, and never does the thought cross us that we may be so different—that what looks well on one may look just as ill on another.

Nothing is more amusing than to see ten blonde women rushing to get some lovely new colour that suits some dark friend of theirs marvellously—and perhaps our most usual practice is equally ridiculous—when every one copies the Empress in everything but her beauty. Not only in becomingness, but also in general harmony, people must consider not only what they are, but also every item of which they compose a toilette. Every one knows how completely wrong gloves can spoil a whole dress—say dark-green, for instance, when the tone of the dress is warm—that is, of course, an example taken from morning dress; but if people will not think of colour then they are not at all more likely to manage it well in the evening, when, though under more control, it is by no means uniformly brought into proper keeping.

Now Scotch dresses, as a rule, are

a warning at fancy balls. You see a great deal of colour, but there is nothing telling. A red, or a blue or green scarf and things in the hair to suit it, would be at least distinct and bright upon the white dress. The misfortune here is generally that there is no mass of colour sufficient to hold its own amidst the great mass of dead white. The green is broken by red, and the red is made dim by green, and a general dislocation is apparent about it all.

Amidst so much colour and so much intention, unless you represent something you should represent some one, or else be content and happy as a nineteenth century lady; and many indeed are the votes that proclaim their dress after all the prettiest of the throng. They are so wide and trailing, so soft in their silky folds, the flowers lie on them so lightly, and the long veils break them so gracefully. Great scope is given, however, to personify favourite characters. Sometimes Amy Robsart passes, and there Ellen Douglas glides; Dolly Varden meets us; one expects to see Becky Sharp. Undine is scarce a character; but seeing so invariably Rebecca and Rowena, Minna and Brenda appearing, one wonders why Walter Scott should be always so very popular.

Madame de Pompadour, too, and many French notorieties; Polish and Russian ladies, and here and there fair Circassians. Even a Moorish princess is well received in Paris.

The costumes of countries are, perhaps, the worst things to carry out. A neat English servant's dress is certainly very pretty; it is so extremely suitable and appropriate to her place; but I never can see the benefit of ladies adopting a peasant's dress. The short striped Swiss petticoats, with their laced velvet bodies; the dress of the Roman contadinas or of the French grisettes—the tall caps of Norman bonnes—the expansive white wings of the Flemings. It seems quite unaccountable why putting silk for calico should make peasants' dresses suitable for ladies, and to me it seems always that ladies are not at home in them.

Amongst the grotesque figures that will cross one's path in such scenes there is that Quasimodo, deformed and hideous-looking, with long carotty locks of hair and a horrible skip when he walks. Faust and Mephistopheles don't often look half diabolic. It is a great misfortune that flame-coloured garments won't make them so. But the best representation of their kind in the present day would be clothed in such oily sanctity or in such very jaunty, and in such liberal guise, that no one would dream of the meaning, and would think only of dear friends.

Women generally do not go in for dressing as 'hideous.' The lady who was Photography, at least only hid her charms under the towery walls of her singular attire. Very few indeed will make themselves purposely frightful.

And I think there should be a law for all against intentional ugliness. There are enough and to spare of ungraceful things in the world, and to multiply fair things seems to be, of the two, so much more laudable.

The gentlemen, it must be owned, will shelter themselves behind precedents. One rarely sees them devise new characters as women do. Women do, doubtless, now and then appear as Queen Elizabeth, or, boldly, as Mary Stuart; but men have, without exception, some guide to fall back upon. And this it is in a great measure that gives such an air of history to the scene. The Crusaders are here with their cross, and the Templars with long white cloaks, and Knights of Malta pass by in black velvet dress, with their diamonds shining, and their irreproachable boots. Among the most picturesque dresses the University robes are seen here and there—suitable or not suitable—at least the one sole vestige we keep of antique beauty, probably the one dress that would not disgrace an old statue.

Here we see Garibaldi, and there Neapolitan sailors. Charles the Second in his plumed hat, and

Henry the Eighth with his cloak and his gay embroideries, and his hat with its ostrich plumes.

Here is Sir Walter Raleigh, tall, and dark, and grave; there a Spanish hidalgo all covered with small black tassels.

www.libtool.com.cn

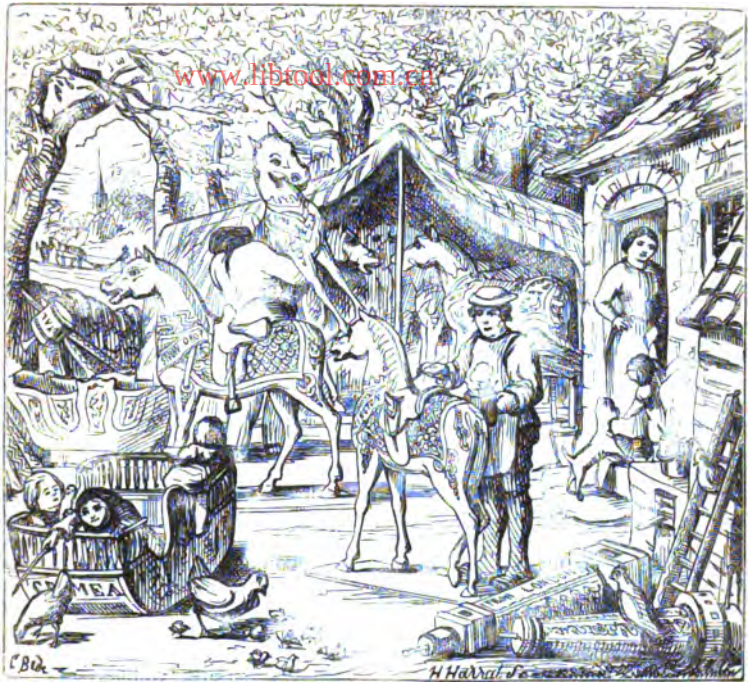
French kings and English nobles, the heroes of romance everywhere: with my Lord of Leicester the Chancellor Clarendon passes; Sir Thomas More walks with King Henry, and perhaps Captain Macheath joins them. No novel is safe from pillage, its characters step out of it; no picture may rest in its frame, it walks out as the Huguenots.

The shining of rich embroidery and the glow of bright-coloured velvets; the glittering sword-hilts and the waving plumes, all make up a wonderful picture of the life of all time before us. The uniforms of all nations are to be seen around us; only the sombre black coats have mostly withdrawn their gloominess, where men in court suits are rustling and men in chain armour stalking by. Except the close-fitting black suits, with mantles that fall from the shoulders, and the robes that give Roman dignity, and the rare handsome uniforms, there can be little question as to the dress that is most *distingué*, that which would with most difficulty be worn by one not a gentleman. For let me remark, *en passant*, fine feathers don't make fine birds; to put on a very fine dress is a trying thing for some people. But one cannot see the long waistcoats covered with fine embroidery, the delicate lace cuffs, and the long cravats falling down, the delicate light velvet coats that suit so well with the powdered hair, the silk stockings and diamond buckles that glitter upon the shoes; one really cannot see the refined look of the seventeenth century without lamenting very much that its nearest trace is now only seen in liveries.

All honour to fancy balls, which ventilate dress theories, and give us an opportunity of judging the dress of one century by that of ten others so readily! But amidst all the knights of old, and amidst the Crusaders' armour, and amidst the many uniforms of red and blue that passed by—amongst all the glittering throng which ornaments shone brightest? Here and there was a quiet figure that passed by in the crowd unconsciously, yet after whom many eyes turned. One was a mere boy, the battle of life, one would have said, had yet to begin for him; but there was an expression of power reserved in that face still, which well might make one think he would bear himself bravely when it came. There was not, perhaps, that eager look of almost boyish daring; there was an unboyish calmness that seemed more to belong to a man. And if the knights of old were men with their gilded spurs, then, indeed, age was not like to be counted by years for him: for on the slight young form there were clasped medals glittering, and brightly amidst the medals shone that one insignia that tells so proudly always of deeds of most daring bravery, the honour that is bestowed upon 'the bravest brave'—the Victoria Cross, which all our brave men prize.

Why are the most brave so calm-looking? Is it that they have not need to be excited? Is it a sound feeling and consciousness of thought? There is surely a great deal hidden in that sustained effortless strength. There must underlie it no little force of will—no slight or untried endurance, a great deal of unself-consciousness. Brave men are not rare in England, and Victoria Crosses are many; but in an unreal scene, amidst so many great shades, there is something that bears one forcibly back to far different days, to the fields where those crosses were won, and across the bright lighted halls the smoke and the flash seem to pass, and with the soft-sounding valse the bray of the trumpet mingles, and the sound of the dancing feet seems to echo the measured tramp.

HOW SOME FOLK PREPARE FOR 'THE DERBY.'



I HAD frequently read of 'Show-folks' in general. In particular, had Mr. Charles Dickens, by lifting the curtain that had hitherto concealed from public notice the characters of Messrs. Codlin and Short, shown me the ins and outs in the lives of the Punch-and-Judy men. Moreover, he it was who had introduced me to Grinder's lot—to Jerry, the manager of the dancing dogs—to Vuffin, the proprietor of the weak-kneed giant and the little lady without arms and legs—to Sweet William, the ugly conjuror, who swallowed leaden lozenges through the medium of his eyes, and balanced donkeys in his dreams—and, above all, to the genuine and only Jarley, the delight of the nobility and gentry, and the patronized of royalty. Mr. Albert Smith, too, had depicted Hickory and Luddy with so much ability that I could at once accept his sketches for the graphic portraits of living realities. But no one had yet painted for me a domestic picture of the swinging boat people, the proprietors of the round-abouts, merry-go-rounds, and ups-and-downs; and my curiosity had often been excited to know what became of these persons when the turmoil and riot of race and fair were over.

They have not been mentioned by Mr. Henry Mayhew in his great literary torso of 'London Labour and the London Poor,' although, in that extraordinary book, he has given us many interesting particulars of people who obtain their livelihood by very strange ways and means; but the subject would present good material for one who has dressed up the dry bones of statistics with so much novelty and effect. For these swinging-boat people are the possessors of much valuable property, and must form a large community; and as the specialities of their profession only demand their existence for six months of the year, the question naturally arises,—What

do they do with themselves during the other six months? In spring they make their appearance with the swallows and the pear-blossoms, and lead a gipsy life until 'the swallows fly towards home,' and the pear-blossoms have ripened into fruit. But how, when, and where do they pass that intermediate wintry stage of their existence between the pear fruit and the pear-blossom?

Chance has put me in possession of some of the particulars of which I was in quest.

It was the last week in April, and I was passing through a certain rural parish in the south-western corner of Staffordshire. It was in the very heart of an agricultural district, where a stranger would have had to wait till nightfall to see the red glare in the heavens before he could fully have realized the fact that he was but five or six miles from the skirts of 'the Black Country.' For this particular parish looked anything but black; and, if it was not green—save where the meadow land and the spring wheat made emerald patches in the brown and ruddy landscape, yet it gave manifold manifestations that it soon would be. The plentiful hedge-row timber, the trees dotted over many of the fields, the coppices, plantations, and woods were bursting into leaf, and presented that hazy appearance which is a characteristic of the on-coming foliage. The larch, 'the lady of the woods,' had been the first to put on her light spring dress; and the chestnuts already made a gallant show, the unfolding fans of their leaves hanging much in the same form that dress pocket-handkerchiefs assume when they dangle from the left hands of ball-room young ladies. A snowy bloom thickly covered the pear and plum and cherry trees; and the black-thorn in the hedge showed its white blossoms among the catkins of the willows. The banks were profusely strewn with wild flowers—'clotted with them,' as an old cottager very expressively said to me. Primroses, violets, daisies, anemones, golden celadines—all these gleaming jewels of Nature were there; in the broad meadows the cowslips were putting forth their speckled buds; blazing king-cups fringed the brook-side, with the paler

> 'Daffodils,
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty;'

while higher up, on the outskirts of the wood, the prickly gorse-bushes were covered with a wealth of glorious golden blossoms.

Overhead, the first swallows were skimming in their rapid flight, and unseen larks were singing 'a mile in air.' Birds were twittering and flitting on all sides; while ever and anon came the hoarse double 'cock-cock' crow of the pheasant, the shrill scream of the partridge, the soothing note of the wood-pigeon, and the plaintive cry of the lapwing, which, to most ears, says 'Pee-weet!' but which proclaims itself to many a rustic as a bird 'be-witched.' In the fields, 'the merry brown hares were leaping,' colts were caracolling by their mothers' sides, and lambs were bounding, 'as to the tabor's sound,' with those dervish leaps and insane pirouettes that constitute so large a portion of their enjoyment. Old Mother Goose was tenderly leading forth her young family of 'gulls' (looking for all the world like little bundles of flannel), their attentive papa strutting by the side of his helpmate with an air of stupid gallantry, now fiercely stabbing the sweet grass with his orange bill, and now giving a hs-s-selk! as a note of encouragement to his wife and children, and a warning to pigs and other farm-yard marauders that he had his eyes wide open, his courage up, and his bill ready. Mrs. Duck, the 'notorious glutton' of the libellous legend, was imitating the example of her anserine relative, and was also walking at the head of a small procession of ducklings; and motherly hens were scratching the dust, and enticing their chirping children around them with invitatory chucks. Here, there, and everywhere, the bird-boys, with screams and clappers, were driving the rooks from the young corn.

Walking amid these sights and sounds of spring-time in the country, in the rustic retirement of this sequestered spot, I suddenly, and to

my great surprise, stumbled upon a scene that I should least of all have expected to find in such a place—a scene, the concomitants of which suggested shouting, and crowding, and riot, and other sights and sounds altogether incongruous to those which were then present to my senses. At the bottom of a sandy lane was a long, low, and irregularly-built cottage, its roof yellow and grey with moss and lichen, and here and there decorated with a coronal of fern. There were many out-buildings, with a picturesque well, and an unpicturesque pig, who had his snout buried in the empty well-bucket, in the vain expectation of wash. Passing by the gable of the building my thoughts were rudely roused from their quiet spring doze by a discordant clatter of voices. In an open yard by the side of the cottage, with blossoming orchard trees all around, was a medley and novel group. I had lighted upon the home of a swinging-boat proprietor, who was surrounded by the gorgeous works of art that formed the staple machinery of his profession, and was placidly smoking the pipe of contentment, the while he administered a coat of varnish to a highly-emblazoned but tailless hobby-horse. A second similar horse stood by, and a third was being carried off to a tent, where eleven horses (of the same rare breed) were drawn up in two lines, nose to nose, staring and snorting at each other, with distended eyes and nostrils, in a manner suggestive of high breeding and corn. All these hobby-horses were excellently carved in wood, and were represented with superabundant action; one or two of them, indeed, might have been modelled from 'an irreclaimable savage' of Mr. Rarey. They were bigger than Shetland ponies; they had glossy coats—of paint and varnish; they were caparisoned (by the brush) in a style that was both new and gorgeous; they were of various hues—black, brown, white, grey, roan, chesnut, cream, spotted, piebald; and they were decorated with scrolls, on which their names were emblazoned in gold and colours—Prince Albert, Prince of Wales, Wellington, Snowball, Rosebud, King Tom, Gay Lad, Black Bess, Wild Rose, Water Lily, Bo-Peep, Red Deer, Moss Rose, and True Boy. They were destitute of tails and bridles, which were moveables, and reserved for the eyes of the public; but their manes were painted, and their leather saddles were fixtures, being securely nailed to their places, thus doing away with the necessity of girths, and precluding the possibility of an accident arising from the saddle 'turning.' Every steed stood upon a wooden platform painted a verdant green.

It was certainly a strange and unexpected sight; and the last thing that one would have expected to see in such an out-of-the-way country nook, were these fourteen hobby-horses, so gorgeously caparisoned, but as tailless as Manx cats, ranged head to head in a pillared tent, which, so far as colour went, was as highly decorated as the Mediæval Court in the Crystal Palace. Nor were the other *agréments* of the scene less ornate or remarkable. Poles, beams, planks, and ladders were scattered on all sides, bright with all (and more than all) the colours of the rainbow, and adorned with marvellous devices that might have been designed by Mr. Owen Jones while suffering from dyspeptic nightmare. Some of the larger portions of the machinery were conspicuously marked with the magic words 'FROM LONDON,' which, in one sense of the word, was certainly true, for poles, and horses, and 'boats' were made there. The swinging-boats, of which but three were visible, the others being stored at the back of the cottage, were also remarkable for conflicting colours and striking devices. The largest of the three displayed, on either side, a bewitching portrait of 'Fair Flora,' scattering flowers, and surrounded by emblems of peace; while, by way of contrast, the under portion of the boat was covered with scenes of battle, and fire, and smoke, the 'Charge of the Six Hundred,' and other stirring scenes from the Cri-

mea, which should be seen and studied by connoisseurs in the crowd beneath, the while the boat with its sickening (is this the reason why it is called a 'boat?') and shouting crew rose high in the air, and made its thirty revolutions for a ha'penny.

Visible to the naked eye, while others unseen were audible to the listening ear, were five children, the property of more than one mother, who were by no means so gorgeously attired, or had such clean and shining faces as the painted hobby-horses. Two of these olive branches were at play in the Crimean boat, the one switching a motherly hen, the other assuaging its tender griefs by the rattle of peas enshrined in a wicker toy, the while it spasmodically hooted, and kicked, and gazed fixedly at nothing, after the manner of infants. A third urchin was swaying himself on a pole, watching the varnishing process, and meditating, it may be, on forthcoming races, when he would stand on his head and turn 'cart-wheels' for the amusement of the gentlefolk in the carriages, and for the extortion of coppers, and fragments of pigeon-pie and pickled salmon. A fourth child was hugging a very blackguard of a dog, who nevertheless received the rough caresses with gentlemanly composure. The fifth youngster was endeavouring to precipitate itself from the door-step, but was restrained from the rash act by its mamma, an exceedingly well favoured and buxom young lady, who, notwithstanding her evident youth, wore a wedding-ring, and was the mother of the child beside her, as well as of the dog caresser. This young lady's head was adorned with plentiful black hair, which (shortly afterwards) she artlessly let down—like the lady of the labels on Rowland's Macassar—then made it glossy with the aid of water and the palms of her hands, and then twisted it up again to its normal fashion, the while she held the comb in her mouth.

This chequered scene of dirty live bipeds and cleanly-painted carved quadrupeds was closely backed by an orchard thick with apple and plum trees, and here and there between their trunks I could see a richly-wooded landscape, with many agricultural signs of spring in the country. The prospect in the immediate foreground was also a symptom of spring; for it betokened the busy preparations of the swinging-boat proprietor for his annual tour to the wakes, fairs, and races of the midland counties. He was now hard at work on the finishing touches; and, within three days after, hobby-horses, swinging-boats, and all the paraphernalia of the 'roundabouts' would be carried off on vans and light waggons to the initiatory scene of the summer campaign. The house was so situated that it lay within easy reach of a populous district, where races, and fairs, and wakes were as frequent as plums in a Christmas pudding. To these he travelled by devious lanes and roundabout roads, in order to escape the turnpikes; and, being well up in the intricate geography of the country, rarely troubled the toll-collector.

This swinging-boat proprietor has, by his own (what shall I say? well, 'not to put too fine a point upon it,') talent and industry, accumulated something like an independence, and is a man of property, for he owns his own and the adjoining cottage, the garden, the orchard, and nine acres of land. He farms his land, and sells the produce of his orchard. He also buys fruit on speculation, or sells it on commission; moreover, he 'does a little butchering,' especially when any sheep or cow has come to a natural end; and he 'deals' in poultry. The cost of his stock in trade must be considerable. I had some talk with him on this subject, the while he graciously permitted me to make a sketch of himself and his quadrupeds; 'for I don't mind being put in a book,' he said, with a hazy idea as to the destination of my drawing; 'I'm a public char*á*cter, and well known to most folks.'

'Them fourteen 'osses,' he said, 'was all made up in Lunnon, and cost me a hundred and twenty pound, not one penny less if you'll

believe me; and ready money, too. And that was when they was in the rough, you must remember, and afore they was smoothed down and painted. And then, as regards the painting of 'em, sir; I was obligated to employ a first-class man; and he slep' here till he'd done his job; and I had to give him thirty shillings a week, and his maintainance.'

I inwardly remarked to myself, that if my friend had been the rector of the parish, he would have kept his curate at a less expense.

'And you must remember, sir,' continued the swinging-boat proprietor, 'that I only paid him for his hart: I had to find all the paint and gilding myself. You'll please to notice, sir, that there's a main o' gold-leaf and silver-leaf laid all about them 'osses; likewise on the boats and poles; and that vermilion paint is dreadful expensive, and we are obligated to use it more than other colour. The hemerald green also comes heavy. And them Crimean battles wer'n't painted for nothing; though I saved a matter of a pound a boat by having more smoke put into them. It makes 'em look more like real battles—not that I ever seed one, but one fancies there must be a deal of smoke and pother—and it saves the expense of painting in the red coats. By the end of a season they always want fresh painting, leastways a deal of touching up. The boys and girls kicks the paint off 'em dreadful; though the men and women are almost worse than the boys and girls.'

'What! do men and women often ride on them?' I asked.

'Law bless you, sir, I couldn't have afforded these hosses, if they didn't!' replied the swinging-boat proprietor. 'Why, let alone the races, you just look at the wakes and fairs; and specially at the mops! Why, at them Michaelmas hirings you'll see all the lasses and men as come to be hired, 'll spend almost as much with me as they do in the public-houses. Why, they're never tired of riding them 'osses, sir! The lasses 'll sit on the pommels, and make believe as they were fine ladies; and the men mostly keeps up the game by pretending to be smart fox-'unters. Oh yes! I've plenty of grown-up folks; and of gentlefolks too, for the matter of that—specially at races. Why, at last —— races, the On'rable —— and a lot of his quality friends, when they got tired of Aunt Sally and the sticks, they all came and had a turn on them 'osses. But they're all alike—poor folk and quality folk; they kicks the paint off dreadful.'

While (to myself) I was deducing an obvious moral from this truism, the swinging-boat proprietor was varnishing, his tailless steeds, and dealing out fragments of information from the storehouse of his experience. It appeared that the saddles, although nailed on, became frayed and worn, and had to be renewed about every other year: that the bridles were not fit to be seen at the end of the season; and, above all that new tails had to be provided annually. On inquiry, I learnt that the usual custom of an equestrian, or equestrienne, at these 'merry-go-rounds,' or 'roundabouts,' was to hold on by the bridle, neck, or pommel with the one hand, and, with the other, to grip the tail. In the excitement of the moment, or, in order to avoid being flung off at a tangent as the machine was whirled rapidly round, a handful of horse-hair was frequently extracted from the hobby-horse's tail; the consequence was, that, at the termination of the season, the portly bang-tail had usually dwindled to a thin rat-tail, and the steed that had started on his professional tour with so much paint and horse-hair, came home again with grievous sores and raws as to paint, and sadly moulted as regards horse-hair. No wonder, then, that, with all these expensive items fresh in his memory, my friend should tell me 'them 'osses cost a sight more than live 'uns.'

But if the cost of the apparatus be great, the gains must also be considerable. At one fair, and that a small one, and unknown to fame—'but a werry good pitch,' said my friend—this man, after paying all his expenses, cleared (according to his own account) thirty-five pounds.

Ex pede Herculem! If this one day's gain is to be accepted as a criterion of the other days in his professional career, there are undoubtedly many less profitable occupations than that of a swinging-boat proprietor. I should like to see his Income-tax return! CUTHBERT BEDE.

www.libtool.com.cn

A BUNDLE OF ANSWERS TO A BUNDLE OF CONTRADICTIONS

'TIS paper solves these contradictions,
And proves, though strange, they are no fictions.

There's paper short, and paper long,
Paper thin, and paper strong,
Paper brown, and blue, and white,
And on the blue you 'Smiles' may write,
Paper heavy, paper light;
One sheet may scarce outweigh a feather:
'Tis weighed by tons when piled together.

You surely need not to be told
There's paper new and paper old.

Where you a double letter see,
Without, within, must paper be.
Each page of paper that you view,
Has got a head as well as you,
Though hair upon it never grew;
While underneath a foot is seen,
On which no toes have ever been.
Yet, without limb, or heel, or toe,
Where'er 'tis sent may paper go.

That paper without wings can fly,
Mounting upward to the sky,
Doubting me, believe your sight,
Go and view a paper kite.

A paper book, *sans* voice or eyes,
Can tell whate'er the traveller spies.

Paper, without lips or ears,
Telling the tale it never hears,
Can move to laughter or to tears.

The lover to his mistress writing,
All her matchless charms reciting,
With burning words and bursting sighs,
Her lips, her cheeks, her brow, her eyes,
Her graceful form, her waist so taper,
Showing what their hue and shape are,
His hopes and fears commits to paper.

Paper without hand to use,
If it bear the prefix, 'News,'
Both good and evil can diffuse.

Paper thinks not, yet may show
All the wise can think or know.

Paper, in worth, all wealth exceeds,
Witness bank-notes and title-deeds;
Yet, in the mud, has many a boot
Trod scraps of paper under foot
Made many a thousand years before;
It will be made for thousands more.

Then own you dull or blind must be,
So plain an answer not to see!

C. M. Q.

A GOSSIP ON GARDEN GAMES.

CHAPTER I.

QUOITS.

www.libtool.com.cn

'WHAT can I do with this bit of land?' The gentleman who put this question to me surveyed the said 'bit of land' with a look of dudgeon. To be candid, it was not much to look at, and the speaker was fresh from the bowery orchards and green slopes of woody Warwickshire. Upon his removal to the metropolis he had applied to me to recommend a nice quiet locality, where he would be too far removed from Fleet Street to hear the roar of the wheels, too far from the river to have the worst of the fogs, and where he might make an effort to keep up country associations. I directed him to one of my own favourite quarters, and the advice was—I mention it as a very rare circumstance—accepted. Having thus stood sponsor for the locality, I presume he considered he had a right to expect me to tell him what he might do with the little strip of land at the back of his house. I had, unfortunately, just congratulated him upon the situation. This added something to the severity of tone he adopted in putting the question.

I had called it a garden. He had laughed at the supposition. We were standing on the steps at the back of the house. Houses, and especially suburban houses, are deceptive. Their exteriors are cream-coloured, and look unconscious of the existence of common bricks—that is, at front; but go to the back, and behold what I saw, standing on my friend's steps—black, dingy bricks all round; for the back of one row of houses looks toward the back of another; and though they are smooth and respectable, like some people I know, on the outside, there is a reverse to the picture; and, as regards the houses, it would be horribly dull were it not that here and there a pretty human face or two lights up the scene from some adjacent window. Odious chimney stacks, cobwebby rain-water butts, and that sort of thing, formed the chief features in the 'house-scape' that I looked upon. The bit of land itself was broken up in every conceivable way. There was a fragment of a line-prop that had seen better days lying in one place; by the wall, in the last stage of natural decay, were some ragged, withered stalks of last year's chrysanthemums. In the centre a pond had apparently been constructed for fish acclimatization purposes, but abandoned, and partially filled up with rubbish, a passion for flowers having usurped the place of the pisciculturel scheme. This, too, had evidently been of short duration, for only one third of the ground had been laid out in parterres. Some long rank grass, a piece of clothes-line, full of knots, fragments of broken crockery, and bits of toys from which the rain had washed the paint, were strewn about the *bit of land*. What could he do with it? I playfully suggested that he should make of the wilderness a miniature Chatsworth, pointing out the advantage of the already made pond for the site of the fountain, and how he should make the flower-beds, lay out the kitchen garden, and build beautiful grottoes.

The reader will have been all this time wondering what this can have to do with a chapter on an ancient English game which does not appear to be intimately connected with a modern garden at the back of a London house. I hope, however, to show him that the two things may be connected with much profit and pleasure. By turning the little strip of land, 27 yards by 8, into a quoit-ground my friend has succeeded in making it of great use. Most suburban houses have such a strip of land, in most cases lying waste, or growing a few flowers, or doing duty as a play-place for the children. Without interfering with the flowers, either human or botanical, to any great extent, gentlemen

may find in such a garden room for a very interesting classical game, which calls for the exercise of considerable skill. The game is quoits. The dimensions will be ample, and the game is charming. Any reader of this is at liberty to adopt the suggestion, and return me a letter of thanks through the editor. That he may the better be able to do so, I shall proceed to describe how the ground is made—I mean a good ground, on which it will be pleasant to play; for it is quite possible to play quoits without taking any preliminary trouble in preparing it.

Having furnished my friend quite unexpectedly with a satisfactory answer to his question, he set about reducing the wilderness to some sort of order. Then he made two 'ends,' eighteen yards apart in a direct line. Twelve inches of soil having been removed for a circle of one yard from the pin, a layer of fine ashes was put in, and then a brickmaker—in suburban regions how plentiful they are, hanging, as it were, upon the skirts of civilization—was taken into confidence and set to work. He filled it up with the finest clay procurable, treading it in, and raising it slightly above the level of the ground, with an incline of three or four inches toward the back. The two 'ends' having been made, and scattered over with sawdust, turf was laid down, flower-beds planned by the side of the walks, and in the space between the two ends; the only prohibition required is that there shall be no shrub in the line of sight between the stakes.

The modern system of quoit-playing is infinitely superior to that adopted by the Greeks and Romans (it was one of the five classical games) or in remote times among the Britons. They used a large circular piece of iron, which was solid; and their object was to throw it as far as possible. We have applied science to this, as to all our games, and it is no longer a mere test of strength, but one of skill, requiring accurate judgment, and a perfect control of the muscles of the arm. As an exercise it has but one defect: that is, its one-sidedness; all the education, muscularly speaking, is imparted to one arm—the right. This is, physically, as injurious as it would be, intellectually, to cram a child with geography, and leave all other knowledge to take its chance. It is the same with all kinds of bowling, with fencing, and with single-stick. The right arm does all the work, and the left languishes for want of use. Setting this on one side, it is a capital exercise, and a splendid chest expander, without being too exhaustive: it is, in fact, just the game for a garden during half an hour of leisure.

Our plan being to throw at a mark, a ground of unlimited length is not required. It is frequently played at various distances. Fifteen yards is the minimum, and thirty yards the maximum length. Eighteen yards is the most pleasant distance at which to throw; or, if a very light quoit is used, the distance may be increased to twenty-one. Such a ground as that is accessible to hundreds of London men whose occupations make it very desirable, and whose tastes lead them to desire an agreeable out-door recreation. This is just adapted to supply the hiatus. Only two players are required, no preparation, and almost as little paraphernalia. A couple of pairs of quoits, two players—father and son, or brother and brother—of about equal skill, a pleasant spring day, and good-bye to dull care! For what other game can I say as much? Croquet is very 'slow' when but two players are engaged in it, cricket impossible, football out of the question, and bowls rather tedious—unless it is bowling at the Jack, which demands a much larger ground. Quoits has none of these defects. It is lively, too: conversation, cigars, and jokes are quite compatible with it. Accidents are well-nigh impossible: they can only result from great carelessness. I have known the ladies busy about the flower-beds while the gentlemen have been throwing the quoits many a pleasant spring evening.

The weight and size of the quoit is a matter of individual taste. A

glance at the windows of the ironmongers in the Strand and Oxford Street will suffice to show how great the difference is. Our primitive quoits were simply worn-out horse-shoes, and our modern disc is only a development of that. It is made sometimes of steel, sometimes of brass, but more commonly of iron. Players of equal strength will sometimes have a preference for quoits in the pair of which there is as much as three or four pounds weight difference. The north country men are great lovers of the game, and many play with a quoit which has not inaptly been called a 'young mill-wheel.' These may be suited for men who habitually harden their muscles by wrestling matches and their daily labour. I like my athletics a little diluted, and find a pair of quoits that weigh five pounds sufficiently heavy. Having once decided at what distance the stakes shall be pitched, and what weight your quoits shall be, it will be well not to 'experimentalize' with others if you wish to attain great precision. Still the best general display of skill is that made by a player who can change his quoits and distance and still throw close to the pin.

Quoits, like anything else in these days of competitive examinations, are very beautifully made, smooth, true, and polished. They should be slightly hollow on the under side, and correspondingly concave on the upper. Thick on the inside, they taper down to a delicate edge, which is sharp. Iron ones are very objectionable, because the rust eats into them very speedily, and then they injure the finger-tips, and become disagreeable to use. If due care is taken with steel ones (but it very seldom is) they will retain their smooth surface and polish, and the pleasure of the game will be much enhanced. If the steel is of a good 'temper' it will not easily chip, and will not burr at all. With brass ones every stone struck in the descent throws up a great burr, and soon spoils them. The greatest injury to quoits occurs when one descends upon another already fast in the ground. The better the players the more liable is this to occur, as all the quoits are grouped round the stake. If this happens near the little notch where the forefinger is placed in throwing it does very serious damage.

Having come thus far, and been absolutely practical (practical writing on pastimes is generally dull, and I am afraid this is no exceptional case), let me suppose that you and I have lit our cigars, that it is a pleasant spring afternoon, and we want an appetite for dinner. Quoits in hand, we will enter that 'bit of land' concerning which I spoke just now. The gardener has watered the clay, smoothed it down since we last played, and scattered some sawdust over the 'ends.' At the two extremities of the grass, which is bright as emerald, they look like two pats of butter nicely balanced on the edges of a green plate. In the centre of each pat, to carry on the illustration, is a thin piece of—but to tell what it is a thin piece of a closer inspection has to be made. Of one thing we can be certain, even at a distance, viz., that it is not an iron pin such as quoit-players, apparently with the sole design of spoiling their quoits, and thus making the business of manufacturing a good one, used to favour.

On a nearer scrutiny of this thin something it turns out to be an ordinary piece of electric wire encased in gutta-percha and painted bright red. It is split at the top, and a piece of cardboard is inserted. It stands about five inches out of the ground, at an angle of about 45 degrees toward the other end. We shall see the reason why it is not perpendicular when the game begins. This description of 'peg' is peculiar to my quoit-ground and those of my friends. It is the best I have ever used. The iron ones break the quoit edges; the wood ones, when struck, send a well-aimed quoit bowling away from the stake; a feather is too light, and easily displaced; but this, when struck, gives way, and recovers its position again with the most obliging promptitude and accuracy, whereas a wooden or metal peg gets dented into the

ground, and, as it must not be touched until the admeasurements have been taken, gives an advantage to the overthrows, and places the short quoits at a corresponding disadvantage. Failing this, a swan's or raven's feather is perhaps the best stake; but they have a most awkward knack—from old association, I suppose—of jumping out of the ground and trying to fly at every third or fourth throw. The gutta-percha can be cut to any length, and thrust deep enough to prevent the possibility of this.

Planting the right foot by the stake, keeping it to the outside, the game begins. There is no running or walking up to the place from which the throw is made. Such a proceeding would render a true throw of very rare occurrence. The quoit is held in the right hand, balanced by the left, and raised, as a rifleman raises his rifle, until the edge just covers the tip of the stake. There is a moment's pause and poise, during which the brain and eye are carrying their commands to the muscles. Swing! The quoit is swung backward, then forward again rapidly, and there it goes on its course. Loosed when the arm was nearly horizontal, and made to spin by a twist of the wrist and the drawing away of the fingers, its flight is beautifully true. It does not describe a perfect arc. For about two-thirds the length of the ground it makes a gradual ascent, and at its highest point the height very nearly agrees with the distance: that is, in a throw of eighteen yards it is at twelve yards' distance about that height in the air, or rather less. Players differ on this point, some maintaining that the highest point in the trajectory should be at mid-distance. It is a mistake, as the commonest application of scientific principles would show. In such a throw the 'edge' is not sufficient to insure its being a 'sticker.' Its descent should be such that it will enter the ground at right angles to the two stakes and at angle of about 45 degrees. The stake is planted so as to meet this position and allow a perfectly true throw to leave the quoit a 'ringer,' which counts double.

With proper rules there is no such thing as chance in the game. Unfortunately rules of any kind are almost entirely unknown. The one or two simple ones that are needed have yet to be made. I never saw but one set in print. They were very extraordinary—especially the rule which imposed a fine of sixpence or threepence for the use, or rather *mis*-use, of certain words; and as the duty of judging of the enormity of the offence and the fine to be inflicted was to be referred to the members present at the time, the intervals between throwing might possibly have been enlivened by a spirited philological discussion. It must not be inferred from this that quoits is a game belonging to a not too respectable class of people. It has been a favourite game, at one time or another, with almost every class. At present it belongs almost exclusively to gentlemen and county matches, and great public games are very seldom heard of, though there are districts in which it is much played for wagers. The quoit-ground is generally at the bottom of the lawn, or attached to the subscription bowling-green.

Perhaps I may be allowed, in the absence of other authority, to indicate what the rules should be. First of all in importance is the law that no quoit which does not stick in the ground should count, unless it is prevented by striking another quoit. This rule is not acknowledged generally, I know. If it were, it would deal with all sorts of unskilful throws; for it may be depended upon that there is something radically wrong when, if the ground is in proper condition, a quoit bounces out and rolls away. 'Rollers,' and 'floppers,' and, in a lesser degree, 'wabblers' all do this, and they are all unskilful. A 'flopper' is very ugly. The disc being loosed at an improper altitude, before the edge points sufficiently upwards, it flies to a great height, and comes down quite flat. The force of the concussion, when it reaches the ground, throws it up again, and it may leap close to the stake. If the concave side is downwards it will not count, but if it is uppermost it will, and

very often does so, to the prejudice of quoits thrown much more correctly and nearer. Ought it to count at all? Certainly not; for, from first to last, it was an offence against all the rules of art. On a lively ground, as the cricketers say, I have seen a quoit so thrown jump five or six yards. To insist upon counting such a quoit is to me a sure evidence of an indifferent player.

The 'roller' is also defective, but not so bad. The properly thrown quoit maintains its parallel the whole distance: but if, in the act of loosing it, it is turned to the left or right—that is, one side raised higher than the other—it will strike the ground in that position and will then bounce out and roll spirally, very often ending by settling down close to the stake. The rule in this case evidently ought to be to take the quoit to the place where it struck the ground, place it in the cut made, and pressing the lip down, let it be measured therefrom—that is the only equitable law. The same law would meet all cases where the ground is too hard for the disc to enter deep enough to be held. In such a case I always throw well over the stake, because it leaps out, and when the leap is from the back of the stake, it is a positive gain, while from the front it is an equally positive loss.

The 'wabbler' is often a better-thrown quoit than the 'roller,' yet it is far less graceful to watch. It generally makes a sadly erratic course, but often comes to a good ending nevertheless. Having this article and this very paragraph in view, I endeavoured, the last time I played quoits, to throw a 'wabbler,' in order to ascertain the cause. I found it difficult, gave it up in despair, and went on with the game. The very best players sometimes throw 'wabblers.' They look shocking, like an unsteady pigeon—a 'tumbler,' that wants to make a summersault in the air, and finds its courage fail at every attempt. After giving up the endeavour, I threw a 'wabbler,' without meaning it. My quoit was just raised, and at the moment when I was about to loose it I saw that it was leaning to the right hand, and would probably be a roller. I jerked my hand to the left—away it went, an eyesore, a wretched 'wabbler' but it entered the ground at a correct angle. That is not often the case: for once a 'wabbler,' it is a 'wabbler' as long as it remains in the air, and usually strikes the ground with an inclination to one side or the other.

I have been theorising. It is such a dear old game—so time-honoured in ancient song, but never in modern prose, that I hope for pardon. Meanwhile, what of the game?

Our game has gone on pleasantly all the while: these remarks about rules might have been made incidental, had not delicacy prevented me from supposing that you, reader, who were my supposititious opponent, would be guilty of throwing 'floppers,' 'rollers,' or 'wabblers,' which are grave offences in the eyes of all lovers of quoits. We have two 'shots' each from each end. At every throw there is a free backward swing, followed by a forward one that somehow draws the whole body into action, and necessitates a couple of long strides forward that leave the stake free for the next player, who, quoit in hand, stands ready. So the game goes on, with sharp walks from end to end. No player must leave an end until the last quoit is thrown, and when we are getting nearly 'up,' and they are too close for it to be possible to tell who is 'in,' we are pleasantly impatient to be off. There is literally no waiting when only two play, and any more than two is too many. Everybody has a short turn and often. While one is throwing, the other is making ready. Then we walk down, sometimes to find two so nearly equidistant, that the eye fails to tell which is first. Then a string attached to the pin is unfurled, and the point soon settled. This arrangement for measuring is so very simple, that it seems to commend itself to every quoit-player as the natural thing. Yet it is rarely seen, because it is unknown, and the players at every turn go casting about for straws or anything that will do for the admeasurement. Perhaps both are equally near, then neither counts. It would be a good

rule, in such cases, for the second quoits to be adjudged; but there are enough reformations required in quoit laws, without this, which is not very material, being insisted upon.

The game goes on rapidly. Now and then there is a 'ringer,' or one player has 'two in,'—that is, both his quoits nearest; and by-and-bye we look at our watches with that peculiar glance which denotes a little anxiety, such as I have seen lurking about expectant faces at railway stations, when a train that is bearing some one dear to the owners has been slightly overdue. We are about to remark that dinner is rather late, when the welcome bell goes, or 'little Willie' runs out with a pleasant summons; and then we go in with wonderful appetites, improved digestions, and a most complete oblivion with regard to the lunch we ate at midday in the City, the Temple, or Strand: for all which we thank our quoits and that 'bit of land' at the back of our friend's suburban house.

CHAPTER II.

BOWLS, SUMMER SKATES, AND CHILDREN'S GARDEN GAMES.

Spring is a great enemy to reading. The soft, luxurious perfumes, the west winds, and the sweet sunshine of beautiful May, make men desire to rush away from the little written to the Great unwritten thought. It is not difficult to understand how Wordsworth's Susan saw

> 'Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
> And a river flow on through the vale of Cheapside.'

An experience not unlike hers is known to many London men coming down by 'bus in the morning sunshine to the unromantic City. The song of a caged lark or thrush recalls flower gatherings, visions of meadows and woods where the gay daffodils and the frail wind-flowers bloom in clusters: groves where, beneath the trees, are spread

> 'Sheets of hyacinth,
> That seem the heavens upbreaking through the earth'

and the desire to realize the vision is strong. It is so dull in the City; and the haunts of the kingfisher, where the rivulet glitters in the sunshine, passing between beds of primroses, would be so sweet! What are the cathedrals, palaces, and exchanges to the temples of Nature, where men may taste the subtler inspiration which makes the concert in the wood and every hedge-row vocal! But it can't be done, says stern Necessity; commerce and Lombard Street cannot spare you. The beauty of the morning will not make a susceptible difference in the duties to be gone through at the War Office; Excise and Custom House work must be done, cheques cashed, and the money found for them; entries made; newspaper articles written; tape measured: and, in short, the business of the world does not care a fig for the spring. More's the pity, thinks many a man who would not care to be thought quite so 'sentimental' by his friends and fellows: for 'sentiment' is not 'the thing' in the City just now. For all that he determines to go away home as early as possible, and enjoy the sunshine in his garden. Perhaps he will turn to the work of primitive man—sow a bed of mignionette, and plant dahlias. It is more likely that he will play some garden game: the spring will not let him be idle, and the sunshine will not allow him to linger indoors.

What will he play at? There is such a variety for him to select from: croquet and lawn-billiards, quoits and bowls, and ball games innumerable. Of all aids to sport commend me to balls. For every age, every time, every place we English have a ball-game. We have them in every material, from the crimson that captivates the eye of childhood, up to the ivory of billiards and the ebony of the green bowls.

Bowling on the green is a game for the sage: a philosopher might leave his study to play it. It is simple—but what judgment, what accuracy it requires! what a combination of rights, with never a wrong, has to take place! *Imprimis*, there

is the bias—you observe that the ball, or 'bowl,' is weighted on one side—to be calculated, then the distance to the jack, the balls that lie in the way, and the plan by which you can circumvent them. Oh, it is a charming game, bowling these black balls over the close green turf! It demands mathematical accuracy to send the ball spinning round and round, nearer and nearer with every circle to the jack, till at last it settles quietly down in its close vicinity; or say it comes in contact with it while it still has motion, and knocks it close up to your opponent's ball. There is a trial for your temper, after all your calculation and care, only to have aided your adversary to win—that, too, with a splendid ball! Most provoking! But it will happen.

A well-kept garden, with a single pad to walk in, often costs a great deal. I do not refer to the expenditure on gravel, tulips, or gardeners' labour: I mean, by the indirect expense which it might have been the means of preventing had it been a playground instead of a garden, with a lawn to run upon, bowl hoops, throw balls, use skipping-ropes, erect swings, and play at 'Tom Tidler's ground,' 'pewit,' and the always diverting 'tick,' and 'five holes,' and all those little nondescript games which make the sum of happiness in child-life, and which are essentially garden games. They are of more importance in this crowded London than a few flowers, for they mean health and strength; and I never see a prettily laid-out little patch of garden, where the children's feet must never press the edging of box, without some regret, though I am not insensible to the beauty of flowers.

The games I have mentioned have no classical reputation. As games they are so little and insignificant that I feel I have done a bold thing in introducing them here. Their value must be my excuse; and they are, moreover, very charming in their way, as all games must be that make little cheeks glow, eyes sparkle, and faces radiant with pleasure. What a simple thing is a swing, or, as it was called when I first became acquainted with its giddy pleasure, a 'swaque.' Nothing to do but to sit down and go backwards and forwards apparently. A little observation shows that there is more than this—that exertion of a general character is required to keep up the motion, and that it demands vigorous and brisk work, especially for the arms and legs.

Summer skates are new adjuncts to sport. On a lawn they are capital, and give a new charm to 'tick.' The supposition that they are useful in learning real skating is a nonsensical one, and they do not need such a fictitious claim to make them popular. The invention is not a new one. A Swiss, half a century or more ago, made house skates, having 'quatre petits roues, et ne pouvaient être employé que dans les chemins bien unis.' But they have only lately become popular in England. The four little wheels revolve beautifully on turf, and some ingenious turns may be made in them, and some still more ingenious falls, at which, as it is only on soft turf, and not hard ice, we can afford to laugh; and Miss Ada—when she is quite sure that only an inch or two of delicate ankle has been displayed—can arise and join in the merriment, and skate away again—

> 'And wind about, and in and out,
> Like a sweet little brook flashing in the sunlight.'

'Les grâces' is another ladies' garden game. It is rather insipid, but since it has power to induce them to leave 'tatting,' and the fashionable 'decalcomanie,' and book-illuminating, I will hold my peace concerning it, and leave them to throw their silken hoops from their lance wands and catch them as they descend again. I cannot see any peculiar grace in the pose which the pastime requires—but perhaps the fault is mine.

Archery does not come within the category of garden games, except the now nearly obsolete cross-bow shooting. Were it otherwise—had ladies grounds in which they could practise when they chose, the art of Robin Hood would soon be wonderfully popular, and Mrs. Horniblow would have to look to her laurels:

for archery is the one solitary sport at which ladies are allowed to compete in public for prizes, and at which their skill comes into direct comparison with that of the gentlemen—and they are determined to be content with no indifferent place in the race; but there is always this difficulty of the ground, which requires to be long to be of service—far longer than lawns in gardens are.

Of other garden games—and there are many—it is needless to speak: the want is rather in the gardens than in the games. This wonderfully serious capital of ours is too intent upon business to take much heed of playgrounds. There are the parks—but who can get to them? how can girls go there to skip and bowl their hoops? In the streets they are forbidden; yet children will, despite Sir Richard Mayne and his knights, skip, and trundle hoops; boys will play tip-cat and leap-frog; and at this time there is an enormous rage for the recently well-nigh obsolete whipping-tops; and I have only to look from my window into the 'quiet street' in which I live to see a host being zealously lashed by boys and girls belonging to widely-separated grades of London society; for the stockingless, bonnetless girls and ill-clad street boys know that it is a 'quiet street,' and dispute the pavement inch by inch with the respectable children who, lacking a garden for their games, come out to play them on the smooth flag-stones. Surely every genial-hearted ratepayer enjoys a secret chuckle when he sees any one of the crew make game of the 'bobby.'

J. D. C.

LONDON SOCIETY.

www.libtool.com.cn

JUNE, 1864.

HOW THEY 'GET UP' A COMPANY.

'SOME national follies have a certain periodicity. You may expect to see them again about every twenty years—after an interval just long enough to allow some full-grown children, who have burnt their fingers, to forget the smart, and others to grow up who don't yet dread the fire.

Just such a periodical folly is a

Joint Stock Company mania. It is founded partly on that impatience of low interest which culminates in rashness, and yet more on the gambling propensities of human nature—propensities so rife that, if once you can disguise the vulgar iniquity of the gaming-table, and deal with scrip instead of cards, there is no party within the church, and no denomination out of it, so strict in their horror of all greed and worldliness; but 'feeling it their duty to exert themselves for the good of their family,' will stake ten times as much with stock or shares as the worst gamester of their acquaintance ever risked at rouge-et-noir.

The world is not always predisposed to the fever of speculation, because the money is not always burning in their pockets. Still, when once the people's pulse begins to quicken, and the usual thirst and light-headedness come on, this fever proves of a highly infectious nature.

If man is 'a reasoning animal,' in the language of philosophy, certainly the common sort no more have their thinking than their washing 'done at home.' The shorter way is to pin your faith upon your neighbours—to 'run out into the trade winds'—to follow the crowd—your credulity increasing with the growing numbers of the dupes.

But just as in trade, demand stimulates supply, so the fools and the knaves, the flats and flatcatchers, are ever found in due proportion; and—there are no greater knaves out of Newgate than some of these Company-mongers.

Respectable solicitors, no doubt, are in one sense promoters, and worthy men have frequently combined purely for adding facilities to commerce, but these are exceptions rare, and easily distinguished, so that we have little hesitation in enunciating, as a good general proposition, that jobbery and private ends almost invariably make the first move. For, as our virtues have not half the activity of our vices, the pure and the disinterested are not the most active even in commercial revolutions. So a Company may have at the outset a Board active and enterprising but interested, which being afterwards joined by men of a purer and better stamp, the road to ruin may take a turn to fortune.

The true origin of Companies, therefore, it is most important to consider. Good men and true are the most unlikely to originate them: for, all schemes yet untried admit of so much doubt and difficulty, that gentlemen of scrupulous integrity dislike the responsibility of recommending. Nor would they succeed, if they did; for their honesty would be quite in their way—especially as the class of persons who subscribe are only to be tempted by something too good to be true.

We propose, therefore, to open the eyes of our readers to the risks incurred by all who put down their names to form a new Joint Stock Company—First, we shall argue from the principles of trade, and the experience of all men of business, and on the assumption that there is strict honour in the management of the common purse—Secondly, we shall explain some of the dishonest ways and means by which the said purse, from first to last, is almost certain to be drained.

In speaking here of Joint Stock Companies and their Directors, we confine ourselves to what we shall call 'Trading Companies,' excluding for the present Railway and Dock Companies, Joint Stock Banks, Financial and many other extensive and *bonâ fide* undertakings, some of which have, more particularly of late, opened up profitable channels for utilising and investing the overflowing wealth of Great Britain and Ireland. We shall glance chiefly at those petty combinations in which, unlike those Companies which we have excepted, men unite for conducting the same business which can be managed by private individuals. Doubtless our remarks will apply with equal force to not a few of the Companies aforesaid, and to others cast in a larger mould and launched with an array of imposing names and with capital sufficient for the 'development,' to the heart's content of the most sanguine, of the

hitherto 'smouldering,' but, of course, 'highly lucrative' business.

Where one Company competes only with another, the waste and mismanagement of the one is met by the waste and mismanagement of the other. Blunders, in such case, are not ruinous, because the competitors are on a par, and both, perhaps, equally inexperienced. In Companies of this kind you may win; but there are those of another and inferior grade which compete with private trade, and in which the shareholders will almost invariably be defeated and lose their money, for:—

1. The scheme proposed has probably been already considered and rejected by the persons who are the best judges of its value.

The capital required in any business of ordinary magnitude is rarely so large as not to lie within the scope of a firm of two or three partners; so it is reasonable to ask ourselves, when something which promises to be unusually remunerative is held up to us, Why have men most keenly alive to their own interests neglected so good a thing and left it for a Company to take up?—The common reply is that a smaller return will satisfy a Company than will satisfy men who add labour to the venture. But, since most Companies point to very high returns, and a private firm might thrive on what some Companies, either through absence of special knowledge of the business waste, and worse than waste; or, by carelessness lose or throw away—this answer hardly meets the objection.

2. A Company must be managed, as it were, by deputy, instead of by men actuated entirely by the energy of self-interest.

But this managing by proxy is contrary to the experience of all trade. Not long since, we observed to a very well-to-do but dyspeptic friend in Paternoster Row, 'Why not pay one extra man to help you, and take a holiday as health requires?' 'Pray,' said he, 'can you tell me who that man shall be?'—In almost every retail house in London we might hear the same reply. The difference between seeing with your own and with others' eyes, makes all the difference between profit and loss.

Again, we once asked a retired upholsterer why he did not leave his capital in the business which had made it, and amuse himself one or two days a week by coming from his house at Tooting to superintend. Our friend turned to another old tradesman who stood by, and both smiling at our suggestion, explained as follows: 'A large capital managed in a *routine way* by paid shopmen, without the spur of self-interest to make them keenly alive to that *integration of little things* which rule great results, will scarcely pay five per cent. If Companies can find servants to need no master's eye, private traders are not so fortunate.'

If this be true even of the best servants, what shall we say of the prospects of that business which is pretty sure to be entrusted to the worst? for:

3. The very nature of a Company, in some instances, proves an alibi of all experience in the managers, and of all fitness in the men.

Men of the same trade as the Company are not likely to be the promoters nor on the management. No. Such men are generally in opposition, and banded together against the Company, especially as every man of business is slow to believe that any Company will succeed and permanently supersede himself in his own respective vocation.

Suppose a Company of West-End gentlemen, with a Board, as usual, of their own class, were to buy up any one of the most flourishing firms in London: suppose they were to become amateur builders in place of Cubitt, carriers in place of Pickford, or mercers in the place of Shoolbred. No man of business doubts that when once the present staff had gone out (a not unusual result), and servants chosen by the Company had come in, the business, however prosperous and securely established, would very soon fall to the ground. And if so—if a Company could not conduct a well-established business, how little would be their chance of founding a new!

Promoters of Companies complacently remark, 'We have only to

find some good managing men, and all will be easy enough.' *Only* to find them, indeed! No remark can more clearly prove how little they know about the matter. None but men experienced in any business can possibly be judges of the right persons to conduct it; and even if they could judge, it is only on the connections of business that any tradesman can from time to time depend for bringing to his notice servants of the proper qualifications he requires.

The talent for selecting the right man for the right place is not more the characteristic of a good general, than of a good manager of a City firm. Some men have been famed for possessing, in a remarkable degree, this talent, so essential to the successful working of any business —in whatever line. The discernment in this respect of Green of Blackwall, and Morrison, among others, has been mentioned as the secret of their wonderful success. Far from regarding a good set of managing men—so good as to require no master's eye upon them—as a thing to be taken for granted, it were wiser to calculate on the certainty of a bad staff, as among the dead weights of the concern.

With all these disadvantages of conducting a business by paid servants not directly amenable to an experienced, deeply-interested, and ever-present head, but to a 'Board,'

4. Companies attempt things far too difficult for any private trader, both in the magnitude of their enterprises, and the rapidity of their organization.

Great City firms are not *made*, they *grow*; and as they grow, they put out not only branches, but roots in proportion; ay, and throw out *feelers* too. But ask one of our great City men, as he moves through his extensive offices and warehouses, if even he, with all his experience, could undertake your Company, and organize such a complexity of human machinery, profitably to employ all your capital in a day—he will tell you that no trader out of Bedlam would ever dream of such a thing. '*Companies* rush in where mortals fear to tread.'

But let us grant one point more. We will suppose that a committee who seem to every trader as much out of their element as land-lubbers appear to seamen — suppose they should act harmoniously in the board-room; and that they should chance to choose the right staff, whether of managers, clerks, and cashiers for a business—or of waiters, boots, and chambermaids by the score for an hotel—pray who is to manage this newly organized and strange crew afterwards?—Take into calculation that there is in human nature little sympathy or conscience towards any body corporate, and quite as little from that body towards those who serve it;—can you then wonder at the common remark, that a Company is doomed to waste and peculation, and that no servant feels a life interest in his office, so makes hay whilst the sun shines, till the whole concern falls a prey to self-interest and misrule!

5. Companies always venture on an enormous capital; but dividends are not always in proportion to capital.

In retail trade it is a maxim that, when once the point of personal supervision is past, the more you increase your capital, the smaller the returns on the whole; till at last all profit comes to a vanishing point—the point of ruin to many a once prosperous tradesman. But Companies always deal in round numbers; as if the larger the capital, the more promising the project. CAPITAL £500,000! This to West-End gentlemen looks very grand; but often to men of business very absurd. Amateur traders innocently suppose that a business, like a mansion, can be built up to order, on any plan and any specification. They forget that the greater the capital the more the shareholders to divide the profits; still less are they aware that those profits depend not at all on the capital you choose to pay up, but only on the capital which the business can judiciously employ.

What is said of a certain big ship at sea is true of many a scheme launched ashore. It may be too big to be manageable by any crew, and certainly far beyond the powers

of those who are at the helm—requiring too many passengers and too much traffic to form a full and complete cargo. So the ship will not pay if not well and regularly freighted — the capital constantly entailing too much 'dead weight.' This is the danger of Monster Hotel Companies. We could name one Sea-side Hotel Company, which, not satisfied with pouring in so much capital at one splash, that their hotel shall stand them in a rental of £140 a week, has forgotten to study the natural history, or the habits of the creatures they hope to entice into it. The building soars so high in air, that 'Such a getting up stairs' has never been necessary before, and people must have the nature and the habits rather of rooks than of 'unfledged bipeds' to roost so high. As to the plan of hydraulicizing the inmates up to the top (however often a lady forgets her card-case, or her smelling-bottle; or perhaps just steps out, alters her mind, and would just step in again), only ask at the Colosseum, and they will tell you that many an old-fashioned lady turns as nervous and shy at the name of the ascending room as a hunter at the sight of a horse-box. But what Company ever thought of being accommodating to its customers, though with private traders every whim and fancy of the public is the study of their lives!—It is usually set forth that a Company has the advantage of an overwhelming connection in business. But as no one shareholder thinks his own custom can affect the dividend a farthing, it is soon proved that there is no such connection as will endure to be supplied badly by their own Company, when any tradesman will supply them better.

'It appears then, that what you call a Trading Company, is almost certain to fail.—But is not this at variance with fact?'

No. Remember we are speaking of large Joint Stock Companies organizing a business wholly new; and of those conducted by an inexperienced, non-practical Board and Staff. The danger is less with an old-established business as the basis of a Company, and where a limited number of men, all used to the business, join together. Rarely, we believe, does any other Company succeed; we have only to consider the black list of the many that have failed. Even of Mines the most prosperous are not worked by Joint Stock Companies. Companies by hundreds have tried every known mode. But where are they? How striking this mortality, and how very few survive!

Money-making by Companies seems so different to trade, that we hardly get a hearing if we speak of the risks and losses of business, and point to the common rate of profits. People are so sanguine and hallucinated, that they rarely test their speculation by the plain rules of every-day life. — 'Subscribing to a Company,' or 'paying up calls,' is a very mild form of words; but we have seen persons exceedingly staggered in their faith when made to understand that it means handing over your hundreds to a dozen men in committee—to be made ducks and drakes of by persons lounging and chatting with much self-importance, but with very little personal responsibility, and utterly ignorant of the value or necessity of the contracts under which the money is squandered by thousands at a time.

Shareholders too often entertain extravagant notions of the profits of trade. If they knew how small are the returns after payment of expenses—making allowance for bad debts and deducting interest on capital—if they knew the nervous care not to offend old customers, and the canvassing and anxiety to gain new—if they knew also the economy in little things by which even these small returns are effected—amateur trading would not be quite so popular.

There is also an illusion in the very name of Shares and of Company. There is with Shareholders an association of ideas as of stock rising higher and higher every time they open their newspaper, or (as we once heard) of getting up in the morning a hundred pounds richer than they lie down at night. Few stay to consider how the profits are

to be made. When the dividend day comes round, they think the money will be forthcoming too.

But there is one kind of Joint Stock Company, namely, Banking Companies, which some will remind us, have had extraordinary success.

Still, even Joint Stock Banks form no exception to our rule—that something more than a large capital is essential to success; though it is certain that in banking, a Company has a peculiar advantage, because credit turns to money, and credit it certainly commands. The huge capital which often runs to waste in other schemes defies all rivals in a Bank, especially as now-a-days the ventures are so large, that few men of business feel comfortable in trusting any but the very first private firms with the proceeds. Besides, Banking is a routine business. If its rules never relax to oblige any customer, a Bank may be all the richer in the long run; though it is the very rigidity of Company management that brings any other business to the ground.

But at the present day men seem to think that when a Joint Stock Banking Company is formed, and first calls paid, all the rest will go right of itself.—Yet, it is one thing to open wide your doors, and to display a costly array of desks and of officials, eating into your capital at the rate of hundreds of pounds a week, and another thing to draw customers from old-established firms, to trust you with their cash. Any banker will tell you that a new bank is the chosen mark of every man of shaky credit, and of every artful knave; and that safe business is so long in coming, that you tremble for your out-goings. Not only is it new to the customers, but the customers are also new, and strangers to the bank. This is the ordeal of all banks at first starting. One of the very first Joint Stock Banks in London, some thirty years since, was called 'The Thieves' Bank,' from the rogues who practised on its inexperience!

The dangers of new Companies, so far described, are simply those dangers which are inseparable from all Company management, however good the directors; but remember we enunciated that Companies are rarely promoted, although sometimes afterwards joined, by men of the highest standing. As to the malpractices on which you ought undoubtedly to calculate and guard against, the following are specimens of what may be looked for in some combinations:—

1. The promoters deem themselves entitled to promotion money or to so many shares; and more shares they offer certain men to act as decoy ducks, by joining the committee—which gifts of shares mean a charge of thousands of pounds on the shareholders' money before any business is done! A friend of ours was once asked to join an Iron Company. 'But I know nothing of the business.' 'Never mind that—your name will draw subscribers, and we will give you a salary of three hundred a year as a managing director!' This Company was the ruin of hundreds.

2. The promoters agree that no shares shall at first be sold under a certain premium. Thus Jones sells to Robinson enough to register a sham quotation in the share list. If thus tempted to buy, you learn the real price to your sorrow when you credulously think to realize.

3. The promoters issue only part of the stock at first. If this limited quantity of stock rises to a premium, the market is soon swamped with a flush of unexpected shares.

4. If you apply for an allotment of shares, the promoters may leave your letter unanswered to see if shares rise. If they rise they sell them for their own benefit; but if the shares fall you are bound by your own letter to take the bad bargain.

Men of suspicious character, to say the least, live by getting up Companies. We remember one of the class. He lived fashionably, no one knew how. But the dash he made in society placed him on high vantage ground as a disinterested man (?) to recommend new Companies; and with what he fleeced from these Companies he maintained his status in society. Of the Com-

panies lately started, two at least were got up by a man well known to us as a banker in the City of ——, which he left after a series of frauds deserving transportation!

Of course, however common, it is absurd for any one who opens a prospectus to ask, Is not this a good thing? Nothing is so good a thing that it can stand jobbery and mismanagement, if such exist. A gold mine is a good thing in one sense, but thousands have put more gold into it than they ever got out.

As to a Prospectus, it is now well understood in the City that the prospectus of a Company is a thing manufactured to order, to pay or promise to pay (which is the same thing) any dividend according to the greed and gullibility of the public, —just as, too often we fear, the Balance Sheet is prepared to follow—when it bears only the signature of one or two highly respectable 'Auditors;' but when it has not passed through the hands and received the stamp of those whose profession and experience qualify them for detecting, and whose reputation is at stake, to deter them from passing mis-statements, intentional or unintentional, and in whatever form.

To be Director of Companies is not less a business than to originate them. Joint Stock direction is quite a trade for men of a certain stamp—men often addressed in advertisements as 'not brought up to business, but wanting a genteel occupation.' There are needy, greedy lords and baronets who extract substance from their very titles, so ornamental and so useful to a prospectus; though the said title proves an alibi of all commercial experience. Gentlemen who have no title before their names want, at least, some good address after them. So Hyde Park 'Gardens,' or even 'Square,' becomes the residence of men who, with a view to Company directions, rent to let again what they have not the least pretension to live in beyond the dull months of the year.

Who does not know how vanity and caprice, private hobbies and pet schemes from a desire to seem original, are often more powerful motives in committee than the stake of any member in the concern?—In a Club Committee every man pushes forward his own wine merchant; and as to economy, an innkeeper would live on what is wasted in the kitchen. So in a Company; no wonder if the committee become the very focus of self-interest, and the puppets of which designing men out of doors are ever pulling at the strings. Members not bribed by money are yet bribed by influence; especially by interest made for their families. The large dealings of a Company enable directors to vote contracts worth thousands to the parties preferred; and patronage so valuable, though ostensibly *given*, is, however indirectly, almost certain to be *sold*.

Seeing therefore that jobbery, ignorance, mismanagement, and indifference enter into the beginning, middle, and end of most of the Trading Joint Stock Companies—we bid our friends BEWARE.

IN THE WATER.

CHAPTER I.

A FATAL NEGLIGENCE, WHAT IT HAS COST US, AND HOW WE HAVE SET ABOUT REMEDYING IT.

WANTED! It is the cry of the age. The 'good old times' have gone, and in their place we have an age of a myriad wants. Everybody wants something; and if everybody does not succeed in getting the want supplied, it is from no lack of perseverance in making the requirement known. The cry echoes everywhere. Many an artificial want is loudly clamoured for, but there are other graver ones—wants upon which hang life and death: the poor wanting food, the

weak strength, and the sick health. I wish to set forth one of these; the issues depending upon it are life and death, and health and strength, so my want shall have the dignity of a line to itself, and capitals. I can put it in three words. It can have no claim to novelty, for the world has recognized the want a long time; but it is, unfortunately, one thing to have a want recognized, and another to get it supplied. My cry is:—

'WANTED, SWIMMING-SCHOOLS!'

Does any reader doubt that this is a real want? The evidence which proves its reality is so voluminous that I can scarce hope to indicate it. The reports of the Registrars of Deaths are not, I admit, very interesting reading. Possibly they are all the less so, because, as we glance down those statistics, the ugly conviction that there is a needless and an awful waste of life going on in the world will force itself upon us. You will all have heard of the gloomy-minded misanthrope who cut from the newspapers all the records of murders and atrocious acts, and preserved them for his private delectation. Well, I have not such a morbid taste as that, yet standing by my desk at this moment is a box of newspaper-cuttings scarcely less deplorably sad. I dip my hand in, and bring out a dozen 'Melancholy Occurrences by Water,' as many 'Sad Accidents by Sea,' an equal number of 'Lamentable Deaths by Drowning;' and 'Fatal Boat Accidents' are almost innumerable. If the matter were less serious, I might be amused by this vast collection of penny-a-liner literature, in which, to use a phrase belonging to their class, they have 'piled up the agony.' But I strip away the verbiage, and take the bare facts. You, gentle reader, will not need to be told of 'heartrending cries upon the river-bank as the youthful and inanimate form lay there;' of 'families plunged into intense grief;' of 'sisters, who lay on the sand, buried their faces, and moaned audibly;' of lovers bereft of sweethearts, and children left fatherless and motherless. Yet it is of such things that this handful of paragraphs which I take from the box tell; and however written, and whatever mistakes are made in the combination of words used to describe the disconsolate and well-nigh broken hearts of the survivors of some boat excursion by river or sea, the facts remain, and will make themselves felt. Who could describe adequately the events or the anguish which attend such a catastrophe? I was once a witness at such a scene. I shall never forget the unutterable grief I, a stranger, saw and felt while the sun was shining, birds singing, and the banks of the little river, over which a boy of ten years ought to have swam with ease, glistened and shone with garlands of summer flowers.

All this because we want swimming-schools—because our boys are left to pick up swimming, if they can; our girls are never taught; and our men know little or nothing of an art which is well-nigh as simple as walking—an art which is in itself a very pleasurable one, a great promoter of health and strength and longevity, and one which to the

'Saxon set in blown seas,'

surrounded on every hand by water, imbued with the love of travel and sport upon the water—boating and fishing—commends itself as the very first precautionary measure to be taken ere he ventures in the delicate outrigger or the swift-sailing yacht.

My subject has forced upon me a gravity I did not anticipate, and a more serious tone than that which generally pervades the pleasant pages of 'London Society.' But the matter is one in which the interest of the world is so great that the sin will be its own apology. Never comes a 'sea-side season' but such calamities as those to which I have referred occur, and that, too, in large numbers. Can you swim? I put the question, collectively. If English men and boys were polled upon the question there would be a shocking preponderance of negatives. In the Navy itself there are hundreds who cannot swim. Until recently it was not taught; no questions were asked. Those who could swim were, I am assured, in a mi-

nority. Those who could not had, when accident occurred, to take their chance, and do the best they could. Now natation forms a part of the education going on at our training-ships. And coming across the Channel from the Isle of Wight in the early morning last April, I saw a sail slung out, and a score or two of sturdy lads—embryo marines—taking matutinal 'headers.' Our soldiers are not taught swimming; and what men are more likely to need it than they? This is one of the things they manage better in France, where swimming forms a part of the soldier's drill, and he is required to keep himself proficient by continual practice. But soldiers and sailors are a very little part of the English people. Do the schoolboys learn? Do mothers teach their daughters—nay, can the mothers swim themselves? I am afraid the answers must be all negatives. Bathing is too little practised. People are beginning to learn its value; but somehow it takes a long time to convince John Bull that what is is wrong; and when he is convinced it takes another long time to make him do what is right, unless a hand is directly put in his pocket, or there is an absurd attempt resulting from a blunder to interfere with his liberties. Fathers went on sending their children to schools where the supply of water was meagre, where bathing was not practised, and then were surprised that their cheeks were pale, that they were not strong and healthy. The returns of the Registrar-General do not, though they distinguish the cause of death, present materials for arriving at a true estimate of the loss of human life which is entailed by our national neglect of swimming; because the consequences are indirect as well as direct. Swimming leads to a fondness and desire for the water; as an exercise it is very enjoyable, the effect is invigorating, and the sense of a new power makes boys covet it; and, consequently, those who swim go to the bath often, and thus obtain that frequent ablution which, without endorsing all the dreams of the hydropathists for the cure of all the ills that flesh is heir to, by the liberal use of cold water, may be said, in many cases, to be absolutely essential to the human frame. Cold water is a very determined foe to fevers, agues, and consumptions. The public is awakening to the fact; swimming-schools are being established, 'professors' are multiplying, and baths increasing; still the work goes on rather tardily.

'Professors' leads me to 'entertainments.' Were you ever at a swimming entertainment, reader, where an amphibious professor lay upon his back and read aloud, lit his pipe and smoked on the water and under it? where his family of diminutive boys and girls—and this part is generally painful, and never pleasant—made all sorts of gambols, swam backwards and forwards, and dived, and kissed their little hands at intervals to the spectators, like the 'followers' in the Godiva procession, or the juvenile equestrians at a circus? Society doesn't care much to see these things; but they are done, and audiences are gathered. And as for the water not being man's element, why it's sheer nonsense; if he will but give it his confidence, and aid it in the endeavour it makes to support him, it will be his friend. I have seen a man swim without an arm, then without a leg, and afterwards with both legs and hands tied. Everybody can float who can be *calm*. All that is necessary is to throw the head back and keep the hands straight out beyond, so that they act as ballast to the legs, the specific gravity of which is just too much for the chest without this aid.

It is not the strong who swim best. Sir William Frazer offered a gold medal for the best and quickest swimmer of a mile last summer. Twenty men, some of them immensely muscular and powerful, in the full vigour of manhood, leaped from the barge into the Thames, anxious for the honour of being declared '*victor in undis*.' In addition to the twenty men there was a little lad about sixteen years of age, a *ci-devant* shoeblack of the brigade. He beat them all, went through the water at a good walk-

ing pace, and swam the mile in sixteen minutes.

A portion of the Serpentine has been set apart for the use of bathers. Men and boys who live near enough to avail themselves of it find it a great boon; and there you may see morning and evening, all through the summer months, lads swimming out and rolling themselves about like porpoises. Between seven and eight thousand bathers have in a single evening availed themselves of this open-air bath. If it were but possible to make such baths in other parts of the metropolis the benefit would be incalculable, and deaths by drowning would become fewer.

The drowning man clutching at a straw makes but a poor spectacle, but a drowning man clutching at his preserver is far worse, as in fright and fear they always do, destroying their own chance of rescue, and very often jeopardizing the life of him who attempts to save them. There would be no difficulty in bringing a man out of the water if only his hands were tied, but beware how he 'clutches' you! People when suddenly immersed in the water lose their presence of mind, up go their arms (surest method of going to the bottom), they struggle, and try to call out. What better means could be devised for making the accident terminate fatally?

Speaking of people who thus refuse to be helped, I am reminded of some silly ducks which caused me an hour or two of uneasiness last winter. According to a British superstition and every-day colloquialism, the goose is popularly supposed to be the silliest bird among our ornithological tribes. I think there is a slight mistake here, and that the duck, whenever superlative folly among the feathered creatures is made the subject of a new proverb, is entitled to the first place.

Skating on a large midland country pool, after a short sharp frost last season, I found frozen in the ice a number of wild fowl. I went to their relief, actuated possibly by the hope that if I saved their lives that day I might take them with my gun the next. Well, as fast as I broke the ice around them, they flapped their wings and dived under it to certain death. The pool is in a lone, unfrequented district, the ice was quite transparent, and I could see the frantic efforts and convulsive death-struggles of the poor birds. After an unavailing attempt for half an hour, I left them to their fate. The speedy death by drowning might be preferable to the slower and more painful process of starvation, but it was too much to expect me to witness it. One lesson I should have learned had not previous experience taught it me: it is, when the ice gives way to remain quite passive until your head comes up above the water. Move once, and get underneath it, and you are a lost man; you cannot break the ice upward, and will never find the hole through which you sank. Ah me! a sad experience taught me this.

I have floated away from my subject. To return: England seems at last to be alive to the importance of having swimming taught to children. For boys there are opportunities, not exactly unlimited, still numerous. At Eton, Harrow, Rugby, the Universities, and the numerous charity-schools, the art is made a part of the education. The London rowing clubs and the Royal Humane Society have set themselves to work with the very laudable design of making a knowledge of the niceties of natation universal. Speedy success to their efforts! And every week, for months past, the champion, who is a wonderful swimmer, and his rival, have been paying instalments toward a large stake for which they are to swim two miles upon the Thames.

Meanwhile for the ladies—but the ladies' baths are entitled to a separate chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE LADIES' SWIMMING-SCHOOL ON THE SKINE, AND THE LADIES' BATH IN MARYLEBONE.

How has it happened that until recently it has never been proposed to English ladies to learn swimming? To adopt the language of a lady

who is always in the van when a good cause is to be advocated: 'English women have four limbs, and live in an island, and make sea voyages, and practise sea bathing, and need exercise in the water at school and at home, and go out in boats; in short, run the universal risk in regard to water, therefore they have a claim to be taught to swim.' Very wise words are these, and I beg to commend them to your attention, reader; and that you may proceed to carry them at once into effect, allow me to tell you how.

In Marylebone there is a large bath-house; there, upon a Wednesday morning in each week, you will find in a capacious bath ladies diving from a considerable height, floating, swimming, and, indeed, enjoying all the pleasures of the bath, such as are enjoyed, and have been for many years, by the ladies of Paris in the swimming-school of the Seine, and by others on the beautiful continental rivers.

The Seine baths are a type of the whole. They are far more convenient than this ladies' bath in London; indeed, this was not built for ladies, it is only set apart for their special use upon the day I have named. The water is that of the Seine; it flows into the large inclosed space built in the river. There is a platform nearest the landing-place, making the depth suitable for children; that is a great advantage. Beyond this the water is deep enough for diving, and there is a clear length for swimming of about 40 or 45 yards. The ladies wear very tasteful dresses, fitting close at the neck, with a girdle round the waist, and a kind of Turkish trousers tied in at the ankle; everywhere else the garments are loose. English ladies, about half a century ago, were wont to adopt a dress something after that fashion when they gossiped away with the dandies of the period up to their necks in the vaunted waters of the 'Queen of the West.' How does it happen that in these modern days they have substituted the far less ornamental and convenient shirt?

So attired, the bathers enter the water. They generally learn as children, and they swim in parties. For the timid there are belts suspended by a ring from an iron rod in the roof; these fasten round the waist, and afford a sure support while the stroke is learned. The stroke is so easy and simple that the girdle is soon dispensed with. An instruc*tor* — not *tress* — attends as an additional security, and superintends the first venture made without leading-strings.

The result of these arrangements is a degree of comfort which induces ladies to remain in the water longer than I should be inclined to consider beneficial. Should their appetites be freshened, there is a confectioner's hard by from whence they get refreshment.

At the ladies' baths in Marylebone the plan is different: there is no instructor. The bathers form themselves into a 'mutual improvement' class and aid one another, which is far pleasanter than being under the superintendence of a master; not that I suppose, if the presence of an instructor was necessary among English ladies, that they would not employ one of their own sex. But surely it is far preferable to learn from each other, especially as there are some among the fair bathers who are quite adepts—one lady of distinguished family who swims there traversing the bath a great many times with a speed not much surpassed by gentlemen. The crane and rope, with the belt suspended, is adopted there as on the Seine, but the ladies prefer the air-jackets when learning. Since this bath was first opened—at which time an instructress attended, but it was found that her services were not required, and during late seasons the ladies have been left to themselves—a great many have there learned to swim. Why should not all the baths, London and provincial, adopt this plan?

What is the proper season for bathing? I should answer, All. A plunge and a rapid swim for two or three minutes in January, followed by a still more rapid run, is as good as one in June. Not so, says the public. What says the old rhyme?

'They who bathe in May
Will soon be laid in clay:
They who bathe in June
Will sing a merry tune.'

That might have been true before the age of morning baths. However this be, neither ladies nor gentlemen swim much in winter; but in summer how sweet the water is; how luxurious

'to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow!'

Or lacking these, in the calmer water of the bath, where, as a lady who frequents that in Marylebone informed me, they paddle about, and gossip, and teach one another, and disport themselves like so many *ducks*. No doubt, if we accept the colloquial in place of the ornithological interpretation of the word.

CHAPTER III.

SOCIETY IN THE SEA.

Sir Walter Scott narrates in one of his novels—I forget which, and it is not material—how, arriving suddenly in the vicinity of a house, one of his heroes came upon a party of maids engaged, I believe, in the not very classical occupation of washing, for which purpose they had removed their shoes, and were making use of their fair feet after the fashion in which an article known to laundresses as 'the Dolly,' is brought to bear upon linen for the purpose of purification. A rustle of falling skirts, and a good deal of blushing, was followed by the precipitate retreat of the damsels from the spot. A harder fate was mine last autumn at a pretty place on our south-western coast. Wandering along the shore under rocks, the passage of which was very difficult—indeed, as I afterwards learned, it was even dangerous—I saw, but I am afraid it would not be quite polite to say exactly what I saw, so I will make a plain narrative of facts, relying, as I know I may, upon the gentle reader's sympathy for me in the unfortunate position in which I was placed. Passing by a narrow ledge in the rocks round a promontory, I leapt down on to a lovely beach, and found myself in presence of what might have been a group of graceful nereïdes indulging in a game at 'follow my leader,' for the better prosecution of which a series of planks forming a spring board had been erected; up these they were chasing one another and leaping into the sea. The bathing costume adopted by English ladies is not very elaborate or extensive; theirs formed no exception to the rule. The supposition that they were veritable sea nymphs was somewhat favoured by the fact that one of them was engaged in twisting her long locks, which had escaped from their net, preparatory to replacing them in confinement. As I had leapt boldly down, my presence was of course immediately known. There being a long reach of beach between the ladies and the dressing-house (which I now discovered, and an angry old true blue, weather-worn, and portly mistress of the baths, such as was the terror of my infantile days ere I had learned to 'take to the water kindly,' approaching me), flight in that direction was out of the question for these perplexed mermaids; so they set up a sharp scream and fled into the sea, there remaining with nothing but their shining shoulders above the level of the waves. I did the most I could under the circumstances, turned my back upon them, conceiving a sudden interest—I am not a geologist—in the substratum of the rocks: seeing this it was really cruel of them to continue screaming. Meanwhile *la maîtresse des bains de mer* approached with angry gestures, and I prepared to beat a retreat, but, alas! I had leapt down from the shelving rock, and to get back again was impossible. I tried my best, and am not a bad rock climber, but nothing under a sea-gull could have got up, so my best failed, and I had to meet the irate mistress, who wore a great blue 'ugly' (I believe that to be the technical name), over a flaming red face, with hair but a few shades lighter, bare brawny arms, and naked feet and ankles (such ankles!) to match. Keeping my back to the nereïdes, I faced her.

'I wonder you 'arnt 'shamed o'

yourself',' she said, 'to come a clim'-in' round them rocks to stare a that'n at them young ladies a bathin'.'

'I'm sure——' I said.

'A riskin' o' your life, too,' she went on, never heeding my attempt at an explanation; and I presently fell into a state of conjecture as to what countrywoman she could be with her strange dialect, which seemed a medley of all the known provincialisms. 'It's a wonder you didn't slip, or the rocks didn't give way a bit, and slip your sacrilegious carcase in the sea, and get you drownded at onst. That's what it is, and served you right.'

I had all the time felt a strong inclination to laugh, and had only preserved my gravity by gnawing my nether lip to a dangerous extent; but here the ludicrousness of the situation became too much for me, taken in conjunction with the bad English and the angry gestures, so I gave way, and fairly burst out laughing, whereupon my custodian—who had stuck her arms akimbo and planted herself between me and the only way of retreat unless I turned my face toward the fair bathers, who had now become quite quiet, doubtless looking upon this woman, who was menacing me, as a guardian angel—became more angry. My back was toward the sea, and as at every sentence my Nemesis brought her face so much nearer mine, that I was under the necessity of retreating a step backward, there really seemed no reason to doubt that in the process of time she would drive me into the sea, thus doing herself what the rocks, according to her opinion, ought to have done in the first instance. To say sooth, I once or twice thought of retreating into the sea and swimming round the rock I could not climb. This I should have done but for a due appreciation which I entertained of the misery to which tourists soaked in sea water are subjected. Moreover, it was morning, and I had but my evening suit besides that which I then wore. Why should I spoil the day for a little over-scrupulousness?

A shower of expletives to the reproduction of which, in this place, the editor might object, were hurled, literally hurled at me by the infuriate guardian angel of the nymphs; and being really anxious to get out of the way, I controlled my laughter, and tried to speak again and again, but was not allowed. A subtle thought came to my aid just as I was being threatened with that eternal resource of the illiterate—'lawing.'

'I'll have the law on ye,' she said; 'that's what I will.'

'But,' I said, 'you are keeping all these ladies' (with a jerk of my thumb in the supposed direction of the naiades, who having recovered their equanimity were keeping up a chatter like a flock of finches), 'by far too long in the water.'

With a few more threats, menaces, and a good deal of what the old dame considered to be contempt, but which was, in fact, burlesque broad enough to have made the fortune of any comedian, I was allowed to retreat and escape down a pathway; and as I went I read at every turn—'To the ladies' bath. No gentlemen allowed;' and I think there was an intimation to the effect that intruders or trespassers would be prosecuted.

Once thoroughly clear of the grounds, I sat down and had my laugh out. Then I lit a cigar. Next time I go to that watering-place I shall know better than to clamber over those rocks and cause consternation among such pleasant society in the sea as that appeared to be at the moment I broke the mirth and order of the meeting.

As the mistress would not let me apologize orally I did it by note, going direct to my hotel and despatching it to the baths at once, unsealed and addressed to the fair bathers, so that they at least might have my explanation.

That evening, walking on the Esplanade, I am sure I heard one sweet-looking girl whose auburn hair reminded me of that I had seen in the process of being bunched up, whisper to another in a very awe-stricken tone these mystic words—

'That's *Him*.'

When they had passed I turned round; they were eyeing me surrep-

titiously, and pointing me out to another lady who had joined them. Pleasant, certainly!

Nature favours that spot with a little cove under steep rocks, which just adapts it for a ladies' bath, and feeling quite secure of privacy, I can fancy that for a bright warm morning the game which was being played would be very pleasant.

As a rule, society in the sea—that is, the English sea—is of a very limited character. Here and there a few ladies staying in one town and bathing at the same hour, fraternize—can ladies be said to fraternize?—and agree to hold on to their ropes and fling their arms about in that peculiarly ungraceful manner which excites such intense derision in French women who have been taught better, and that is all. The gentlemen are far away if they are bathing, and if not they are lounging on the beach making critical comments—which are impertinent.

What a remarkably uncomfortable, inconvenient dress English ladies adopt for bathing! They are prone enough to follow French taste in bonnets and shawls. Why not go a little further, and adopt their really capital bathing costume? It would not, when they rose, Venus-like, from the waves, cling to them, producing that statuesque effect, which I may suppose it is their object to avoid. But this is only a minor advantage. It would only remain for gentlemen, as is the case at the best French watering-places where the use of full costume by both gentlemen and ladies is compulsory, to adopt a similar dress, for us to have real society in the sea; and when this takes place, ladies will soon be swimmers. At Biarritz, a gentleman asks a lady to swim with him in the morning just as readily as he would invite her to waltz at night. Why not in England?—at Brighton as at Boulogne, in Devonshire as at Dieppe. The ladies have everything to gain by it, the gentlemen nothing to lose.

First impressions are very often false. What first impressions we get of the sea, when the powerful and remorseless ogress seizes us ruthlessly by the arm and dips us three times, ultimately restoring us to the arms of nurse, half-suffocated, and three-parts blinded! I can recall the day when I stood shivering on the steps, just allowing the water to wash the sole of my foot—about as unwise a proceeding as a bather can be guilty of.

Bathing from the rocks is pleasant, or would be if one were not afraid of running one's head against a sunken rock, at every dive, or maiming one's great toes, or having one's clothes washed away by the tide, which is as bad as the case of the bather who left his dog to take care of his garments, and found when he emerged (the story might suit the author of 'Sartor Resartus') that Nero, or Ponto, or whatever the brute was called, refused to acknowledge his identity, or surrender the clothes except with life. The reader can fill in the consequences according to taste, though I believe there is a sequel to the story, which I have forgotten.

There is another advantage of bathing from the rocks, with the water at a temperature of, say seventy, and the atmosphere at ten degrees higher; you can stay in a long time, luxuriate in floating and swimming, and employ the intervals in searching for shells for the young ladies among the interstices—only beware of crabs. They have such an awkward and disagreeable taste for great toes: not to mention the sad fate of the young man who, upon a solitary coast, had his wrist seized by a great crab while his arm was bent round a fissure in the rocks. Draw it away he could not; free himself from the tenacious claws he could not; and the tide rose, and rose, and still he was a prisoner. His order of release came only with death; and when the tide receded, he was found upon the rocks, cold and torn by his struggles to escape.

Of all bathing give me bathing from a boat, by which I avoid the jolty process over the shingle in a bathing-machine, which has about a thirty-jaunting-car capacity for rumbling; by which I avoid a wet carpet to tread upon, pegs made on purpose to allow hats to fall down, and all such things as

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

WHAT IS MY LOVE LIKE?

Drawn by E. K. Johnson. See the Poem.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

WHAT IS MY LOVE LIKE?

Drawn by E. K. Johnson. See the Poem.

www.libtool.com.cn

shingly beaches and broken glass on 'lovely sands' (see the Guide-books): give me a boat, I say, and a clear plunge with an utter fearlessness of rocks or the bottom, which are only a few degrees worse than the sharks and alligators common to the warmer latitudes. To be sure there is a pleasant little uncertainty—unless you have left a friend in the boat who will balance it on one side, while you climb in on the other—as to the possibility of your getting back again; but it is only sufficient to lend a zest to the occasion. I never knew any one who did not find the means of getting in again.

A little while, and the great annual exodus from the capital will commence. Society will migrate from Belgravia to the seaside. May I not hope that it (society) will learn to swim there; and thus take the surest means of making society in the sea pleasant and beneficial, and preventing the recurrence of that sad chapter of accidents, the records of which are to be found in obscure corners of newspapers, and on tombstones in seaside churchyards. If it does this, I shall have a pleasure in this work of a far higher kind than that which ordinarily attends the accomplishment of a task.

J. D. C.

WHAT IS MY LOVE LIKE?

WHAT is my love like? She is fair—
Fair as a tender autumn star,
Twinkling through the woodland air.
A cloven cherry is her mouth,
Her breath a breeze that wanders far
Through camphire hills in the sweet South.

And fine, and delicate, and slim
Is her rich, purple-boddiced waist,
Set round with fringes, quaint and prim.
O'er her cool neck, a rosary
Of fragrant pearls, white-serried and chaste,
In one close-linkèd measure lie.

O wondrous, wondrous is her hair—
A twisted wealth of golden brown,
That droops above her temples bare.
A milky shoulder, gleaming shy,
Peeps coy and blanched above her gown,
As from a pleasant nunnery.

Her hand so oft doth kiss her lips,
That half the cherry blood has flown
In ruby to her finger tips.
I will not swear me for her eyes,
For, when we meet, my lids are prone—
Supine before their witcheries.

She hath a voice, like a low brook
That crystals through a bed of gold,
By saddest lilies sun-forsook.
And her sweet laugh is soft and slow,
And wise in meanings manifold—
A viol that the spring gusts blow.

Such is my love—a phantom bright,
The vision of a summer brain
Seen half between the dark and light.
She lives within a palace fine,
And sees the moons of fancy wane,
The image and the dream are mine.

OUR CROQUET PARTY.

www.libtool.com.cn

'I HOPE you and Cissy are good hands at croquet,' was one of the first observations made by my friend Allerdyce, when, our mutual greetings over, and the battle of the luggage victoriously won, we had finally seated ourselves opposite to him in his waggonette, and were being bowled away towards his place, Maplehurst, where we were to pay a long-promised visit.

'I have quite too high an opinion of your father's judgment,' he continued, looking at Cissy, 'to suppose for a moment that he would have neglected to cultivate such a necessary branch of education; therefore, I expect that my visitors will crown themselves with glory at a grand croquet party we go to at Repton Park the day after to-morrow.'

'Well,' I said, 'Cissy will, I'm sure, for she's a capital player; but as for myself, though it gives me a terrible pang to disperse such rosy-tinted visions, truth compels me to say that I never could master the art. You see, my education was neglected, apparently; and after a certain age learning new things becomes impossible; at least

as I never, even by chance, could manage to do the right thing at the right time, I have given up even trying to propel balls.'

'You can't play worse than I do, old fellow, at all events,' broke in Allerdyce, 'for *I*'m a laughing-stock to my children (in whom, I am afraid, the bump of reverence is not very largely developed); but you'll be sure to play well enough for a monster croquet party; bad players get on just as well as good ones in a crowd, that's one comfort. At all events you can see Repton, which is well worth a visit, for it's a fine old place, and will of course look its best in holiday dress. The day after to-morrow is to be the grand inauguration of the weekly Wednesday receptions Mrs. Sackville has announced her intention of holding, so I suppose the World and his wife will be there, and conversation, croquet, and tea furnished *ad lib.*, if the weather be fine.'

Discussing the coming fête, in all its different aspects, pretty well occupied the time till our arrival at Maplehurst, where, on driving up to the gravel sweep, we perceived a game of croquet in active progress on the ground near the hall door. Here Allerdyce had told us that his young people were always as sedulously at work as if they were laudably trying to qualify for a degree in croquet, and the truth of his words was manifest. Of course we went over to look at them; and found Tom Allerdyce using the most eloquent arguments to persuade his elder sister Kate *not* to hit the winning peg, and so put herself out of the game. 'It would be just madness,' he was enunciating with all the zeal of sixteen, as we came up; 'of course go at the blue ball, and croquet it away—then go at red, and do the same for him, and then come gently down to me, lie up close, and we'll hit the peg together my next innings.'

A charming programme, if it had but been carried out; but, alas! the fates decreed otherwise. Even the best-devised plans of humanity are liable to fail. Whether Kate's nerve failed her from over-anxiety, at the critical moment, I cannot say, but so it was that the ball, sent apparently with such unerring aim, growing slower and slower in its course, finally stopped just an inch or two short of its destination; red ball was at once down on it, successfully exiled both it and its white partner, and at the next stroke had the game. We did not wait, however, to hear the end of the storm of recriminations Tom and his sister hurled at each other at finding the victory unexpectedly snatched from them at the very last moment, for Mrs. Allerdyce appeared on the scene, brought us to the house, and tried to inveigle us into partaking of an afternoon tea. My daughter, I am sorry to record, fell a victim to her blandishments, for, alas! flesh is weak; but as for me, sternly did I reprobate the degenerate and luxurious age which allows such practices. I astonished even myself by my eloquence, as I held forth against perpetual meals, and the havoc wrought in the nervous system by the unceasing tea-drinking that ladies especially now patronize. How, indeed, is it possible to appreciate the delicacy of the *entrées*, the juiciness of the joint, when gorged with cakes or bread and butter, and feeling oneself a walking reservoir of liquid? Truly human nature is perverse, but, alas! how helpless is man! Even in my own house, I blush to record the fact, surreptitious and irregular 'teas' take place, excused under the specious reasoning, 'that it is a necessity to pander to the depraved tastes of visitors.' They are, however, given under protest; for when they come to my knowledge, sternly do I check the morbid fancy.

Mrs. Allerdyce seemed, I am happy to say, struck by my arguments, and hoped I would give Mrs. Sackville the benefit of them at second hand. Ever anxious to do good, I promised, if opportunity served, to enunciate my views on the subject at Repton Park.

The whole of the next day we were kept on thorns by the weather-glass, which, with characteristic fickleness, executed feats of tumbling, which could only be accounted for by its *mercurial* temperament, for

when Wednesday appeared, it came decked in all the most glorious panoply of a perfect June morning.

Apollo was in one of his happiest moods and most fascinating tempers, and sent his sunbeams sparkling forth with the most profuse prodigality, as if bent on gladdening the hearts of all by the glory of their beauty. At about 2·30 P.M. we got under weigh; some of the party in the waggonette, the rest on Allerdyce's Irish jaunting car, which with curious perversity he professes to consider the most perfect mode of progression possible, and vainly endeavoured to induce me to sit with him thereon. I was constant, however, to the waggonette, and we at last started on our five-mile drive through a fine undulating country to Repton—the old trees along the way at times stretching their branches over the road, and furnishing us with a living awning of Gothic fretwork, as we drove along under their shade.

On reaching Repton Park, we found, by the numerous and recent tracks of wheels at the gateway, that we were not the first in the field, and as we progressed along we got glimpses of various equipages converging from various directions towards the house. The approach by which we entered, and which is more than a mile long, is managed with much skill, and passes through great variety of scenery. For the first half-mile or so after entering the demesne, it is fringed by a double avenue of beeches, the long straight vista being closed at the end by the Gothic archway and lodge of the second gate. The scene is then changed, and becomes more open and park-like, embellished by clumps of the fine old trees for which Repton is famous, and by herds of deer, which view our approach with great stoicism, and hardly take the trouble to move at the sound of the approaching wheels. A little further on we pass through a thick wood of rhododendrons and American plants, and get some very well managed glimpses of the lakes, the latter looking their best in their uniform of sapphire blue, in which they strive to emulate the bright azure hue of the sky above them. A sudden turn brings us in sight of the house, when a very animated scene burst on our view. The croquet ground on the lawn was crowded with occupants in very magnificent toilettes, the numerous colours in which threw the poor old rainbow quite into the shade; several conveyances were depositing their cargoes of smart ladies and gentlemen on the gravel sweep, while in the distance 'Aunt Sally's' picturesque garments floated in the breeze.

Mrs. Sackville was standing on the steps as we drove up, and Allerdyce hastened to congratulate her on the beautiful day she had managed to secure for her fête—and in short we talked atmosphere and weather, as it is *de rigueur* for the British to do when congregated together; for, as has been well observed, a lovely day is the one and only beauty that all can join in praising, without exciting feelings of envy and jealousy. The weather was certainly deserving of all possible praise, but still the subject was perhaps getting threadbare, when the arrival of fresh visitors left us at liberty to depart, and we migrated to the croquet ground.

Here, the presiding genius, Miss Sackville, looking like an Arcadian shepherdess, in white muslin and blue ribbons, was to be seen croquet book in hand, the centre of an eager crowd, trying to arrange the numerous players on each side; a complex problem which seemed very difficult to solve, even after her sister had carried off a large number of players to croquet ground No. 2, myself unhappily amongst the number. But what was I to do, when a very beaming young lady at just the most captivating age 'hoped I would go with her?' I *could* not refuse, for I am but a poor weak creature when opposed to a whole battery of feminine charms. Need I say, then, that I went, muttering, however, something *en route* about 'not knowing the game.'

'Oh, never mind that, Mr. Courtenay,' responded the fair vision at my side, 'I will teach you.'

'But Mr. Courtenay is, I am sure,

really a first-rate player, from his having chosen such a good mallet,' officiously struck in one of the bystanders.

In vain I hastened to assure her that chance alone had chosen it: little by little the delusion spread, and like a snowball gathered as it rolled: it was proclaimed that 'I evidently knew what I was about;' I found my advice even asked on all sides, and my partners actually congratulated on having 'Mr. Courtenay, the great croqueter,' with them, for to *that* it actually came at last. The more I disputed the honour, the more persistently was it bestowed on me, until at last I found myself actually beginning to wonder whether it could be true that they were all right, and I labouring under a delusion. Had my past life been a dream? Lost in a clueless labyrinth of doubt and difficulty, I was endeavouring to solve the complex problem, when called on to play. Instantly there was great commotion—every one came crowding up to see 'Mr. Courtenay's stroke.'

'Just watch how he holds the mallet,' said one man close to me in an audible whisper to another. 'You see the dodge is to hold it very low down: it gives certainty——'

'Oh! when you're through your third hoop,' burst in a little minx of eleven or twelve, rushing breathlessly up, 'make me ring the bell, do; I'm on your side, the green ball, and have been put away *so* often——'

'Keep out of the way, Dora, do, and don't distract Mr. Courtenay's attention,' interposed her elder brother. 'We depend on you, Mr. Courtenay, entirely,' he continued, confidentially to me. 'Our side is doing dreadfully badly. Just look where I've been stuck to for I couldn't say how long; but you can retrieve it all, I know; and when you've gone through your hoops, if you've any Christian benevolence, come and help me.'

All this time I stood still, hoping against hope that some sudden inspiration of genius might seize me, but finding none coming. In the greatness of my dilemma, I bethought me of Miss Sackville—of her who had kindly volunteered to 'teach me,' and hastened to place myself at her orders. Alas! in my hour of distress she was nowhere to be seen. My guardian angel had forsaken me. I was left to my own devices. Distracted by the different counsels proffered on every side (in all which, alas! self-interest and the selfishness inherent in human nature were painfully apparent), I repaired to the starting-post, and found more than a dozen balls thickly studded between it and the first hoop. Through this I was to pass myself, but on no account to send any of the other balls (in my path) through also. How to avoid doing so, without having the sleight of hand of a conjuror, seemed difficult, if not impossible. With the energy of despair, however, I grasped my mallet, and, to my utter amazement, sent my ball victoriously through the hoop, scattering the cluster right and left. To my still greater astonishment, I found myself 'ringing the bell'—acting the benevolent Christian, as requested, and, in short, performing prodigies of skill. Every fresh stroke confirmed the bystanders in their belief of my 'wonderful play;' and the running commentary on my performances (at which no one was so astonished as myself) was *piquant* in the extreme.

When at last I was stopped in my victorious career, I found myself three quarters round the course, far ahead of any of my partners or rivals, and the hero of the hour. Having thus most unexpectedly crowned myself with laurels, I determined, like a judicious general, to retreat in time, before Fortune, notoriously fickle, could strip me of my fame. Seizing, therefore, the first opportunity, I slipped quietly back to the house, and carefully avoiding croquet-ground No. 1, coasted round to pay my respects to the celebrated Aunt Sally, whom I found, as usual, surrounded by her votaries. Though that ancient lady's ebony charms decidedly look to most advantage at a distance, she undeniably possesses great attractions, and is quaint to look on, though perhaps too much

devoted to pipes to please every taste. This sad failing, however, those present did their best to correct, and the black beauty bore the abstraction of her pipes with imperturbable complacency and good-humour, smiling blandly on her aggressors with a benevolence quite touching to see. Tom Allerdyce was particularly zealous in the 'dudheen' war, and the ground was strewed with fragments of his spoils. Mary Allerdyce, however, soon summoned me to join my daughter and Mrs. Sackville in a visit to the conservatory and gardens, which well repay a visit. The latter are laid out in terraces overhanging the lake, and were a blaze of beauty. A broad terrace walk, bordered by giant yew trees, connects the gardens with the house. The latter has no great architectural beauties to recommend it; a square stone edifice, with the inevitable Greek portico, which is apparently so indispensable a characteristic of the domestic architecture of the nineteenth century: it resembles nine out of every ten country-houses that one sees. Few squires, however, can boast of a finer demesne than Repton; the long beechen avenues are said to date from the reign of Anne, and the oaks would make a Jew break the tenth commandment instanter, and long for the handling of the revenues that could be produced by the use of the axe. We saw the woods to the more advantage, as after we had lionized the gardens, Mr. Sackville drove us round one of the lakes in his pony-carriage, and down a long grass drive through a wood to see the 'Giants,' as they are called, a group of fine old patriarchal firs, which stand at the junction of six grass avenues.

'What a pity it is,' Mr. Sackville said, as we drove up to them, 'that we are not paying our visit here by moonlight, for we might then have the pleasure of seeing the "White Lady," an ancestress of mine who is supposed to haunt the spot at night. Unfortunately she never shows in the daytime.'

The words were hardly out of his mouth when we heard a gentle, very gentle rustling in the underwood behind us. It stopped as I looked round; then after a moment we heard a moan, and the rustling recommenced, as if something were cautiously making its way through the bushes; and, finally, a *white object* just showed for a moment, and then vanished. We all saw it. 'The ghost!' was on all our tongues as a matter of course; and Mr. Sackville, springing from the carriage with an alacrity hardly to be expected from his grey hairs, rushed into the wood in pursuit. Of course we awaited his reappearance with feelings strung to the highest pitch of anxiety; and after a few minutes he returned, bringing with him, not, alas! the ancestress we were so anxiously expecting, but a very prosaic white calf, which, disconcerted by the shouts of laughter and derision with which it found itself greeted, rushed back, after a moment's deliberation, into its leafy asylum.

'*There's* a ghost for you, Miss Courtenay!' exclaimed Mr. Sackville. 'Now you can say you have seen the White Spectre of Repton, which I can tell you not many have accomplished doing; and there can be, of course, no mistake about the matter when it is seen in broad daylight, and not, like most ghosts, after dinner.'

We accordingly made capital of our adventure, and edified our friends by the marvels we had seen in the wood. Our reputation as ghost-seers became almost as great as mine as a croquet-player, and with about an equally strong foundation of fact.

On our return to the house we found tea in progress. A deplorable and amazing spectacle! It is, indeed, hard for any well-constituted mind to see with equanimity appetites deliberately blunted at the most critical period of the day—before dinner. Mrs. Sackville seemed, however, quite too hardened a sinner for me to cherish even a hope of making a convert of her. I can only hope some of the others present were convinced of the error of their ways; but it is a hard task to reform an age that is so devoted to 'its cups.' I was giving Miss Sack-

ville her tea, and some most valuable advice gratis, when Mrs. Sackville interrupted my exordium by—

'Oh, Mr. Courtenay, I hear you are such a wonderfully good croquet-player. My daughter says what you did was really quite surprising——'

'And to no one more so than to myself,' I broke in; but my modest disclaimer was at once pooh-poohed, and I was called over the coals in the most painful way for having deserted my colours before the game was concluded.

A *divertissement* was at last, however, made by a precocious child in the company, who, having been for some time very restless at the unscientific turn the conversation had taken, finally thought it his duty to interfere, and nudging the elbow of a deaf elderly gentleman near me to attract his attention, tried to elicit his opinion on the 'Atomic theory,' but with singular ill-success.

'Tommy?—is it, my dear?' said the benign old gentleman, ear-trumpet in ear, bending down to his tormentor. 'And a very nice name, too.'

'*Atomic!*' insisted the *enfant terrible*, with an amazing emphasis on the last syllable.

'Ah! *Mick*, is it, my dear? I thought you said Tommy. Mick Tiernay. Why, you must be quite a little Irish boy,' continued the poor old gentleman, with the most winning affability, which was quite thrown away upon his questioner, who, finding that it was perfectly hopeless, even with the help of an ear-trumpet, to make himself understood, changed his ground, and suddenly pouncing on me, begged, in a stentorian voice, to my infinite horror, that I would at once give him my opinion 'as to whether the possibility of spontaneous combustion in the human subject had been satisfactorily disproved.'

Thoroughly taken aback, I could only falter, 'I really don't know,' as it would have been useless to affect not to have heard a query propounded in a voice of thunder.

'But is it possible,' my young gentleman continued, in a tone of much displeasure, 'is it possible that you have not read the treatise of the learned Doctor Ummelkauptfelhausen on the subject? Only fancy, mamma,' he said, addressing a lady with a face like a bird, who was sitting gazing on her darling, with a rapt expression of delight and awe combined on her countenance, 'only fancy! this gentleman hasn't read Ummelkauptfelhausen!'

Language altogether failing in such a dreadfully reprehensible state of affairs, a groan burst from the maternal bosom, and all present, appalled and awed, were of course struck dumb. But Allerdyce was equal to the emergency, and with wonderful presence of mind came gallantly to the rescue. Patting the child most paternally on the head, he observed, quietly, 'I'm afraid, my little man, your learning must be *very* rudimentary, or you would know better than to fancy Ummelkauptfelhausen an authority; though, indeed, a thoroughly superficial thinker like him is just fit for children. But you will be wiser when you're older, we may hope.'

Of course every one smiled. The mother alone looked savage, and as if she could have eaten Allerdyce then and there in one mouthful without the smallest scruple; but for that he was fortunately most supremely indifferent, having gained his object—namely, silenced, for a time at least, a most objectionable member of society. Lest a reaction might take place, we thought it would be a prudent course to migrate; accordingly, we departed, taking my daughter Cissy in our train, who, by-the-way, rejoiced immensely at the temporary extinguishing of the infant prodigy, he having been plying her all day with abstruse questions on the Punic wars and the specific gravity of hot and cold water, which she could not in the least answer. She had finally referred the anxious inquirer to Tom Allerdyce, who suggested the prodigy should 'go and be hanged,' as the best solution of the difficulties that oppressed him. It appeared, however, that the advice so kindly given (as is often the case) had not been taken, for she found her tormentor alive and busy as ever when she went to tea.

We now strolled down to the archery-ground—that relic of the days of yore which brings the ancient Britons, Cressy, and Agincourt to one's mind at once. With all the boasted improvements of our age, we still apparently cling to bows and arrows. Perhaps the thought that they were handled by our ancestors constitutes their charm; certainly a kind of halo of antiquity glistens round the sport: but in addition it can plead the minor merit of furnishing endless subjects for pretty speeches, for the connection of love and archery is an old, old story, and yet ever new. The shooting was very good; perhaps the absence of wind may have contributed to that satisfactory result, there being no adverse influences to contend with. The ladies especially crowned themselves with glory; but the infant prodigy being reported as heaving in sight under maternal convoy, we beat a precipitate retreat, and on our way to the house met emissaries sent from Mrs. Allerdyce to say that the leave-takings were in progress, and our conveyances waiting.

And now the difficult task of collecting our scattered forces began. The youngest son and daughter had been most successfully captured by Mrs. Allerdyce, who clung pertinaciously to her children, lest they should in an evil moment elude her grasp, when the elders were secured. Tom and the second daughter, Mary, were, however, nowhere to be found, and scouts had to be sent out in all directions to search for them. Meanwhile, I am afraid, we 'gossipped' on the departing guests; and Captain Sackville favoured us with several caustic remarks on mankind in general, and young ladies in particular. In process of time our numbers became complete. Mary Allerdyce had fallen into the clutches of an amateur photographer, who had been making 'studies' of the scene, and had been compelled to act a very unwilling *tableau vivant*, in reward for which the artist informed her, when he had finished, that his charge for boring her to extinction was *five shillings!*—as 'a most deserving charity' was in great want of funds. That the 'deserving charity' received an augmentation to its funds we may hope; but I am afraid the Allerdyce family were not amongst the contributors, but that they let this grand opportunity of returning good for evil pass without taking advantage of it.

When making our adieux to Mrs. Sackville, she 'hoped I had not left the game of croquet because of their bad play. It was really *so* good of a first-rate player to be willing to join with all sorts of indifferent ones.' To this flattering exordium I bowed; words would have been perfectly useless, and therefore it was needless to expend them. Under the false character which had been attached to me all day I left Repton, grieving inwardly—as a man of truth must—over the delusion which I was powerless to dispel, but outwardly acquiescing in the laurels so forcibly pressed on me. Captain Sackville vainly tempted little Maud Allerdyce to remain with him; she was superior to bribery, and altogether rejected his overtures. The parting came. Young Sackville, in the deepest grief, made copious applications of his pocket-handkerchief, but all in vain; Maud was flinty-hearted, but finally relented so far as to make a vague promise of one of her golden curls at some future period, with which the captain had to satisfy himself, affecting to consider himself very badly treated. At last we started. The last thing that reached our ears as we drove rapidly past the croquet-ground was the announcement by an infatuated youth that he was practising 'Mr. Courtenay's stroke;' though whether my mantle devolved on him or not I am to this moment ignorant. Let us hope so. I can only say that it has left me.

O.

www.libtool.com.cn

"'Speak for me,' to the stars, I said,
One June night as I walked alone."

Drawn by Robert Jefferson. See "A Midsummer Lyric."

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

A MIDSUMMER LYRIC.

'SPEAK for me,' to the stars I said,
One June night, as I walked alone;
But the stars kept silence overhead,
Nor helped to make my loving known:
'Unkind, cold stars,' I cried, 'the moon
Shall rise and tell my passion soon.'

The moon above the purple hills
Then climbed the skies; I bent my knee,
But ah! my tears like summer rills
Were lost before they reached love's sea,
And I stood voiceless by a shore
Where waves are murmuring evermore.

Then in despair I called the winds,
And bade them seek some amorous shade;
To whisper there the spell that binds
My soul to her, the chosen maid;
But no! the idle winds went by,
And left love's sighs on earth to die.

At last I met my peerless maid,
And love, unhelped by stars or moon,
Broke out in speech, and stammering said
Its olden tale that night in June;
For I had climbed to Feeling's peak
Whence love with pride must fall—or speak.

I clasped the maiden, then mine own,
Repeating o'er my love again;
And not this time spoke I alone,
Moon, stars, and winds joined my refrain;
'I love—she loves,' the echoes heard,
And earth and heaven joined each fond word!

THE PLAYGROUNDS OF EUROPE:

Cheap Switzerland.

www.libtool.com.cn

SURELY everybody ought to have their holiday! Holidays (whether regularly periodical or irregularly occasional) are the grand elixir of life, the true *aurum potabile*, for busy people. As for people who do not know what it is to be busy, whose life is one long holiday, they are more to be pitied than they in the least suspect.

I may therefore lay down the axiom that a holiday is a medicinal restorative, a pleasurable necessity, for every hard-worked individual who has not made up his mind to shorten his natural term of life. About that, there can be no dispute or doubt. It may be taken for granted. The only points open to discussion are the How, When, and Where of the holiday. I leave private convenience and inclination to settle with the two first of those adverbs — although, as to the second, for multitudes, the close of summer or the beginning of autumn is the time selected; and a capital time it is— and will confine myself to the consideration of the last: Where? Whither? In which direction? North or South? East or West?

Now, without discussing particulars, I will assume that the pleasantest, the grandest, the most attractive, the least wearisome playground in all Europe, is Switzerland. If one country is more cosmopolite than another in respect to its visitors, Switzerland is probably that country. Wherever you go, from table d'hôte to mountain top, you fall in indiscriminately with Italians, Russians, Spaniards, Germans, Americans (fewer since the civil war), Dutch, French, English. Strangers are Switzerland's staff of life; they enable her to purchase bread and wine; they pay the rent of many a dwelling; they render the desert habitable, and cause provisions to abound where none are produced naturally. With the amusement to be derived from this polyglot throng, Switzerland unites great geographical variety and diversity of altitude. You may keep snug in the valley, or climb up to the clouds, or, mounting above them to the highest peaks, may learn, from the evidence of your senses, that the fields of air are anything but boundless. Dear Switzerland! It is needless to sound your praise. I know that you can be and are often dear; but I also want to show people of moderate fortune that you may and can be cheap.

In the first place, the Alps are rapidly reached, nowadays. How times are changed, in respect to travelling! Overhauling some old memoranda, I find a note of a journey from Geneva to Paris, in 1835, taken with the same pair of horses, under the conduct of a Swiss voiturier, who boarded and lodged me on the road, giving a good knife-and-fork breakfast at noon, a dinner in the evening, and a bed. We started early, reposed a couple of hours in the middle of the day, and reached our quarters for the night about six or seven. At every halt, we came to a fresh town or village; every half-day's journey brought a change of scene which would have been very amusing but for the monotony of the grand interior plain of France in spite of all its wealth and all its agricultural interest. Still we did see the towns and villages, and mixed with their inhabitants. I remember that the

Swiss's name was Claude, and that he left Geneva the day after his wedding, his wife and a female friend coming to see us off. I paid him six louis-d'or and ten francs bonne-main, or 5*l.* 4*s.* English, and was well served in every respect; but we started on the 24th of May, and arrived on the 1st of June. My note concludes: 'After seeing Italy, the road has but little to interest, and one is glad to reach the end of the journey.' The interest, now, is that such a journey is historical. Who, in 1864, will perform the feat of going from Geneva to Paris, in nine days, with the same pair of horses?

As a contrast to the above, you can now, in the course of four-and-twenty hours, traverse the whole of France by its longest diagonals; which is a much more extensive sweep than that which took me nine days. This certainly is rather a fatiguing trot; but it is an approach to the migratory powers of the swallow and the crane. In 1864, a very respectable continental tour may be completed in less time than it could be half begun thirty or forty years ago.

Two advantages result. You want to see a place or a province, and you dart down upon it at once with all your faculties fresh. By making one grand stride by night, when the country you traverse is veiled in darkness, you escape all temptation to linger and loiter, and consequently to lose valuable time. Many and many a travelling project has been rendered abortive by syren attractions which peeped out along the road. Myself and small party once set off to see Brittany. Our route lay through Normandy. But Normandy is very pleasant; and the women's caps are funny to behold. They give you a warm foot-bath after your dip in the sea; or if you like to bathe in cyder, you easily can, there are such oceans of it. And they do not breakfast and dine, as elsewhere; they eat two dinners per day, one at eleven, and one at six. And the banks of the Seine are picturesque. There are melons, plums, and figs to be eaten; there are churches and stained-glass windows to be beheld. When October came, all we had seen of Brittany was the Rock of Cancale (honoured of epicures), from the summit of St. Michael's Mount; nor have we seen more of it up to the present day. It is best, therefore, to rush straight to your intended object. Remember the copy, 'Delays are dangerous.' Fancy yourself a queen's messenger until you get where you want to go.

Another advantage of rapid and economical locomotion is, that the pleasure of distant travel is thrown open to a multitude of persons to whom it was hermetically closed before. Moreover, many people who could well afford more than sufficient sums of money, could not afford anything like sufficient time. But other persons besides those with two or three thousand a year and an indefinite extent of leisure may now enjoy the exhilarating influence of Alpine air and scenery. The Jura range, the Swiss Lakes, the Bernese Oberland, nay Italy itself, are no longer secluded behind the formidable barrier, impassable to most, which is raised by having to look at your horses' tails for five or six long weary days. The upper and wealthier class of English are already a nation of travellers; so are another class, often not wealthy, but frugal and good managers, who reside abroad for longer or shorter periods. With the present economy in the times of transit, the middle classes, professional and business people, might likewise be travellers, if they would only regulate their incomes and their general outlay so as to leave some margin for travelling expenses. If they will spend their last farthing—they often say they *must*, and have not the courage to say they *will not*—in keeping up appearances to the utmost in matters of dress, equipage, and establishment, barely making two ends meet while striving to pass for greater folks than they are, they must necessarily debar themselves from the mind-enlarging, soul-elevating, body-strengthening pleasures of travel. But what an incomplete existence, to pass out of life without ever beholding a snowy peak, a natural cascade, an alpine lake, a self-sown forest hanging on

crags where man never set foot, and with the clouds entangled in the fir-tree tops! Surely, the sight of a mountain chain will compensate for a little less household show; an annual trip to the rocky hills, with their brawling streams and their bracing gales, will make some amends for the absence of a footman from your entrance-hall.

What will be the eventual results of the new system of travelling, no one can predict as yet. The changes to be brought about are manifold, and are only at their commencement. One curious consequence is the starting into life of mushroom localities that attain full growth, or at least considerable development, in the interval between two editions of 'Bradshaw.' The latent germs of towns that have lain dormant on the ground ever since the fall of the Roman Empire, sprout suddenly, make vigorous shoots, and burst into blossoms of glass roofs and painted walls. Take Culoz, for instance, which figures in small capitals in Time-tables and Indicateurs for the Mediterranean line. Where is Culoz, and what? Search for it in 'Guy's Geography,' in 'Brooks's Gazetteer,' in the maps of the Useful Knowledge Society, in 'Chambers's Educational Atlas;' you may as well look for a watering-place in the map of the moon. But *I* have Culoz on a map, in a 'Guide to Savoy,' published since its annexation to France. It is the point where the line from Maçon to Chambery (and thence to the foot of Mount Cenis, on the high road to Turin) branches off to the left, to go to Geneva. Culoz is a little town, a handful of houses, just enough to keep a mayor and a notary amongst them, lying in a nook behind a rocky mountain, about a quarter of an hour away from the station. Hundreds and thousands pass the station without seeing, or suspecting the town. But the name, Culoz, has sprung at one bound out of oblivion into notoriety; and the town and the station may one day, perhaps, effect a junction of continuity.

Olten, again, *may* be found on old good maps of Switzerland, such as Keller's; but it is not the Olten of 1864. Olten, now, is the point of meeting of the railways from Neuchatel and Solothurn, from Thun and Berne, from Freyburg and Berne, from Lucerne, from Zurich and Aarau, and from France and Basel. Olten boasts some of the best-managed refreshment-rooms in Europe; and close to the station is a capital boarding-house and hotel, Von Arx's, where the weary traveller may rest and restore himself with every comfort, at moderate prices.

It is not probable that, for some time to come, the means of transport from London to Switzerland will be easier or speedier than they are at present. There is the choice between express and omnibus trains; and that is all. It is a question of expense. But *in* Switzerland itself the facilities for rambling hither and thither are constantly increasing. Everywhere, the railway skirting the lake is superseding the steamer which rode on its bosom, and which every now and then, if it did not sink to the bottom, caused other lakefaring craft to sink. On the Lake of Neuchatel alone, the summer of '63 saw seven steamers less than there were in '60. An always inconvenient, often unpleasant, and sometimes dangerous mode of transit is thus exchanged for one that is quite the contrary. Carriage roads take the place of what were only bridle-paths; economical diligences, open to the commonalty, run where expensive posting once held the monopoly. In all sorts of places, little wooden hotels, organized in conformity with the tariff of a franc per bed per night, if down in the valley, somewhat dearer if up amongst the peaks, are starting up, holding their own, and yielding satisfactory profits. Competition, and the growing consciousness that over-exaction tells badly in the long run, are reducing the prices of guides, innkeepers, and other travelling necessaries. The presence of a crowd of middle-class tourists has called forth, and led to the discovery of, a sufficient number of middle-class hosts. The demand for 'Cheap Switzerland' has raised a supply.

There are now three lines of railway completed and open from Paris

to Switzerland. First, to Geneva, by Macon and Culoz; secondly, to Basel, by Vesoul and Mulhouse; thirdly, to Neuchatel, by Dijon and Pontarlier. We will follow the last, as the shortest, cheapest, and most striking way of entering Helvetian territory. The descent from Pontarlier, down the Val de Travers, to Neuchatel, is indescribably magnificent. Weather permitting, there is a theatrical succession of mountain scenery ending with a climax-picture of the town and lake in the foreground, the Simmen Thal mountains in the middle distance, with the snowy Jungfrau at the back of all, which renders theatres poor trumpery. What it is, may be guessed from the following trait.

The first time I travelled on the line, soon after passing the French frontier, the conductor of the train entered our carriage with a smiling face, and seated himself as one of the company. Thinking that we were favoured with his presence for business purposes merely, I tendered my ticket to be snipped or inspected.

'Oh, no; I don't want *that*,' he gaily observed. 'I like to come in, to watch and see what travellers think of the Val de Travers. You are coming to it soon. Sit on that side, to the right of the carriage as you face the engine. On this side, where I am, you would see nothing —which some people seem to like best, for they very often shut their eyes.'

'Either very cool, or very sympathetic and obliging!' thought I to myself. 'A capital specimen of Swiss independence.' Even where we were, there was much to admire, and I could not help expressing my admiration.

'Oh! this is nothing,' said the volunteer showman. 'Wait till you come to the Val de Travers. Look at that narrow opening between the hills.'

We, the occupants of that railway carriage, grouped ourselves round the right-hand window, as we were bid, in a social little semicircle, as if we had been in the private box of a theatre. As we advanced, the mountain portal opened wide, and we followed the outline of the left-hand buttress, hanging, somehow, not far from its summit. First we saw great masses of mist boiling up, as if from some great subterranean caldron; and then, a verdant valley seemed to have been suddenly excavated beneath us out of the bowels of the earth. We looked down into a beautiful abyss; but still it *was* an abyss. It was as if the ground had suddenly sunk down under our feet, like an enormous pitfall, with trees, rivers, roads, human dwellings, and everything else standing upon it, leaving us trembling on the very edge of terra firma. Far and deep below you see a busy village. It is just such a view as a hawk would have when he hovers over the cottage in which his quarry has taken refuge in despair. Like him, you dart down towards it with a curvilinear course, which resembles the descending sweep of a bird from the skies. The inclination of the railroad, as it hangs on the brow of the mountain and glides across its face, is fearful to behold, when you can behold it.

'Oh dear! oh dear!' groaned one of our party. 'This is dreadful! It is most lovely, certainly, if you will; but if I had known what it was like, I could never have ventured here—no, that I could not. Do tell me, pray, when will this frightful part of the line come to an end?'

Our ticket-taking cicerone was in such high glee that he nearly jumped out of his uniform. He feasted on the combined expression of wonder, delight, alarm, and pleased surprise, that was stamped on every passenger's countenance.

'There is no end of it at present, he said. 'You will have ever so much more. I hope you are not tired yet of going in and out of tunnels. But you should have seen the railway while it was making. At first there was not foothold on the face of the cliff. The engineers were obliged to be held by ropes tied round their waists; they were hauled up and down by means of a windlass. But I must go; for here's a station.'

And such a station! It's just an

elegant wooden birdcage hung up against the side of a wall.

Single men, on pleasure bent, but at the same time of frugal mind, will of course reach their destination per third-class carriage. The fare

www.libtool.com.cn

From Boulogne to Paris, 15 francs 65 centimes: From Paris to Neuchatel, 31 francs 05 centimes; altogether 46 francs 70 centimes, or less than *2l.* The reader is reminded, once for all, that 10 centimes make one penny, and therefore that a franc, or 100 centimes, is tenpence; 25 francs make a pound; 100 francs make *4l.*

Permit me to speak didactically, while giving travelling advice. First day, leave Boulogne at six in the morning, and *don't* stop in Paris, for reasons already stated. Take luncheon in the railway carriage; cross Paris to the Chemin de Fer de Lyon, and go on to sleep at Montereau. Second, an easy day to Dijon. Third, an easier to Dole. Fourth, to Neuchatel.

This reads like tardy progress, but really is not so in the end. 'Chi va piano, va lontano,' is an excellent motto for travellers. It implies not only 'Slow and sure,' but 'slow and far.' Never knock yourselves up with the ardent outburst of your first two or three days' journeying. Travelling all night, except upon pressing emergency, is a mistake and a piece of false economy. The next day has to pay for it; perhaps the debt is not quite cleared off till the day after the next. The machinery of the human frame refuses to act properly, if cheated of its regular rations of repose. No man has more than a limited capital of strength in his corporeal bank. If he draw on it too freely and rapidly, he will become insolvent in the end.

For those not familiar with French railway travelling, it may be advisable to mention some of the regulations in force. Contrive to be at the station at least half an hour before the starting of your train. The advantage of arriving early is that you may generally secure for your luggage the first or second turn of registration. A porter will receive your luggage and place it on the bench connected with the luggage office, as near the office window as possible, to take its turn. The French railway people, if civilly treated, are almost invariably civil and obliging. Cases of just complaint are extremely rare. Gratuities to porters are forbidden; but such prohibitions are useless. If human nature be driven out at the door, it will return by the window. I have found the administration of half a franc, or even of a few odd sous, greatly expedite matters in hand.

As soon as your luggage is deposited, take your place at the ticket wicket, and wait patiently. No crowding or pushing is allowed there; travellers are required to advance to the wicket regularly, one by one, in single file, in the order of their arrival, forming what the French call a *queue*, or tail. Rails are mostly placed in front of this wicket, to compel the formation of the *queue*. If you stand first in the file, you will be served first; therefore go early. You thus avoid all hurry, fuss, and feverish bustle; you keep your temper and abstain from putting yourself into a perspiration. At the wicket, state briefly, and distinctly, the number of your party, the class you travel by, and your destination, thus: 'Trois—Premières—Paris.' Your tickets and your change will be returned with admirable rapidity.

As soon as you are in possession of your party's tickets, hasten to the luggage-office window. Have in readiness ten centimes, that is, a couple of sous, which is the charge for registration. Every traveller by rail in France is allowed a certain weight of luggage, without extra charge. I do not tell *what* weight, because you are wise enough to travel with as little luggage as possible; the model quantity (the only quantity suitable for *Cheap* Switzerland) is a small carpet bag which you can carry in your hand and take in the carriage with you, under the seat. In foreign hotels, you get things washed with wonderful rapidity. The American plan, when out on a journey, is not bad; as soon as a thing gets spoiled and shabby,

throw it aside and buy a new one. Anything to avoid encumbrances. It is also good to start light, to leave room for purchases and things collected on the way. The French allowance of luggage is more than enough for reasonable tourists, especially as it is distributed over your party. One has a little more, another has a little less; and the average remains within reasonable bounds.

You give your tickets to the luggage clerk; the porter puts your luggage into the weighing machine, and shouts, while the clerk writes, 'Three voyageurs; four *colis*, packages; so many kilos (weight); Paris.' Other porters paste on each package a printed label with the No. of registration and the destination. The clerk takes the two sous, stamps your ticket on the back 'Bagages,' and hands you a duplicate of the registration, which you will put in your purse, and go in peace, keeping your ticket in a come-at-able place. You have now no further care about the luggage, until you arrive at your journey's end, which is a very great comfort when the journey is long.

You are then admitted to the waiting-room belonging to your class. When the train is on the point of starting, the doors of the first-class waiting room are first thrown open; then, after a short delay, during which the first-class folk take their places, the second-class passengers are let loose; and then the third. You start; we will suppose that you arrive without accident. You have to wait in a lobby or hall of the station while the luggage is being classed in order. At last, you are admitted to claim your own by presenting the duplicate of registration. But note that luggage cannot be removed till it has been passed by the Octroi officers of the town, which they do by chalking a hieroglyph on each package. Therefore, have your keys in readiness, in case they choose to search it for meats or liquors. The larger the town at which you arrive, the more strictly the Octroi insists on its right; which, however, by railway, and by express trains especially, is often suffered to drop into an inoffensive formality, although the right still remains.

The cheapness with which Switzerland can be 'done' depends entirely upon how far you can combine the following conditions. Travel second or third class by rail. On steamers, take the second place, the fore part of the vessel, which has the best view and costs the least. Numbers who pay for places at the stern, crowd to the front and remain there during the whole passage. Go to cheap inns, which need not be bad ones, but quite the contrary. You will find many such respectable, clean, and comfortable, although you may often not have 'the view,' and will be less thrown in the way of wealthy English. But you have only to walk out to see the view, and your main object, I suppose, is Switzerland. Lastly, travel on foot all you can; not by any means eschewing the convenience of railways, diligences, and steamers, when they fall in your way, but avoiding the expense of hired carriages or saddle-horses, to make the innumerable excursions for which there is no public conveyance. The knapsack and the little carpet bag are also an introduction to cheap hotels, as well as a persuasion to concede reduced prices in hotels which are not exactly cheap.

For in Switzerland the whole art of cheap travelling consists in settling the prices beforehand. Have no shame or hesitation in doing it; the innkeeper would think you a fool if you had. I do not claim the merit of the discovery. M. Desbarolles, a French artist, has published 'A Journey in Switzerland at three and a half francs per day.' The author practises painting and palmistry, making, possibly, more by the latter than the former. His book is amusing from its intense Anglophobia, for which we may pardon him, considering that it (the book) has done great good. For instance, the charge for 'bougie' has already disappeared from several moderate-priced inns, being incorporated with the more general and less objectionable item of 'service.' Of course he is no favourite with numerous innkeepers; nevertheless, he has directed considerable custom

to those who are willing to meet the demand for fair accommodation at moderate charges. He boldly carried out the ideas which were long ago suggested by Topffer's charming 'Voyages en Zigzag.' His grand arcanum for the economical traveller is to FIX HIS PRICES BEFOREHAND. His tariff is, dinner, including such an allowance of wine as he can get for his money, a franc and a half; bed, one franc; breakfast of coffee, milk, bread, butter, and honey, another franc; service and bougie, nothing. Total, three francs and a half.

This figure is low. I get my bed for a franc, but pay more for other things, and do not refuse a trifle for service. I get a good dinner, without beer or wine, for a franc and a half, especially if I do not dine alone. A more substantial breakfast than that allowed by M. Desbarolles is required by most constitutions while making a pedestrian tour with only two meals a day. In truth, it is difficult beforehand to set precise limits to your total expenditure. Extra fatigue requires extra restoratives; and a man's appetite for meat and drink is very different amongst the Alps to what it is in a city counting-house. The above prices only apply to towns and lowlands. Up in the hills, where provisions have to be fetched by horses or men, prices are necessarily higher, but not more so than might be reasonably expected. On the top of the Niesen (a most delectable climb), reached only by a bridle path which mounts steeply and continuously for ten long miles, I had a good and wholesome dinner for two francs. Fair ordinary white wine was a franc and a half the bottle, Yvorne two francs, and Nuits (Burgundy) three francs only. All this wine is carried up on horses' backs. If a wine-carrier were to fall, what a smash and a spill!

Every intending pedestrian ought to take great thought how he means to be shod. A doggrel philosopher has enunciated the formula that 'without feet you can't have toes;' I carry the truism further, and assert that without good walking toes and feet you can't walk. But sedentary people are apt to forget that there are two sorts of human feet, feet to walk with, and feet to sit still with. We treat our sedentary feet exactly as they should be treated, by carrying out the golden rule to keep the head cool and the feet warm. But walking feet must be otherwise managed; they must be kept cool and dry; hence, partly, the pedestrian exploits performed by nude-footed people, as the Scotch and the Arabs. Thick stockings which encourage, and boots, highlows, or bottines which confine moisture, are bad. At the end of a long summer-day's journey you will have your feet tender, sodden, half-skinned, approaching the condition of an overboiled fowl; for which misfortune the best remedy is to inclose your toes and the parts affected in a linen rag soaked in brandy and olive oil before drawing on your stockings. Wear thin socks or stockings of finest wool, and thick-soled shoes, cut low rather than high, and already worn before starting. If you must have gaiters, to keep out gravel and bits of stick, let them be of brown holland or hempen cloth. I guess that silk would make the best walking stockings, but have not tried it.

The rest of your costume, proceeding upwards, may be trousers rather thick than thin; waistcoat of the same, buttoning high: light frock coat, and waterproof wide-awake or cap, with the means of fastening under the chin. Instead of stick or alpenstock, take a large strong umbrella with a convenient handle, an iron ferule, and a stick exactly the length of your walking-stick. It will serve besides as a parasol in the sunshine and a screen in the wind.

In starting for an eminence where a view is to be admired (as the Rigi, Mount Pilate, &c.), take with you a woollen comforter and a flannel shirt; an overcoat also is a wise precaution. You arrive perspiring at the top; you immediately change your wet flannel for dry. If the air is keen, as mostly happens, you don the additional outer clothing and enjoy your panorama in comfort and safety. I convey these and a few other items in a little hand-bag,

easily carried; but you will often have offers to be relieved of it for a mere trifle, 'ganz billig,' very cheap, especially if you appear not to care to be relieved of it. In Switzerland, as elsewhere, the less you are supposed to be in need of a thing, the more likely you are to get it. Independence is master of the market. You say, and show, 'I can do without you,' and you have your man.

The question of 'braces or no braces' merits careful consideration. Their absence gives a freedom to the chest and the whole upper portion of the body, which cannot be imagined by those who have never tried the experiment. You feel as much at ease in all your motions as if you were a prizefighter about to enter the ring. The girding of the loins, in order to keep the trousers in their place, is a support which is popular, historical, and biblical. The improvement of your personal appearance is indisputable. On the other hand, persons who perspire much may find themselves inconvenienced by tight girding. Braces enable you both to trudge along with your loins ungirded, and also serve to keep the bottoms of your trousers out of the dirt in sloppy weather. On the whole, my advice is, start without braces, but take a pair with you for occasional service.

The pedestrian must not be disheartened by weariness at the outset of his journey. After two or three days' walking, he will find his fatigue gradually diminish until he is thoroughly in tramping trim, and able to continue his march for many hours without feeling tired or in the least exhausted. Rest may be allotted in various ways; as, part of the day on foot, part in steamer or diligence. French troops, when on the move (in time of peace), march four days, and rest the fifth. If you take two days' rest in the week (Sunday and either Wednesday or Thursday) and walk the rest, it will carry you over a considerable extent of country.

Once at Neuchatel, Helvetia's all before you where to choose. You may turn to the right, to Lausanne and the Lake of Geneva; you may cross the Lake to Morat, and walk on to Freyburg; or you may take rail to Berne and Thun, whence the steamer will land you at Neuhaus. And now for a cheap day or two.

Walking from Neuhaus to Unterseen (the twin village of Interlacken, one of the grand rendezvous for Swiss tourists), rain came on; so, instead of proceeding, I slept there. Next morning early, while the goats belonging to each family were assembling in the Place or Square to be driven off together to their browsing ground, I started early on foot, and reached Zweilütschinen. Excellent breakfast, 1f. 80c. Thence on to Lauterbrunnen, where I would tell about the Staubbach cascade if there were room, and if you could not read about it elsewhere. After the Staubbach, onwards and upwards on the way to Mürren. On leaving Lauterbrunnen, there started from the ground a little brown man about two feet high, with an old little face made of Gruyère cheese, a russet coat and waistcoat much too short, brass buttons much too big, a pair of shoes much too large, and a stick as long as he was himself. The little brown man had, moreover, a knowing look and a cunning smile. He would carry my bag to Mürren for three francs.

No, he wouldn't; I could perfectly carry it myself.

At this, he was a beaten mannikin; my slave. He would carry it for two; and did so.

Installed in office, Johannes Fichter informs me that, though small enough for six, he is ætat. sixteen. He is a guide in the bud. He shows me a squirrel (quite different to ours, black with white muzzle), high up a cherry-tree. As we ascend, the little brown man, up to his business, pulls off his coat—a hint for me to do the same. Nor is he without pretensions. He wears a hat, if you please, —somebody's cast-off wide-awake, chucked into a ravine—and not a black cotton nightcap, like his little fellows. He leads the way manfully to Mürren (which I advise you to see), telling the names of the giant peaks as they rise before us. His information is useful; for a flat map gives no idea of the nature and bear-

ings of a mountainous country. At Mürren, little brown man asks for a trink gelt, and gets 25c. Good dinner at Mürren, with wine and London stout, 6f. [Dearer, because not at table d'hôte time.] Host evidently wishful to keep me for the night. Know better. If bad weather sets in on the mountain, you are caught in a trap, where you must stay perhaps two or three days. Therefore, after dinner, walk down to Pension Staubbach to sup and sleep.

Another cheap day. Supper, bed, and breakfast at the Pension Staubbach, 4f. 50c. Start, with a roll in pocket, over the Wengern Alp, on foot, expending by the way 1f. 5c. in wine and coffee, and passing close by the foot of the Jungfrau. In descending to the valley of Grindelwald, do not enter the village, but make for Zweilütschinen again, where dine and sleep.

One more cheap day. Dinner, bed, and linen washing at Zweilütschinen, 6f. 15c. Walk to Interlacken. Excellent breakfast there, with coffee and glass of cognac, 2f. 10c. Steamer to Brienz, 1f. On the top of the diligence, over the Brunig to Alpnach, 5f. 60c. Steamer to Lucerne, 1f. 20c. Dinner at Lucerne, with bottle of wine, 2f. 50c. In this cheap day, a great distance is accomplished and a wonderful variety of scenery beheld.

Mont Blanc, and similar excessively high work, are not included in Cheap Switzerland; and if you wish to distinguish yourself by scaling the Cervin or some other (is there any other now?) unclimbed precipice, you must pay for it in pocket, and often in person. A member of the Alpine Club, who made an ineffectual attempt to ascend the Schreckhorn while it was still a virgin peak, has never recovered his eyesight perfectly since the two nights which he spent among the snow four or five years ago.

I conclude with a list of cheap inns, from personal experience, premising that I don't know a bad Hôtel du Commerce in France, nor a bad Hôtel du Lac in Switzerland.

Neuchatel, Hôtel du Lac.
Berne, La Clef (am Schlussel).
Unterseen, Hôtel de Ville (Kaufhaus).
Zweilütschinen, L'Ours (am Baar).
Lauterbrunnen, Pension Staubbach.
Interlacken, Hôtel du Lac.
Lucerne, L'Aigle d'Or.
Rigi Staffel (hill prices).
Wimmis (foot of the Niesen), Hôtel du Lion.

Very good, but not of the very cheapest:—

Unterseen, Pension Beausite.
Geneva, Hôtel du Lac.
Berne, zum Affe, Pension Hirter.
Thun, Freienhof.
Zurich, Faucon.
Rapperschwyl (Lake of Zurich), Hôtel du Lac.
Lucerne, Swan.

Cheap hotels, not known to the writer:—

Baths of Leuk (Gemmi), Hôtel de l'Union.
Mullinen, L'Ours de Berne.
Art, La Couronne d'Or.
Brienz, L'Ours.
Sachseln, L'Ange.
Hergiswyl (foot of Mont Pilate), Cheval.
Meyringen, Mdlles. Balmer.
Altorf, Guillaume Tell.

And now, my friends in 'London Society'—the young ones especially whose hearts and heels and purses are yet light,—peradventure an 'old stager' has 'put you up' to a few things. After your first or next ramble about Switzerland you may think of the excellent investment you made in this month's number of your favourite magazine—how it was worth as many sovereigns as it cost you pence. *Au revoir!*

E. S. D.

THE LONDON OPERA DIRECTORS:

A SERIES OF CURIOUS ANECDOTIC MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL MEN CONNECTED WITH THE DIRECTION OF THE OPERA; THE INCIDENTS WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEIR MANAGEMENT; WITH REMINISCENCES OF CELEBRATED COMPOSERS AND THE LEADING SINGERS WHO HAVE APPEARED BEFORE THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

www.lpiool.com.cn

By the Author of 'Queens of Song.'

CHAPTER III.

VANESCHI—SINGERS FALL INTO CONTEMPT—MANAGERIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS—VANESCHI INVITES SIGNORA MINGOTTI TO ENGLAND—REGINA MINGOTTI'S HISTORY—HER TRIUMPHANT SUCCESS IN LONDON—QUARRELS BETWEEN THE DIRECTOR AND HIS PRIMA DONNA—CRAWFORD TREASURER—BANKRUPTCY AND FLIGHT OF VANESCHI—SIGNORA MINGOTTI BECOMES DIRECTRESS—FELICE GIARDINI—MINGOTTI IS OBLIGED TO RETREAT—RE-APPEARANCE OF VANESCHI: HE FAILS AGAIN—SIGNORA MATTEI OBTAINS THE DIRECTION—COCCHI, THE COMPOSER—PINTO, LEADER OF THE ORCHESTRA—TENDUCCI—DANCING BEGINS TO USURP THE FIRST PLACE—KLISI—CROWDS AT THE OPERA—ABEL—BACH—SIGNORA MATTEI RESIGNS HER ARDUOUS POSITION—GIARDINI BECOMES DIRECTOR—MANZOLI—DR. ARNE WRITES AN OPERA FOR THE KING'S THEATRE—GIARDINI RELINQUISHES HIS ATTEMPT AT MANAGEMENT—VINCENT, GORDON, AND CRAWFORD UNDERTAKE THE DIRECTION—BARTHELEMON, CHEF D'ORCHESTRE—GUARDUCCI—PUGNANI, CHEF D'ORCHESTRE—MILLICO AND SACCHINI: CABALS AGAINST THEM—MLLE. HEINEL, DANCER. [1751–1772.]

WHEN Dr. Croza disappeared from the precincts of the Opera, affairs went on irregularly and badly with that establishment for some time. Nobody was willing to take the helm; the warning given by the mishaps of so many unfortunate directors being probably sufficient to deter any would-be successor.

In 1751 the King's Theatre was opened in January; but, after two performances, the company removed to the Little Theatre opposite. In 1752, during the winter, balls only were given.

Signor Vaneschi, who had nothing to lose, assumed the management in 1753. The theatre opened in November that year—concerts and balls having been the only entertainment during the earlier part of the year. Vaneschi had come from Italy some ten or fifteen years before this time, and had commenced his opera management as assistant to Lord Middlesex.

Since the departure of Monticelli, in 1746, serious opera had languished in neglect. Vaneschi endeavoured to revive it; but unfortunately the public did not care for the entertainment which he offered them. In December, 1753, Walpole wrote thus of the performances at the King's Theatre:—'The Opera is indifferent; the first man (Serasini) has a finer voice than Monticelli, but knows not what to do with it. Ancient Visconti does so much with hers that it is intolerable. . . . The Opera succeeds pretty well; and music has so much recovered its power of charming that there is started up a burletta at Covent Garden that has half the vogue of the old "Beggar's Opera;" indeed, there is a soubrette called the Nicolina, who, besides being pretty, has more vivacity and variety of humour than ever existed in any other creature.' The singers at the Opera, in addition to Serasini, were Ranieri and Albuzio, and Signore Passerini and Frasi. These performers were regarded with the most supreme contempt by the aristocracy, who employed them to sing at concerts, but engaged their services through a steward or butler, leaving professional and agent to haggle about the price to be charged.

At this time there was an announcement (continued for many years) that 'by his Majesty's command' no persons whatever were to be admitted behind the scenes. There were other advertisements

that 'no money will be returned at the gallery for the future, but to those that can get no room;' and that 'no servants will be admitted into the Footmen's Gallery but those that attend their masters and ladies to the said Opera.' The servants were becoming perfectly intolerable; and in the following November (1754) threat was made that, several persons of quality having oftentimes complained of the disturbances created by the livery-servants, the Footmen's Gallery would be shut up on the first complaint, and no admittance given for the future to these turbulent gentlemen.

The theatre lingered through the season; but the utmost success achieved by Vaneschi just enabled him to keep free of a debtor's prison. He saw that it would be useless to try to carry on his enterprise without some lyrical magnet; so he invited Signora Mingotti to come to England as his leading singer.

Regina Mingotti was then the most celebrated prima donna in Europe. She had, in her childhood, been placed in a convent by her uncle, who intended that she should become a nun; but the death of this relative changed her fate, and she did not even enter on her noviciate. During her sojourn with the nuns, she had acquired a taste for and a certain knowledge of music; when she returned to her mother and sisters she was very unhappy, and gladly accepted an offer of marriage from Signor Mingotti, director of the Opera at Dresden, an old man, who, with the object of making a fortune by her beautiful voice, forced her on the stage, entirely against her inclination. She had come out in opposition to Faustina, then principal singer at Dresden, and had completely eclipsed that admired prima donna. At the time when Vaneschi entered on his management she was singing in Madrid, at the head of the company engaged by Farinelli, who was as tyrannical as her mother, sisters, and husband had been. She eagerly accepted Vaneschi's offer, and arrived in London in the autumn of 1754. She was an agreeable-looking woman, about twenty-seven, plump, with an expressive countenance, and was an admirable singer and a superb actress, playing with fire and energy: indeed she performed with so much boldness that she was preferred in male characters.

Felice Giardini was then director of the orchestra.

The season opened November 9, 1754, with 'Ipermestra,' composed by Hasse and Lampugnani, when Signora Mingotti made her first appearance in England. The male singers were Ricciarelli, who had a pleasant style and a beautiful voice, and Cipandi; the second female singer was Signora Columba Mattei, a charming singer and a spirited actress, who afterwards became directress.

The public gave Signora Mingotti a warm welcome. The popularity of the theatre revived, as if by magic, and the opera of 'Ipermestra' proved a decided success.

Managers and singers, from the commencement of Opera annals, have mutually assumed an antagonistic position. Scarcely had Mingotti appeared in London when the fashionable world was plunged in a third war, waged between her and Vaneschi. There were perpetual quarrels and disputes, which became more violent every day. Fashionable society separated into two parties, one declaring itself for Vaneschi, the other for the pretty German. Ladies of the highest rank threw themselves into the affray with the ardour of veteran warriors, with the vehemence displayed by their grandmothers in the battles between Faustina and Cuzzoni, Handel and Bononcini. The Opera war was the principal topic of conversation at drums and hurries, kettledrums and hurley-burlies. Giardini of course took part with Mingotti against Vaneschi. His patroness, Mrs. Fox Lane (afterwards Lady Bingley) was one of their most vehement partisans. One day General Crewe called upon her, when she entered upon the history of the war pending between the manager and his prima donna, and demanded his opinion on the subject. The General was puzzled, but at length asked—'And pray, madam, *who* is

Signora Mingotti?' 'Get out of my house!' cried the enraged lady. 'You shall never hear her sing another note here as long as you live!' She was in the habit of giving private concerts, where the pupils of the Signora and the eminent violinist performed; and as these fashionable amateurs could not be heard anywhere else, her friends employed every species of intrigue, descended to every kind of humiliation, to obtain admission. Of this she took advantage to assist her *protegées*. Whenever a benefit was announced by either, she would cavalierly demand contributions from everybody. 'Come, give me five guineas!' she would say; but she never deigned to inform her victims whether she would grant them tickets in return for their money.

Mingotti's extraordinary popularity excited great jealousy and invidious criticism. A dramatic satire entitled 'Lethe' was brought out at Covent Garden, in which Mrs. Clive, as the *Italian Lady*, sang a song from an Italian opera, written for the purpose of giving a ridiculous imitation of Signora Mingotti. However, Mingotti continued to sing with few interruptions, and unabated popularity, till November, 1755. Jomelli's 'Andromaca' was produced that month, when Mingotti unfortunately fell ill, and resigned her part to Signora Frasi. This she had done once before; the public had been exceedingly indignant the first time this happened, and they were even more angered now. Mingotti was hurt by their severity, and complained some twenty years afterwards to Dr. Burney of the harshness of the English public, who had frequently hissed her 'when she was suffering from a toothache, a cold, or a fever;' misfortunes, she said, to which the good people of England would readily allow every human being to be liable, except an actor or a singer. 'Andromaca,' however, was seriously injured by her inopportune illness; and the public, manager, and singer were equally out of temper.

At this time Crawford was treasurer; he was afterwards director.

The quarrels between Vaneschi and his prima donna and chef d'orchestre became so violent that the Opera was perfectly disorganized; and the summer of 1755 saw Vaneschi a bankrupt, a prisoner in the Fleet, and finally a fugitive from the country, after the manner of his predecessor Dr. Croza.

On the flight of Vaneschi, Signora Mingotti had the folly to undertake the government of the Opera, assisted by Giardini. She was, apparently, well suited to take the reins of power; she was clever, intelligent, had a practical knowledge of music, great experience of the world, and could speak with the utmost fluency German, French, and Italian, and English tolerably well. Her exertions gave an improved aspect to the lyrical drama; and though music already composed for continental establishments (selected by the judgment, and arranged and amplified by the taste of Giardini) supplied the place of original works, yet success, for a considerable time, seemed to sanction her venturesome speculation.

Giardini was born at Turin in 1716, and was a pupil of Lorenzo Somis, a distinguished scholar of Corelli. He was seventeen when he obtained a situation in the Opera orchestra of Naples, where he was stationed next the first violin. With the vanity of youth, he liked to display his execution, and used to adorn his music with numerous flourishes not to be found in the score. One evening, however, during the performance of an opera by Jomelli, the celebrated composer himself entered the orchestra, and sat down beside Giardini; the young man, determined to impress the famous maestro with a high opinion of his skill, performed such an elaborate fantasia in the symphony of a song, that Jomelli rewarded him, not with praise, but with a hearty slap on the face,—'the best lesson,' says Giardini, telling the story, 'that I ever received in my life.' Jomelli, however, finding that he was amenable to correction, took a fancy to him, and afterwards was of very great service to him. Giardini came to England in 1750, and im-

mediately gained an extraordinary popularity. He composed several operas, some of which were produced during the joint management of himself and Mingotti.

Unfortunately, though applause was acquired, and the Opera was patronized, the profits were far from being large. In April, 1757, the directress made an urgent appeal to the fashionable frequenters of the King's Theatre: 'Signora Mingotti begs Leave to inform the Nobility and Gentry, that Subscriptions for carrying on Operas the ensuing Season, will be received by Messrs. Drummond, Bankers, at Charing Cross. She humbly solicits an early Payment of half the Subscription, that she may be enabled to exhibit next Winter an Entertainment equal to her wishes, and worthy of her Audience.'

The difficulties grew more formidable every day, however; and in the following January, Mingotti and Giardini were obliged to suddenly withdraw from the dangerous arena, both having been heavy losers by the speculation, and reduced almost to poverty from comparative affluence. Signora Mingotti quitted the country altogether; she continued to sing for five years in the principal cities of Italy; and at length quietly settled at Munich, where she went into the highest circles of society. She came again to England in 1791, with one of her pupils, who was to appear at the Opera. She died in 1807.

The season of 1757 was continued by Vaneschi, who had reappeared. In May he tried the effect of an appeal to the patrons of the Opera. 'Mr. Vaneschi begs leave to inform the Nobility and Gentry,' he said, 'that a licence being granted to him from the Lord Chamberlain's Office, with his Majesty's most gracious approbation, for exhibiting Italian Operas at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, subscriptions for the ensuing season will be taken in by Messrs. Drummond and Co., bankers, at Charing Cross. He humbly desires his protectors and subscribers to oblige him with an early payment of their subscription money, in order that he may be able to give the necessary securities to Signora Columba Mattei, and to Signor Pasquale Potenza, as also to the rest of the singers.'

Vaneschi, however, failed again, after the lapse of a year, and the nobility, having paid too dearly for their experiments in opera-management, were disinclined to resume the government of so expensive a state. The Opera, therefore, remained without a chief until Signora Mattei and her husband, Trombetta, 'made interest for the chance of speedy ruin,' as Burney says; and they became Opera managers, 1759, a post which they retained for four years.

Of course Signora Mattei assumed the dignity of prima donna. She soon became a favourite; she was an excellent singer, a fine actress, and a handsome woman. Potenza, an uncertain singer and an affected actor, supplied the place of Ricciarelli. Mattei engaged Gioacchino Cocchi, of Naples, as composer to the Opera during her administration. This composer had some talent, but he was not endowed with genius. When he first arrived in England, he brought over the new passages that were in favour at Rome and Naples; but to these he added so little from his own stock of ideas, that, from frequent repetition, the public soon wearied of them. On giving up his dignified position as composer to the Opera (1764), he took the more humble one of teacher, and earned a comfortable independence thereby.

Giardini's successor as leader of the orchestra was Pinto, an Englishman by birth, an Italian by parentage. When a boy, he was 'a miraculous player' on the violin; and when a mere youth he was employed as leader of large bands in concerts. He was far more inclined to be the fine gentleman than the musical student, however, at that time; he kept a horse, 'was always in boots of a morning, with a switch in his hand instead of a fiddlestick,' when the arrival of Giardini changed all his thoughts and aspirations. The superiority of that eminent performer to any one he had ever heard filled him with emulation; and he

practised for some time with great diligence. He had a powerful hand and marvellously quick eye, but he was so careless a performer that he played the most difficult music better the first time he saw it than ever after: he was then obliged to look at the notes with some attention, whereas afterwards he trusted to his memory, and frequently committed mistakes, and misconstrued the expression of passages which, if he had thought of looking at them, he would have executed with accuracy.

Tenducci arrived in London in 1758, when he was engaged to sing at the Opera. It was not until the following year that he was noticed. Though a young performer, and only second in rank, he was a much better singer than Potenza, to whom he was obliged to give precedence. The sister of Guadagni arrived in 1759, when Cornacchini, a new 'first man,' superseded Potenza—a change by which the public gained little, as he had an indifferent voice, and a disagreeable style.

In 1759 and 1760, dancing began to usurp the place of the sister art of music, although the rage for it had not yet made London and Paris ridiculous. Mdlle. Asselin was the principal female dancer at the Opera; Gherardi was first male dancer and ballet-master, 'famous, both in serious and comic, as well for his invention as for execution in dancing,' the advertisements said. Gallini, first dancer in 1760, received great applause, and in a pas seul was frequently encored, 'which I never remember to have happened to any other dancer,' says Burney. Gallini was a very eccentric character, and a perfect miser.

The next season (1760-61), the Opera troupe was reinforced not only with Elisi, a new male singer of great reputation and ability, but by a complete company for the comic opera, consisting of Paganini, Tedeschini (who afterwards became an eminent singing master), and several other singers. Some comic operas were then produced, with which, as with the performers, the public were greatly pleased. Later in the season, a pasticcio by Galuppi—'Arianna e Tesco'—was produced, when Elisi appeared, with the directress, Signora Mattei, and the theatre again attracted crowds. Elisi was a great singer, and a still greater actor; he had a fine compass of voice, and wonderful dexterity; and his figure was large and majestic. Tenducci had quitted London for Scotland and Ireland.

The grand event of 1761 was the production of 'Il Filosofo di Campagna.' The singers were indifferent, but such was the popularity the music attained, that the applause was indiscriminate. Paganini was encored in almost every air. So much did this buffo caricato increase in public estimation during the run of this piece, that, on the evening of his benefit, the crowd which besieged the doors of the house was so immense, that not a third of the people who presented themselves could be accommodated. Such a crowd had rarely been seen in front of the King's Theatre. 'Caps were lost, and gowns torn to pieces, without number or mercy, in the struggle to get in. Ladies in full dress, who had sent away their servants and carriages, were obliged to appear in the streets and walk home in great numbers, without caps or attendants. Luckily,' adds Burney, an eye-witness, 'the weather was fine, and did not add to their distress by rain or wind; though their confusion was greatly augmented by its being broad daylight, and the streets full of spectators.' This season was a very profitable one to the impresaria; and in the autumn, the arrival of his Majesty King George, with his bride, the royal coronation, and the festivities consequent thereon, filled London with a crowd of visitors. The first night the royal couple appeared for at the Opera, half the applicants' places were refused tickets because there was not sufficient space.

The public were growing very weary of Cocchi. Although he had two admirable singers to write for—Elisi and Signora Mattei—his lack of inventive powers was becoming more evident every season. At this juncture John Christian Bach, in

company with Charles Frederic Abel, arrived in London.

Abel was a German. For nearly ten years he was in the band of the electoral king of Poland, at Dresden, at the time that the celebrated Hasse was chapel-master. Many reasons are assigned for his throwing up this situation about 1760 (some assert that he had a violent dispute with Hasse); he quitted Dresden with only three dollars in his pocket, and went to the next little German capital, where his talents obtained for him a temporary supply of money. On coming to England, he gained the patronage of the Duke of York; and on the formation of Queen Charlotte's band, he was appointed chamber musician to her Majesty, with a salary of two hundred pounds per annum. He could perform on several instruments, but his favourite was the viol di gamba, on which he excelled every contemporary performer; he preferred its grating tones to the most dulcet strains that any other instrument could produce. A story is told of him by Dr. Walcot. At a dinner at which the doctor was present, given by Lord Sandwich at the Admiralty, the various merits of different musical instruments forming the subject of conversation, his lordship proposed that each gentleman should name which was his favourite. Abel, after hearing with restrained emotion, one name the harp, another the piano, another the organ, another the clarionet, and so on, but no one mention his favourite viol di gamba, abruptly rose, and left the room, vociferating, 'O dere be de brute in de world; dere be dose who no love de king of all de instruments!' He was a singular personage, a man of dry sarcastic humour, but kind-hearted. He used to swear that 'gold was de devil of English idolatry.' His compositions were easy and elegantly simple, for he often declared, 'I do not choose to be always struggling with difficulties, and playing with all my might. I make my pieces difficult whenever I please, according to my disposition and that of my audience.' He was deeply learned in the science of music. He was the umpire of all musical controversies, and was frequently consulted on difficult points. His science and taste, however, were greater than his invention. He possessed a high reputation in his profession till his death. He and Bach organised weekly concerts the year after their arrival in London, which attracted crowded and fashionable audiences.

In 1762, Mattei retired from the stage, but continued at the head of the Opera until May, 1764. The Amicis family were engaged for burlettas, in addition to Paganini and the other singers. Anna de Amicis was a captivating singer, and a graceful and elegant woman, with an exquisitely polished style. By this time Cocchi's invention was quite exhausted: his pieces were becoming intolerably wearisome. He had neither humour, gaiety, nor creative powers. His comic operas were the most melancholy performance that can be imagined. In 1763, Mattei (who was now joined by Mr. Crawford in the management) displaced Cocchi. She had wished Bach to write for the Opera on his first arrival in England, but he was so extremely mortified to find that he was invited to compose for such singers as Ciardini and the Cremonini, then the chief vocalists, that he totally declined doing so, being unwilling, as a stranger, to trust his reputation to such performers. Having heard Anna de Amicis sing two or three serious songs in private, however, he knew he had discovered a singer worthy of performing his music. He said to Mattei that if she would give the 'first woman's' part to Anna de Amicis, he would write an opera; she willingly agreed, Anna de Amicis was invested with the dignity of prima donna in the serious opera, and during the rest of the season this singer appeared in serious parts on Tuesday nights, and in comic on Saturdays, being equally admired in each. Bach's first opera in England was 'Orion,' produced February 19, 1763, performed before the king and queen, and a house crowded with fashion, and proved a triumphant success. This

was the first time that clarionets were admitted into our opera orchestra.

In June, 1764, Signora Mattei resigned the direction of the establishment. An announcement appeared in May, 'As Signora Mattei leaves England at the end of this season, and Mr. Crawford intends to quit the management, all the dresses and other articles belonging to him and Signora Mattei will be sold.' The theatre opened in November under the management of Giardini, who had been teaching since he relinquished his post as leader of the orchestra. Giovanni Manzoli, one of the most eminent singers of the period, arrived in England, and was immediately engaged. The expectations which his brilliant reputation excited were so great that on the opening of the theatre in November, there was such a crowd assembled at all the entrances, that it was with the utmost difficulty any one could obtain places, though some visitors waited two hours at the doors. Monzoli's voice was most powerful, and his style the most grand and dignified heard since Farinelli's time. He was a good actor, though he was 'unwieldy' in figure, and not well made, and was not young, being then forty years of age. The sensation he created was extraordinary. The manager invited Dr. Arne to write an opera for Manzoli, although every musician of distinction in London was ambitious of composing for the great singer, and the doctor had never written for the Italian stage. Dr. Arne selected Metastasio's 'Olimpiade;' but owing probably to being compelled to write in fetters—with a different language, different singers, a different audience, a different style of music to that to which he had been accustomed—the doctor failed unequivocally, and surprised every one by the tawdriness of his music. This was succeeded by a pasticcio, to which Hasse, Galuppi, Ferradini, Bach, Vento, Rezel, and even Abel contributed; and then 'Adriano in Siria,' by Bach, was produced, when the crowd that besieged the Opera for admission was so great that it was impossible for a third part of the company collected together to obtain places. The public were very much disappointed in this opera, however. Scotti was the first woman; she had personal beauty and good taste, but a feeble voice. Tenducci returned this season, as 'second man.' Giardini, although he could write operas himself, invited Vento from Italy, on the supposition that he should continue impresario; but at the end of the season he relinquished his attempt at Opera management. He enjoyed the favour of the English aristocracy till 1784, when he went to Italy. After an absence of five years, he returned to London; but he was then no longer the same—broken in health, his powers diminished, and, worst of all, 'old-fashioned,' and he failed to regain any share of attention. The advantages which he obtained by his talents, he lost, during his whole life, by his haughty disposition, and by his extravagance. He squandered the large sums he received, and alienated his best friends by his caprice and his splenetic temper. As a composer he was pleasing and effective, and for a long time popular; but he had few pretensions to learning. Some one informed Dr. Boyce that he professed to teach composition in twenty lessons; to which the doctor sarcastically replied, 'All that *he* knows of composition might be taught in ten.'

On the retirement of Giardini, Vincent, Gordon, and Crawford undertook the management; their regency lasted from November 1765 to 1772, the only year in which Crawford was absent being 1768. Gordon and Vincent were experienced professionals. Gordon was the son of a Norfolk clergyman, and was a good performer on the violoncello. Thomas Vincent was a scholar of San Martini, and was long a favourite performer on the hautboy; his father was a bassoon player in the Guards, and his brother, James Vincent, who died young, was joint organist of the Temple with Stanley, and a brilliant performer. Thomas Vincent had been a favourite with the Prince of Wales, father of George III., and had acquired by

his profession a considerable sum of money, which he 'augmented by marriage,' Burney says; but which, unfortunately, was soon swallowed up in the expenses of the Opera. He finally became a bankrupt, and his colleagues, though they escaped utter ruin, chiefly because they had nothing to lose, were not enriched by the speculation.

The operas produced by these gentlemen were not successful. The singers were Elisi, the Visconti, and some others of lesser celebrity. Savoi appeared for the first time, and soon Elisi's popularity waned, and Savoi became the reigning favourite. Barthelemon (who came to London in 1765) led the band. He was a first-rate performer on the violin. He was born at Bordeaux in 1741, and lived some time in Paris, where he had composed an opera In 1766 he composed his first opera for the King's Theatre—'Pelopida'—which was received with uncommon applause. Garrick, hearing of his success, called upon him one morning, and asked him if he could set English words to music? He replied, he thought he could. Garrick, asking then for pen and paper, wrote down the words of a song to be introduced in the 'Country Girl,' and sung by Dodd, as Sparkish. While the tragedian was writing his verses, Barthelemon looking over his shoulder, set them to music! Garrick at length said, 'There, my friend, there is my song.' Barthelemon instantly replied, 'There, sir, there is the music for it.' Astonished at this unexampled display of musical talent, Garrick invited him to dine that day with him, and to meet Dr. Johnson. The song proved so successful, that it was encored every time it was sung; and Garrick in his gratitude promised to make Barthelemon's fortune. He employed him to set to music the operatic farce of 'A Peep behind the Curtain,' which was so much admired, that it was represented one hundred and eight nights in one year: Garrick cleared several thousand pounds by it, and rewarded the composer with the sum of *forty* guineas instead of fifty, which he had originally promised him, alleging, as an excuse, that the *dancing cows* had cost him so much money, that he really could not afford to pay him any more. Barthelemon composed several pieces for the English stage, though he finally gave it up in disgust. He was, in appearance, a very little man, but handsome, and had a neat figure. He married Miss Polly Young, an operatic singer, a beautiful little creature—a bewitching Ariel.

During the summer of 1766, a new plan was formed for the ensuing season by the Opera managers, which involved future directors in great difficulties and expense. As the theatre had been almost deserted on Tuesdays, even when it was thronged on Saturdays, the impresarii thought it expedient, in order to attract visitors, to perform serious operas on Saturdays, and comic on Tuesdays. As this necessitated a double company of singers, Mr. Gordon went to Italy, during the recess. Among the performers with whom he returned were Guarducci and Signora Grassi. The first buffo, Lovattini, was in London at the time. Guarducci, who had been in England before, was greatly admired. He was tall and awkward in figure, inanimate as an actor, and in countenance ill-favoured and morbid; but with these personal disadvantages, he was a man of undoubted probity and worth in his private character. As a singer, he was one of the most correct performers ever heard; and had he not, unfortunately for himself, arrived here so soon after Manzoli, the impressions of whose beautiful voice and majestic manner of singing had not been effaced, Guarducci would have attained the highest position. His voice, though of much less volume than Manzoli's, was clear, soft, and flexible. Prejudice ran high against him on his first arrival, but his merits at length made its way, and his exquisitely polished style was approved and acknowledged by the principal professionals and persons of taste and discernment. He soon discovered that a singer could not

captivate the English by tricks of vocal execution, and told Dr. Burney some years subsequently, in Italy, that 'the gravity of our taste' had been of infinite service to him. 'The English,' said he, 'are such friends to the composer, and to simplicity, that they like to hear a melody in its primitive state, undisguised by change or embellishment. Or if, when repeated, riffioramenti are necessary, the notes must be few and well selected, to be heard with approval.' Dr. Burney adds, 'Indeed, Guarducci was the plainest and most simple singer, of the first class, I ever heard. All his effects were produced by expression and high finish, nor did he ever aim at execution.'

Cecilia Grassi, afterwards Mrs. Bach, performed the first woman's part with Guarducci. She was plain, and a perfectly inanimate actress, yet she possessed a certain charm which disarmed criticism.

The visit of the young King of Denmark to England in 1768 was signalised at the Opera-house by a series of six extra performances. His Majesty, in October, gave a splendid masquerade, at which three thousand persons were present; the profusion of diamonds worn by the nobility on this night excited the utmost wonder. The stage is said to have been lined with crimson velvet, and six rooms were arranged for supper, where a quantity of plate glittered.

At this time Gaetano Pugnani led the band. He had been violinist to the King of Sardinia: in 1754 he had come to London, having created a great sensation in Paris at the Concert Spirituel. He was a brilliant violinist, and unequalled as a leader. At the head of an orchestra he was like a general at the head of an army. So absorbed were all his thoughts in his profession, that sometimes he forgot everything else. One night he was performing a concerto in a crowded assembly, and had come to an *ad libitum* passage, when he was 'so lost in attention to his playing,' that, fancying himself alone, he walked about the room till he had finished an elaborate cadence. He remained in England until 1770, when he returned to Italy, and founded a school from whence issued some of the best violinists of the last century; his eulogy has been pronounced in these words: 'He was the master of Viotti.' He would have been a handsome man but for the disproportionate size of his nose.

In the autumn of 1769, Guadagni arrived for the second and last time. During his absence from England, he had gained a brilliant reputation in Italy. As an actor he was justly eminent, and he was an exquisite singer, although he had forced the extent of his voice, thereby, in the opinion of most persons who had heard him before his departure in 1748, injuring it. Unhappily, although he had attained the highest place in public estimation, his quarrelsome temper well-nigh ruined him. He quarrelled with the Hon. Mr. Hobart, the patentee of the theatre, because that gentleman chose to give the preference to Signora Zamparini before his (Guadagni's) sister; he quarrelled with the public because they persisted in applauding or encoring him when he was engaged in interesting scenes; and he quarrelled with all his friends and theatrical comrades because he had no control over himself. He was so passionate that his enemies, knowing his weakness, often maliciously encored him, simply to irritate him, and make him offend the audience by refusing to acknowledge the tokens of approval. He had strong resentments and 'high notions of his own importance and profession.' He was admitted to be the most skilful billiard-player in Europe, yet his opponents, when playing for large sums, would put him in a rage by pretending that something was unfair that was clearly otherwise, when he would become so agitated as to be no longer a match even for a child. Yet he was generous to extravagance; he lent large sums of money to impoverished young men of good family, who had ruined themselves. One young nobleman, having borrowed a hundred sequins from him, said, 'I only want it as a loan; I shall repay you.' 'That is not my intention,

replied Guadagni; 'if I wanted to have it returned, I should not lend it to you.' He left England in 1771, because, during the latter part of his stay, he never appeared without being hissed.

Tenducci continued to sing during the seasons of 1770 and 1771: he was greatly improved since his first arrival. From May 1771 there was no serious opera attempted till the arrival of Millico, who came over in the spring of 1772 with Sacchini. He was considered the best singer of his time, and was remarkable for the dignity and feeling of his style. He was ugly, and his voice had acquired its greatest beauties from art; but he was a fine actor, and a most excellent man. When he came, he had to sustain a most desperate struggle against the cabals which were organised against him by the admirers of Tenducci and Guadagni, as well as the Cocchi, Guglielmi, Giardini, Vento, and Bach parties. None of his violent and virulent opponents would allow that Millico could sing. They were also very bitter against Sacchini, who, they asserted, could not compose. At first, both Sacchini's music and Millico's singing were frequently hissed; but at length these gifted men conquered their enemies, and not only obtained universal applause, but drew crowded audiences; and at the end of the next season, as Burney says, 'several who had boldly pronounced that neither Sacchini could compose nor Millico sing, would have given a hundred pounds if they could have recalled their words or made their acquaintances forget they had been guilty of such manifest injustice and absurdity.'

Cecilia Grassi was the first female performer.

Dancing was now rapidly gaining an ascendancy in point of popularity over music. The celebrated Mdlle. Heinel attracted crowds by her grace and piquancy. Neither the works of a new composer, nor the talents of a new singer, could draw the public to the theatre as this dancer could. Her 'extraordinary merit' had, however, an 'extraordinary recompense:' for besides the salary of six hundred pounds allowed her by the Hon. Mr. Hobart, she was complimented with a gift of six hundred more from the Maccaroni Club. 'It is very extraordinary,' remarked Cocchi, the composer, bitterly, 'that the English set no value upon anything but what they pay an exorbitant price for.' E. C. C.

THE UNDER-CURRENT.

THOUGHTS of mine, so wildly pressing
Through the mystery of my soul,
While my calm face, unconfessing,
Keeps the solemn secret whole.
Oft I ponder,
With vague wonder,
Whence ye come—and what ye mean;
Visions of my world unseen!

Are ye nothing? all the longing?
And the deep bewildering doubt?
Till the old child-faiths come thronging
Back—and cast the tempter out.
Is this dreaming?
Only seeming,
All the strong love, and the pain
Which can never sleep again.

Does all pass away unheeding,
Leaving no marks in its track?
Do the days, on days succeeding,
From the Past call nothing back?
No! I only,
Sad and lonely,
In my weary soul bear trace
Of the wrestle and the race!

All, all, passes; but in token
Of the long-lost dreams, there lie,
In my silent heart, unspoken
Words and thoughts, that will not die.
Here, the cherished
Hopes, that perished
Ere those golden days were o'er,
Sleep enshrined for evermore.

M. DE LYS.

OUR SOCIAL PIONEERS:*

Charles Knight and the Penny Press.

www.libtool.com.cn

THE name of Charles Knight is intimately associated with the rise and progress of the popular literature of the century. When the instruction of the people was frowned on by the aristocracy of England, denounced as democratic, and dreaded as the prelude of revolution, the idea of a cheap instructive literature was being cast in his mind, and was shaping itself into the work of his life. No weekly serial or monthly volume of attractive information, adapted to the tastes and suited to the comprehension of the people, issued from the British press. Science had not condescended to popularise her doctrines. Her wonders were still the pride and the possession of the aristocracy of mind. The pen of the *littérateur* still aimed to command 'ears polite.' To write for the tradesman and mechanic, for the farmer, the clerk, or the shopman, for the needlewoman, the nursery-maid, or even the boarding-school young lady, was beneath the function of the man of letters. He shot at higher game, to bring down my lord or lady as patron or patroness to his genius, or to win the homage of the literary taste and higher mind of the country. The 'cheap publications' of that period, or such as bore the name, were almost exclusively democratic or infidel. Nothing seemed to have strength to live, or the vigour of self-support, unless the vehicle of sedition or of infidel opinions. Wooler's 'Black Dwarf,' 'The Republican,' 'The Medusa's Head,' 'The Cap of Liberty,' ran the race in the metropolis with Cobbett's 'Twopenny Register,' and the large manufacturing towns had their competing journals for working men of a similar stamp. Even larger works designed for the mechanic, the factory workers, or the few reading agricultural labourers, were tainted with the same poison. Mr. Knight mentions a Manchester paper that came under his eye some time in the year 1814, an entire column of which consisted of an advertisement of books, nearly the whole of which aimed at the overthrow of Christianity, all published in numbers, and at a price accessible to the unhappy mechanics who were then labouring sixteen hours a day for less than a shilling.

It was time that the new power of education that was beginning to develop itself among the working men of England should have impressed upon it a safer direction. The pious and loyal tracts dropped by aristocratic distributors in the homes of the poor, with their invariable dreary commonplace of loyal obedience and reverential contentment, were no antagonists to the fiery appeals of the anarchist or the wild novelties of the sceptic. Something more attractive than pious commonplaces and stale advices was required to displace the revolutionary literature which, wanting in every quality as a guide or instructor, yet broke in upon the monotony of the artisan's life and thought, with its magnificent promises, daring fault-finding, artful flattery of his class, and the hopes it fed of its vindicating for him a higher social position and a more commanding political influence. To drive it from the field, a cheap literature was called for which should at once attract and instruct the popular mind, deliver it from its subjection to political quackery, and prove the means of the higher mental culture of the working man.

To project a literature of this character fifty years ago was a bold undertaking—to propose to conduct it on the mercantile principle of self-support, seemed as hazardous as the enterprise was novel. It could hope for no support from the

* 'Passages of a Working Life during Half a Century, with a Prelude of Early Reminiscences.' By Charles Knight. First Epoch. London: Bradbury and Evans. 1864.

dominant class of British society who had borrowed from Rome its maxim, 'that ignorance was the mother of devotion,' and translated it into the political one 'that knowledge was the mother of revolutions.' The age of Mechanics' Institutes was still in the distance, when noble lords should occupy the chair at an 'Introductory,' or themselves turn lecturers, and for the time meet all ranks on the common platform of knowledge. It was still the strong prejudice of their order that for the working men to read books was to make him a dangerous member of society. His part was to obey his superiors, and enjoy, when he could, 'unlimited rashers from the flitches of his bacon rack.' The hope of support from the working classes themselves seemed as desperate. The few readers amongst them had for the most part taken their side with the journals that had poisoned their principles and soured their hearts. Throughout the rural districts of England a dreary, degrading ignorance at the time prevailed. 'The believers in Moore's Almanack,' Mr. Knight tells us, 'comprised at that period nearly all the rural population. When "Master Moore," as the good folks called him, uttered his mystical sentences under the awful heading of "Vox Cœlorum, Vox Dei—the voice of the heavens is the voice of God," how small sounded the mundane reasonings of all other writers! If the great astrologer prophesied disaster few would be the believers in success. There was scarcely a house in southern England in which this two shillings' worth of imposture was not to be found. There was scarcely a farmer who would cut his grass if the Almanack predicted rain. No cattle-doctor would give a drench to a cow unless he consulted the table in the Almanack showing what sign the moon was in, and what part of the body it governed. When, on the 3rd of November, the guns were fired for the intelligence of the mighty victory of Leipzig, few would believe that the war would have a favourable termination till they had read "the Signs of Heaven" in the mysterious picture which might happily foreshadow the fall of the Beast in the Revelation.'

With 'Master Moore' as the political instructor and scientific handbook of farming and working England, the prospects were not inviting for the advent of a higher cheap literature. Had Mr. Charles Knight been a man of less discernment or less steadfast energy of purpose, he would have been appalled by the obstacles to success. At the period despondency had paralysed the best friends of the people. They despaired of their future. Charles Knight marked the light that was breaking in the education that had begun and was rapidly spreading, and which was destined to usher in a morning brighter and fairer than had been forecast even in his most sanguine thoughts. How the idea of his higher popular literature sprung up in his mind, grew, took shape, and stamped itself as a new feature on the British press, and of the age, is pleasantly and naturally told in the 'Passages of a Working Life.' Once having found its practical sphere, the idea of his life became his work. His London press poured out in rapid succession 'The Library of Entertaining Knowledge,' 'The Penny Magazine,' 'The Pictorial Bible,' 'The Pictorial History of England,' 'The Penny Cyclopædia,' the extensive series of the 'Weekly Volume,' and during twenty years the numerous volumes of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which, during that period, were under his care as publisher, and in several cases as editor. The fountain once pierced flowed plentifully, and the more copiously it flowed it wrought new and ever-widening channels for its streams. For a season useful-knowledge books became the rage of the press. Mr. Knight's idea, caught up by a host of publishers, was reproduced in a thousand shapes, till our very primers for infant minds were crammed with scientific facts, and our school books turned into scrappy useful-knowledge collections. With more discernment, Mr. Knight held on his own way, mingling the gay with the grave, the lively with the severe; now interweaving the

'Thousand and One Nights,' or again the 'Pictorial Shakspere,' with his volumes of more formal instruction. The reactionary wave of the sensational press has already carried us many years beyond the useful-knowledge era, to throw us back again we trust, when it shall have spent its violence, upon a popular literature, that will do more for the reader than minister to his craving for excitement, or use up the hours that hang heavy on his hand. When this fresh reaction shall have set in, men of the type of Charles Knight will again have their place in the councils of British popular authorship.

In the mean time Mr. Knight, after a busy life of fifty years, is reviewing the past and presenting us with its most salient incidents in his 'Passages of a Working Life.' The readers of the volume that has appeared will agree with the author that in that life 'there were passages that might have an interest for a wider circle than that of his family and immediate friends if presented without the tedious egotism of a formal auto-biography.' Mr. Knight has given just enough of himself to give to his reminiscences the unity and charm of a personal narrative, and to throw around them the colouring of his kindly, genial character. His 'Passages' have much more to say of others than himself; yet in what he says of others, there is no missing his own quiet sense and delicate feeling. We could not have had less of the personal without taking from the interest of the volume, and removiug it into the colder impersonal and colourless region of a history of the times. When the work is completed, it will prove one of those helps to a writer who shall undertake a history of the first half of the present century from which he will draw the best materials for giving reality and life to his historic canvas. We already feel as if we had added not a little to our stock of information of the more eminent men of the first half of the century, and of the general manners, several habits, and class feelings of English society during the period, by the perusal of the first volume. If we are not as a nation what we should be, nor what we hope to be, let us be thankful we have made some advances from our position half a century ago, and that we are still strong in the energy that pushes on to fresh attainments.

We can afford space but for one or two of the characteristic pictures of the men and times fifty years ago with which Mr. Knight's volume abounds. A Windsor boy, and reared beneath the shadow of the palace, when royalty lived with less reserve than now, he was familiar with the person of 'Farmer George and his wife,' and with all the gossips about what the frank inquiring old gentleman, who lived up the hill, said and did. His picture of George III. leaves a more pleasant impression of the man than Thackeray's sketch, half satire, half history. We like its quieter colours.

'My early familiarity with the person of George III. might have abated something in my mind of the divinity which doth hedge a king; but it has left an impression of the homely kindness of his nature, which no subsequent knowledge of his despotic tendencies, his cherished political hatreds, and his obstinate prejudices as a sovereign, can make me lay aside. There was a magnanimity about the man in his forgetfulness of the petty offences of very humble people, who did not come across his will, although they might appear indiscreet or even dangerous in their supposed principles. Sir Richard Phillips, with somewhat of a violation of confidence, printed in his "Monthly Magazine" an anecdote of George III. which was told him by my father. Soon after the publication of Paine's "Rights of Man," in 1791—before the work was declared libellous—the king was wandering about Windsor early on a summer morning, and was heard calling out "Knight, Knight!" in the shop, whose shutters were just opened. My father made his appearance as quickly as possible at the sound of the well-known voice, and beheld his Majesty quietly seated reading with marked attention. Late on the preceding evening a parcel from Paternoster Row had been opened, and its miscellaneous contents were exposed on the counter.

Horror! the king has taken up the dreadful "Rights of Man," which advocated the French Revolution in reply to Burke. Absorbed majesty continued reading for half an hour. The king went away without a remark; but he never afterwards expressed his displeasure, or withdrew his countenance. Peter Pindar's incessant endeavours to represent the king as a garrulous simpleton were more likely to provoke the laughter of his family, than to suggest any desire to stifle the poor pests by those terrors of the law which might have been easily commanded. The amusements which the satirist ridiculed when he told of a monarch

> Who rams and ewes and lambs and bullocks fed,'

were pursuits congenial to the English taste, and not incompatible with the most diligent performance of public duty. The sneers of the rhymester at "sharp and prudent economic kings,"—at the parsimony which prescribed that at the breaking up of a royal card party "the candles should be immediately blown out," fell harmless upon Windsor ears. Blowing out of wax candles, leaving the guests or congregation in the dark, was the invariable practice of royal and ecclesiastical officials. At St. George's Chapel, the instant the benediction was pronounced, vergers and choristers blew out the lights. Perquisites were the law of all service. The good-natured king respected the law as one of our institutions. He dined early. The queen dined at an hour then deemed late. He wrote or read in his own uncarpeted room, till the time when he joined his family in the drawing-room. One evening on a sudden recollection, he went back to his library. The wax candles were still burning. When he returned, the page whose especial duty was about the king's person, followed his Majesty in, and was thus addressed, "Clarke, Clarke, you should mind your perquisites. *I* blow out the candles." The king's savings were no savings to the nation. In 1812 it was stated in the House of Commons that the wax lights for Windsor Castle cost ten thousand a year.'

The following reminiscence of Mr. Pitt is worth preserving:—

'It was in 1804 I saw Mr. Pitt. He was waiting among the crowd till the time when the king and queen should come forth from a small side door, and descend the steps which led to the level of the Eastern Terrace. A queer position this for the man who was at that moment the arbiter of European affairs; who was to decide whether continental kings were to draw their swords at the magical word "Subsidy;" upon whom a few were looking with sorrow in the belief that he had forfeited the pledge he had given when England and Ireland became an United Kingdom, and whom the many regarded as the pilot who had come to his senses, and who could now be trusted with the vessel of the state in the becalmed waters of intolerance. Soon was the minister walking side by side with the sovereign, who, courageous as he was, had a dread of his great servant till he had manacled him. It was something to me, even this once, to have seen Mr. Pitt. The face and figure and deportment of the man gave a precision to my subsequent conception of him as one of the realities of history. The immobility of those features, the erectness of that form, told of one born to command. The loftiness and breadth of the forehead spoke of sagacity and firmness, the quick eye of eloquent promptitude, the nose (I cannot pass over that remarkable feature though painters and sculptors failed to reproduce it), the nose somewhat twisted out of the perpendicular, made his enemies say his face was as crooked as his policy. I saw those characteristics or had them pointed out to me afterwards. But that smile, revealing the charm of his inner nature, *that* was to win the love of his intimates, but it was not for vulgar observation.'

We shall welcome the appearance of the remaining volumes of this most agreeable work, so rich in its reminiscences of the Men, the Books, the Social Progress, and changing Manners of the eventful period of its author's life, and richer still from the transfused mellow light of the author's ripened wisdom.

THE MERCHANT PRINCES OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER VI.

www.libtool.com.cn

THE HAWKINSES OF PLYMOUTH.

ADMIRAL SIR JOHN HAWKINS.

IN the years 1530, 1531, and 1532, 'old Master William Hawkins of Plymouth, a man for his wisdom, valour, experience, and skill in sea causes much esteemed and beloved of King Henry VIII., and being one of the principal sea-captains in the west parts of England in his time, not contented with the short voyages commonly then made only to the known coasts of Europe, armed out a tall and a goodly ship of his own of the burthen of 250 tons, called the "Paul of Plymouth," wherewith he made three long and famous voyages unto the coast of Brazil, a thing in those days very rare, especially to our nation.' In that brief sentence Hakluyt gives the pith of all we know about the great man who, as far as extant history shows, was the first actual voyager from England to Brazil, and the founder of English commerce with America.

For forty years before that time—doubtless for longer than that—the enterprising merchants of the West of England had thought and talked of a new world of trade across the Atlantic, and as often as they could had actually gone out in search of it. 'For the last seven years,' says the Spanish ambassador in London, writing to his sovereigns Ferdinand and Isabella in 1498, as we read in a document lately discovered at Simancas, 'the people of Bristol have sent out every year two, three, or four light ships in search of the island of Brazil and the seven cities.' This statement, if true—and though hard to believe, it is harder to dispute, coming as it does from a man who certainly could have no interest in exaggerating the naval skill of England, and who would be far more likely to say too little than too much—shows that our Bristol merchants were sailing out into the Atlantic a year before Columbus made his first voyage. Be that as

it may, the example of Columbus filled not a few brave Englishmen with a desire to follow in his track. John Cabot, a Venetian by birth, but a Bristol merchant by choice and long residence, with the help of his fellow-traders fitted out a couple of vessels manned by 300 sailors in 1497, and sailed westward till he reached Newfoundland. Dying too soon to carry on the work of discovery himself, he bequeathed it to his son Sebastian. In 1498, Stow tells us, this Sebastian 'caused the king to man and victual a ship at Bristol to search for an island which he knew to be replenished with rich commodities. In the ship divers merchants of London adventured small stocks; and in the company of this ship sailed out of Bristol three or four small ships, freighted with slight and gross wares, as coarse cloths, laces, points, and such other.' Unfortunately, buyers were not found for either coarse cloth or lace. Sebastian Cabot's voyages—he certainly made more than one—did good service to geographical science, but none to the commerce of the day. Therefore they were discountenanced by the prudent Henry VII. 'This good prince,' according to another chronicler, 'by his high policy marvellously enriched his realm and himself, and left his subjects in high wealth and prosperity, as is apparent by the great amount of money brought into this kingdom by merchants passing and repassing, to whom the king, of his own goods, lent money freely' (entering into a sort of partnership with them) 'to the intent that merchandize, being of all crafts the chief art, and to all men both most profitable and necessary, might be the more plentifully used, haunted, and employed in his realms and dominions. But both he and his son Henry VIII. discouraged all attempts to extend their dominions in the world beyond the seas, and to embark on the perilous work of discovery was almost too great an undertaking for private enterprise alone. Not much was done during the first quarter of the sixteenth century. A few voyages to the West Indies and to Spanish America were planned and undertaken, but very little good appears to have come of them. The most adventurous voyaging of the men of Bristol, Plymouth, and other western towns was to the Levant and the Canaries, where a steady English trade was gradually being established.

In that school old Master William Hawkins was brought up. His father, John Hawkins of Tavistock, a gentleman by birth, appears to have been an influential shipowner and captain in Henry VIII.'s service between 1513 and 1518. But neither of him nor of his son do we know anything in detail prior to the year 1530, when William made his first voyage to Brazil. Quitting Plymouth—which, from being in Henry II.'s time, under the name of Sutton, 'a mean thing as an habitation for fishers,' grew important enough to be made a borough by Henry VI., and to become, at the time of which we speak, 'a port so famous that it had a kind of invitation, from the commodiousness thereof, to maritime noble actions'—he touched first on the coast of Guinea, where he bought elephants' teeth and other commodities from the negroes, and then boldly crossed the Atlantic to sell them to the Indians dwelling on the coast of Brazil. 'He used such discretion,' we are told, 'and behaved himself so wisely with those savage people, that he grew into great familiarity and friendship with them; insomuch that in his second voyage,' undertaken in 1531, 'one of the savage kings of the country of Brazil was contented to take ship with him, and be transferred hither into England; whereunto Master Hawkins agreed, leaving behind in the country, as a pledge for his safety and return again, one Martin Cockeram, of Plymouth.' The native chief was brought to London, and presented to Henry VIII. at Whitehall; and 'at the sight of him the king and all the nobility did not a little marvel, and not without cause, for in his cheeks were holes made according to their savage manner, and therein small bones were planted, standing an inch out from the said holes, which in his own country was

reputed a great bravery. He also had another hole in his nether lip, wherein was set a precious stone about the bigness of a pea. All his apparel, behaviour, and gesture were very strange to the beholders.' He remained in England for the best part of a year, leaving it to return home when Hawkins started next summer on his third voyage. Unfortunately, he died of sea-sickness on the passage, and the English were mortally afraid that they would get into trouble in consequence. 'Nevertheless, the savages being fully persuaded of the honest dealing of our men with their prince, restored again the pledge, without any harm to him or any man of the company; which pledge of theirs they brought home again into England, with their ship freighted and furnished with the commodities of the country.'

It is probable that William Hawkins died soon after the completion of this voyage. At any rate, we hear no more of him. His example, however, was not forgotten. His son John was too young as yet to follow it; but others, chiefly merchants of Southampton, promptly took the work in hand. About the year 1540, as we learn from the meagre accounts that have come down to us, 'the commodious and gainful voyage to Brazil' was made many times by Robert Reniger, Thomas Borey, and other 'substantial and wealthy merchants' of Southampton; and in 1542 another Southampton adventurer, named Pudsey, 'a man of good skill and resolution in marine causes,' went to Brazil, there traded with the Portuguese residents, and built what is called a fort at Santos. This southern town of Santos seems to have been the favourite resort of the English merchants. We have a curious letter, written thence in June, 1578, by one John Withall to Richard Staper, a merchant of Plymouth and London. Withall tells his friend how he had gone thither on a voyage, intending to return to England shortly, but that he has fallen in with a wealthy native of Portugal, who prefers him to any of his own countrymen as a husband to his daughter, and 'doth give with her in marriage to me part of an engine which he hath, that doth make every year 2,000 ducats' worth of sugar, little more or less,' with a promise that he shall in due time be sole proprietor of the machine and of sixty or seventy slaves as well. 'I give my living Lord thanks,' he exclaims, 'for placing me in such honour and plentifulness of all things!' But shrewd Withall desires yet further increase in plentifulness. Therefore he writes to Staper, saying that if he and Edward Osborne, one of the richest and most enterprising London merchants of that time, will send him a cargo of English goods he will be able to dispose of them for thrice as much as they cost, and to send home in return a very profitable ship-load of sugar. 'If you have any stomach thereto,' he adds, 'in the name of God do you espy out a fine bark of 70 or 80 tons, and send her hither. First, you must lade in the said ship certain Hampshire and Devonshire kersies; for the which you must let her depart from London in October, and touch in the Canaries, and there make sale of the kersies, and with the proceeds thereof lade fifteen tuns of wines that be perfect and good, and six dozen of Cordovan skins of these colours, to wit, orange, tawny yellow, red, and very fine black. I think you shall not find such colours there; therefore you shall cause them that shall go upon this voyage to take saffron with them to cause the same skins to be put into the said colours. Also, I think you shall take oil there; three hogsheads of sweet oil for this voyage are very necessary, or 150 jars of oil.' Then follows a long list of the commodities, and the quantities of each, that had better be sent off, the catalogue giving us a very clear notion as to the nature of the dealings with which our immense American and West Indian trade began. Cloths and flannels, hollands and hose, shirts and doublets, are spoken of as specially important. In the Brazil market there is room for 400 ells of Manchester cottons, 'most black, some green,

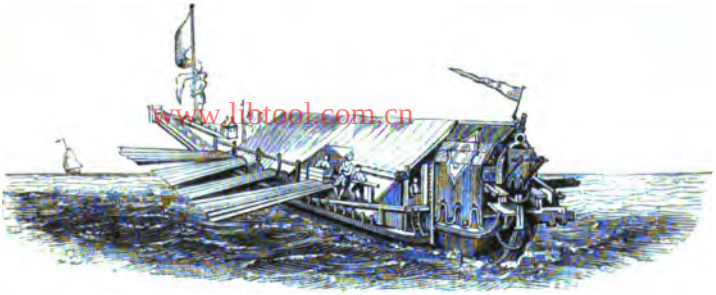
some yellow;' also for 400 or 500 ells of some linen cloth of a cheap kind for making sheets and shirts, and 4 pounds of silk; as well as 8 or 10 dozen hats, 4 dozen reams of paper, 4 dozen scissors, 24 dozen knives, 6000 fish-hooks, and 400 pounds of tin, with a little scarlet parchment lace and crimson velvet; 'and, lastly, a dozen of shirts for my wearing, also 6 or 8 pieces of stuff for mantles for women, which is the most necessary thing that can be sent.'

In 1580 a cargo of such commodities as these was sent, not by Richard Staper and Edward Osborne, but by a little company of London merchants, among whom Christopher Hodsdon, Anthony Garrard, Thomas Bromley, John Bird, and William Elkin were chief, in the 'Minion of London.' Let us hope that it fared well, and that John Withall got his 300 per cent. of profits. But the South American seas were at this time being frequented by much more notable ships, the property of much more notable adventurers.

Captain William Hawkins left two sons, William, of whom hardly anything is known save that he was a wealthy merchant and shipowner, apparently settled in London during the first half or more of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and John, who became one of the foremost naval heroes of England. He was a lad about ten or twelve years old when his father went to Brazil, and, as he 'betook himself early to the sea,' it is just possible that he shared in one or more of these expeditions. We know, at any rate, that during his youth and early manhood 'he made divers voyages to the Isles of the Canaries, and there by his good and upright dealing being grown in love and honour of the people, informed himself of the state of the West Indies, whereof he had received some knowledge by the instructions of his father, but increased the same by the advertisements and reports of that people; and being, amongst other things, informed that negroes were very good merchandize in Hispaniola, and that store of negroes might easily be had upon the coast of Guinea, resolved within himself to make trial thereof.' This, if a new, was certainly not a very honourable branch of English commerce. But the discredit lies rather with the age than with John Hawkins himself. For generations it had been the custom of the Spaniards and Portuguese to make slaves of their Moorish prisoners and of the African tribes associated with them; and from time immemorial blacks had been reckoned an inferior race of beings. A man as philanthropic as Las Casas, the great apostle of the Indians, urged the substitution of negro for Indian slavery, on the ground of humanity, never thinking that the cruelty was as great in the one case as in the other. Hawkins therefore shocked no prejudices and broke no accepted moral law by participating in the slave-trade. It is true that a man of generous nature and high sense of honour would have preferred some other way of enriching himself. But Hawkins was not remarkable for generous or highly honourable conduct. He was a daring voyager, a brave soldier, and one of the great promoters of our country's commercial greatness; but in other respects he was no better than his fellows.

Much cruelty, of course, was in his self-appointed business. Having, in the spring of 1562, consulted with his father-in-law, Master Gunson, a well-to-do merchant of London, and through him with some richer and more influential men—Alderman Ducket, Sir Thomas Lodge, and Sir William Winter among the number—he obtained from them money enough to fit out three good ships—the 'Solomon,' of 120 tons; the 'Swallow,' of 100; and the 'Jonas,' of 40; and to man them with 100 hardy sailors by the autumn of the same year. He left England in October, touching first at Teneriffe, and then halting at Sierra Leone, 'where he stayed some time, and got into his possession, partly by the sword and partly by other means, to the number of 300 negroes at the least, besides other merchandizes which that country yieldeth.' With that cargo he proceeded to Hispaniola, 'where he had reason-

www.libtool.com.cn



GALLEY

COASTING VESSEL

GALLION

OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

able utterance of his English commodities and of his negroes, trusting the Spaniards no further than that by his own strength he was able to master them.' In exchange for his mixed cargo he obtained a goodly number of pearls, besides a sufficient quantity of hides, ginger, sugar, and the like, to fill not only his own three ships, but two chartered hulks as well; and thus, 'with prosperous success and much gain to himself and the aforesaid adventurers, he came home, and arrived in September, 1563.'

In the autumn of the following year he set out again, having chartered for the purpose one of the stoutest and largest ships in Queen Elizabeth's service, the 'Jesus of Lubeck,' of 700 tons' burthen, besides his old 'Solomon' and 'Swallow' and two other little vessels, the 'Tiger' and the 'St. John Baptist,' with about 100 men in all. 'Serve God daily,' ran the last of the pithy

rules which he drew up for their guidance; 'love one another; preserve your victuals; beware of fire; and seek good company.' Very curious is the piety with which these men engaged in their evil work—work not the less evil in itself because the doers saw no harm in it, and because its first and most apparent results tended greatly to the naval power and glory of England. Cape Verde was the first African place at which they stayed. The natives they found 'very gentle and loving, more civil than any others, because of their daily traffic with the Frenchmen;' but that did not deter Hawkins from attempting to kidnap a number of them. Failing, through the treachery or right feeling of some of his men, he sailed southwards as far as the Rio Grande, and there 'went every day on shore, burning and spoiling their towns.' 'We took many in that place,' says the mariner who has written a history of the voyage, 'and as much of their fruits as we could well carry away.' Other parts of the coast were visited, until a full cargo of slaves was obtained, and then the traders proceeded to the West Indies. They were becalmed for eighteen days midway, 'having now and then,' says our chronicler, 'contrary winds and some tornadoes amongst the calm, which happened to us very ill, being but reasonably watered for so great a company of negroes and ourselves. This pinched us all, and, which was worse, put us in such fear that many never thought to have reached the Indies without great death of negroes; but the Almighty God, which never suffereth his elect to perish, sent us the ordinary breeze.' The breeze took them first to Margarita, and then to Cumana, and then to Barbarata, but in none of these places did Captain Hawkins find a market for his negroes, until, in the latter port, he landed a hundred men, well armed with bows and arrows, harquebuses and pikes, and so forced the Spanish residents to buy his negroes at his own price. After that he proceeded to Curaçoa, where 'they had traffic for hides, and found great refreshing both of beef, mutton, and lambs, whereof there was such plenty that, saving for skins, they had the flesh given them for nothing; and the worst in the ship thought scorn, not only of mutton, but also of sodden lamb, which they disdained to eat unroasted.' After refreshing his men with these good things, Hawkins returned to the mainland of South America, and proposed to exchange his negroes for the hides and sugars of Rio de la Hacha. 'But seeing they would, contrary to all reason, go about to withstand his traffic, he would not it should be said of him that, having the force he had, he was driven from his traffic per force, but would rather put it in adventure whether he or they should have the better, and therefore he called upon them to determine either to give him license to trade, or else stand to their own defence.' The townsmen, after deliberation, answered that they would buy his negroes for half the sum he asked. 'Whereupon the captain, weighing their unconscionable request, wrote to them a letter, saying that they dealt too rigorously with him, to go about to cut his throat in the price of his commodities, which were so reasonably rated as they could not by a great deal have the like at any other man's hands; but, seeing they had sent him this to his supper, he would in the morning bring them as good a breakfast.' That breakfast, of arrows and javelins, had such a wholesome effect on the Spaniards that 'we made our traffic quietly.' So it was at other ports. At length, after some disastors, the whole stock of negroes was disposed of. Then the voyagers set about returning home. Foul winds detained them 'till victuals scanted, so that they were in despair of ever reaching home, had not God provided for them better than their deserving; in which state of great misery they were provoked to call upon Him by fervent prayer, which moved Him to hear them,' and on the 20th September, 1565, they arrived at Padstow in Cornwall, 'with the loss of but twenty persons in all the voyage, and with great profit to the venturers, as also to the whole realm, in bringing home both gold, silver, pearls, and other

jewels in great store.' Great was the favour with which the perpetrators of these deeds were regarded by queen, court, and people. As for Hawkins himself, 'by way of increase and augmentation of honour, a coat of arms and crest were settled upon him and his posterity,' the chief peculiarity in which was 'a demi-Moor, in his proper colour, bound and captive,' fit token of the iniquitous trade which he had made popular in England.

That voyage was followed by others, each one more ambitious than the last, in which first Hawkins, and after him a crowd of imitators—one, at any rate, destined to become even more famous than himself—managed to combine the pursuit of gain by violent and often unholy modes of traffic with the more patriotic work of crippling the overweening power of Spain. In October, 1567, Hawkins quitted Plymouth with two ships, the 'Jesus' and the 'Minion,' supplied by Queen Elizabeth herself, and four smaller vessels, equipped by Hawkins, his elder brother William, and other adventurous merchants, the whole being furnished, we are told, with fifteen hundred soldiers and seamen. One of the four was the 'Judith,' of 50 tons' burthen, with Francis Drake, now about two-and-twenty years of age, for its captain. Drake was a native of Plymouth,—according to one account, a kinsman of Hawkins's. The son of a poor parson, and the eldest of twelve, he had, at a very early age, to enter the service of one of his father's friends, who made small trading voyages between the coast towns of the east of England, and occasionally crossed over to France and Holland. He was so good a servant that his master, dying about the year 1565, bequeathed to him the bark which he had helped to manage, and with its assistance he had scraped together a little sum of money, when he heard of Hawkins's new expedition. Thereupon he sold his vessel, hastened to Plymouth, and embarked his all in the West Indian venture.

This time the voyage was not profitable. Nearly five hundred negroes were kidnapped on the coast of Guinea. But, in the West Indian waters, bad weather and Spanish treachery destroyed four out of the six vessels, and though many of the mariners were also lost, there was hardly room for the survivors in the already crowded 'Minion' and 'Judith.' 'With sorrowful hearts,' wrote Captain Hawkins, 'we wandered in an unknown sea by the space of fourteen days, till hunger enforced us to seek the land; for hides were thought very good meat: rats, cats, mice, and dogs, none escaped that might be gotten; parrots and monkeys, that were had in great price, were thought then very profitable if they served the turn one dinner.' At last, in October, 1568, they drifted to the coast of Mexico, near Cape Roxo, 'where we hoped to have found inhabitants of the Spaniards, relief of victuals, and place for the repair of our ship, which was so sore beaten with shot from our enemies, and bruised with shooting off our own ordnance, that our weary and weak arms were scarce able to keep out water. But all things happened to the contrary; we found neither people, victual, nor haven of relief; only a place where, having fair weather, with some peril, we might land a boat.' Several boat-loads of people, about a hundred in all, were here set ashore, chiefly, as it seems, by their own desire, and left to support themselves as best they could until help could be sent from England. The others slowly sought their way home, many dying each day of starvation before, on New-Year's Eve, they reached the coast of Galicia, where, 'by excess of fresh meat, the men grew into miserable diseases.' At last, on the 25th of January, 1568, the few survivors, obtaining assistance from some English seamen whom they met at Vigo, landed in Cornwall. 'If all the miseries and troublesome affairs of this sorrowful voyage,' said Hawkins, 'should be perfectly and thoroughly written, there should need a painful man with his pen, and as great a time as he had that wrote the lives and deaths of the martyrs.'

It was too miserable, and troublesome, and sorrowful for Hawkins,

now about fifty years of age, to be in a hurry for another West Indian enterprise. But Drake was just half as old. He had lost all his little store of money, and gained an immensity of hatred against Spain and the Spanish colonies of America. Hope of wealth and hope of glory, personal revenge and a desire to punish the great enemy of England, all prompted him to carry on a private war with Spain. 'A dwarf,' says Fuller of this enterprise, 'standing on the mount of God's Providence, may prove an overmatch for a giant;' and it is plain that Drake and his fellow-seamen did really think that they were doing God service by attacking the chief supporter of the Inquisition, the haughty destroyer of independence in the Netherlands, and the greatest foe to civil and religious liberty known in the sixteenth century. At any rate they did good work for their country and themselves; and, in their case, if ever, it must be admitted that the means were justified by the ends. 'His doctrine,' according to one no very friendly historian, 'how rudely soever preached, was very taking in England, and therefore he no sooner published his design than he had a number of volunteers ready to accompany him, though they had no such pretence even as he had to colour their proceedings.' He wisely set about his work. In 1570 and 1571 he made two harmless trading expeditions to the West Indies, about which we have unfortunately no details, partly to make money and partly to study the tactics of the Spaniards. Thus prepared, he started in 1572 on the famous voyage by which the southern seas were for the first time opened up to English traffic, and in 1577 on the yet more famous voyage by which he sailed right round the globe. But these expeditions, and others that succeeded them, undertaken both by Drake himself and by a crowd of followers, were so thoroughly warlike, and had so little to do with honest trade, that we have not here so to speak of them. They did exert a notable influence upon commerce, but only by encouraging English merchants and seamen to embark on distant enterprises, and to make themselves masters of the wealth of far-off lands.

One proceeding of Drake's, especially, is said to have had a very practical effect on English commerce. Returning, in the autumn of 1587, from his memorable expedition against Cadiz, he fell in with a huge Portuguese trading vessel on its way from the East Indies. 'And it is to be noted,' as Hakluyt remarks, 'that the taking of this carrack wrought two extraordinary effects in England: first, that it taught others that carracks were no such bugs but that they might be taken; and, secondly, in acquainting the English nation more generally with the particularities of the exceeding riches and wealth of the East Indies, whereby themselves and their neighbours of Holland have been encouraged, being men as skilful in navigation and of no less courage than the Portugals, to share with them therein.' 'By the papers found on board,' says another old historian, 'they so fully understood the rich value of the Indian merchandizes, and their manner of trading into the eastern world, that they afterwards set up a gainful trade and traffic, and established a company of East India merchants.'

There had been a good deal of trading into the eastern world, however, attempted and effected, during some time previous to this year 1587. Edward VI. had established a 'mystery and company of the merchant adventurers for the discovery of regions, dominions, islands, and places unknown,' with Sebastian Cabot, son and fellow-voyager of the John Cabot who discovered Newfoundland in 1497, for its governor; and it was through the energy of this company that Sir Hugh Willoughby was sent in 1553 on his ill-fated voyage in search of a north-eastern passage to India. Willoughby and seventy of his comrades, in two of the three vessels that made up the expedition, were lost on the shores of Lapland. But Richard Chancelor, captain of the third ship, was more fortunate. Separating from the others, and going in a more northerly direction, as he tells

us, 'he sailed so far towards that unknown part of the world that he came at last to the place where he found no night at all, but a continual light and brightness of the sun shining clearly upon the huge and mighty sea,' and then, moving southwards again, he entered a great bay, apparently the White Sea. There he landed and won the friendship of the natives, and before long, leaving his ship to be taken care of by a party of its crew, he set off with the rest on a land journey of nearly fifteen hundred miles to Moscow. From the czar he received all possible kindness, and after a stay of some months, he travelled northward again, to make a successful voyage home and comfort his employers, in some degree, for the disastrous issue of Willoughby's share in the undertaking. In 1555, as soon as he could get ready for it, he was sent on a second journey to Moscow, by the same circuitous route, with orders 'to use all ways and means possible to learn how men may pass from Russia, either by land or by sea, to Cathay.' So zealous were the English of the sixteenth century in their quest of the fabled riches of the Indies, that they could hardly be satisfied with any more accessible source of wealth. Nothing but good resulted from this state of mind, however, as it sent travellers all over the world and opened up numberless roads to commercial prosperity. In the present instance, Chancelor effected a successful trading alliance with Russia, and brought back a Russian ambassador to the English court. Three out of his four vessels were wrecked on the return journey, but that mischance in no way disheartened the merchant adventurers. In 1558 they sent Arthur Jenkinson, with a goodly number of enterprising companions, on a journey of exploration by land into the Far East. This journey, rich in geographical interest, was not very profitable from a commercial point of view. Among the Tartars, the chief articles of commerce were children, 'of whom' Jenkinson says, 'we can buy thousands for a loaf of bread apiece.' Adrakhan is full of merchants, but their dealings are of a petty sort, and there is no hope of a trade in these parts worth following. All round the Caspian Sea 'the fewness of the ships, the want of towns and harbours, the poverty of people, and the ice, render the trade good for nothing,' and about other parts of Persia and the far east the report is not more favourable.

Jenkinson's experience deterred other English merchants from attempting much trade by land with the Asiatic nations. To Moscow, and other Russian towns, however, they often went to dispose of English commodities, and procure some of the more important articles that the caravans and local traders had brought from Persia and Tartary. They also sought, in all sorts of other ways, to extend their commerce with the Indies.

About the enterprises of such men as Frobisher and Gilbert in seeking a north-west passage to India we have not here to treat. There were other voyages, however, less famous, but more intimately connected with commerce, that do concern us. In the year of Chancelor's journey to Russia, a company of merchants, partly following the example of 'old Master William Hawkins,' sent two vessels on a trading expedition along the coast of Africa, under the management of a Captain Windham. Windham was an incompetent agent, and the adventure altogether failed. But next year, in 1554, three other vessels, under the command of Captain John Lok, were despatched on a like errand; and by visiting the coast of Guinea and trading with the natives they gathered so much wealth, that in nearly every following year a like expedition was sent out. The violent and unworthy conduct of John Hawkins, and those who carried on his work in kidnapping the negroes and making slaves of them, necessarily interfered with the proper growth of trade. But notwithstanding all hindrances, this and every other development of commerce fared well and was augmented year by year.

In the later years of his life, John Hawkins ranked as one of the mer-

chants whose enterprise and wealth, used in these ways, promoted other enterprise and helped the accumulation of fresh stores of wealth. As a young man, he had spent most of his time on shipboard and in the daring enterprises to which we have referred. But after his disastrous expedition of 1566, he left the active work to others, and settled down, with two memorable exceptions, to live in London. As partner of his elder brother William, and, at one time, as we are told, joint owner with him of thirty trading vessels, he must have lived a busy life, although its details are not recorded. He had some famous associates in City life. Besides Sir Thomas Gresham, who was just now building the Royal Exchange, there was a crowd of other eminent merchants, men whose zeal and energy, shown in quiet ways, did not a little to make the reign of Queen Elizabeth illustrious. The names of Edward Osborne and Anthony Garrard, Richard Staper and Christopher Hodsdon, have already come before us. But more noteworthy than any of these, perhaps, was Sir Lionel Duckett, the son of a Nottingham gentleman, and, as the annals of commerce show, one of the busiest and most prosperous men of this time. He was Lord Mayor of London in 1573, and sharer in nearly every important venture of these times. Here we find him busy about furnaces set up for him in England, there he is employing agents to melt copper and silver for him at Augsburg. At one time we see him taking part in the manufacture of cloth; at another he is forming a company with the great Cecil and the Earls of Pembroke and Leicester as members, to construct waterworks for the draining of mines. Such was his wealth, we are told, that to each of his three daughters, he gave upwards of 5,000*l.* in Tudor money as dowry, and, when he was asked why he had not given more, he answered that that was as much as it was seemly for him to bestow, since Elizabeth, herself, on becoming queen, had found only 10,000*l.* in her exchequer.

But Hawkins was much more than a mere merchant. In 1573 he was appointed to the onerous office of treasurer or comptroller of the navy, filling it so well, we are told, that he made more important improvements in the management of the queen's shipping than any of his predecessors. In 1588 he served as rear-admiral in the fleet that helped to overthrow the great Spanish Armada, and for his gallantry in that business he was knighted. Two years later the queen sent him with Martin Frobisher, at the head of her ships, to threaten the coast of Spain and intercept the Portuguese carracks coming from India. No prize was to be met with, however, and the fleet returned as it had gone out, after seven months' cruise. This was anything but pleasing to Elizabeth, just then in especial need of the money she had hoped to make by the expedition. Therefore Hawkins tendered an elaborate apology. 'Paul might plant,' he said, in its conclusion, 'and Apollos might water; but it was God only who gave the increase.' That scripture quotation, however, was too much for the queen. 'God's death!' she exclaimed; 'this fool went out a soldier, and is come home a divine!'

But Hawkins, especially where the honour of England was concerned, was anything but a fool. A few years before this, and before there was actual war between England and Spain, while he was out with a small squadron on a coasting expedition, he fell in with some Spanish ships, whose admiral attempted to pass without paying the usual salute. 'Thereat Sir John ordered the gunner of his own ship to fire at the rigging of the Spanish admiral, who taking no notice of it, the gunner fired next at the hull and shot through and through. The Spaniards upon this took in their flags and topsails, and running to an anchor, the Spanish admiral sent an officer of distinction in a boat to carry at once his compliments and complaints to Sir John Hawkins. He, standing upon deck, would not either admit the officer or hear his message; but bid him tell

his admiral that, having neglected the respect due to the Queen of England in her seas and port, and having so large a fleet under his command, he must not expect to lie there, but in twelve hours weigh his anchor and begone, otherwise he should regard him as an enemy declared, his conduct having already rendered him suspected. The Spanish admiral upon receiving this message came off in person, desiring to speak with him, which at first was refused, but at length granted. The Spaniard then expostulated the matter, insisted that there was peace between the two crowns, and that he knew not what to make of the treatment he had received. Sir John Hawkins told him that his own arrogance had brought it upon him, and that he could not but know what respect was due to the queen's ships; that he had despatched an express to her Majesty with advice of his behaviour, and that in the mean time he would do well to depart. The Spaniard still pleaded ignorance, and that he was ready to give satisfaction. Upon this Sir John Hawkins told him mildly that he could not be a stranger to what was practised by the French and Spaniards in their own seas and ports; adding, "Put the case, sir, that an English fleet came into any of the king your master's ports, his Majesty's ships being there, and those English ships should carry their flags in their tops, would you not shoot them down, and beat the ships out of your port?" The Spaniard owned he would, confessed he was in the wrong, submitted to the penalty Sir John imposed, was then very kindly entertained, and they parted very good friends.'

It was not possible, however, for any very real friendship to exist between Sir John Hawkins and a Spaniard. Blunt, bold, and resolute, his whole life was a sort of warfare against Spain; and his hatred, patriotic and personal, was strong enough to induce him, when he must have been seventy years old or more, to embark in another expedition against its West Indian possessions. He and Sir Francis Drake left Plymouth—now doubled in fitness for all maritime enterprises, through the generous care taken care of it by Drake—on the 28th of August, with a fleet of twenty-six sail, containing about 2,500 men. The expedition fared well as far as Drake, and the cause for which it had been undertaken, were concerned. But a violent quarrel with his comrade threw Hawkins into a sudden illness, and he died on shipboard, off Porto Rico, on the 25th of November, 1595.

Sir Richard Hawkins, Sir John's only son, as far as we know, made for himself a fame almost equal to his father's. But his life had nothing, or next to nothing, to do with commerce, and therefore need not here be told. Nor, in future chapters, shall we have much to say about the great naval worthies of England. In the turmoil of the sixteenth century, when the old systems of commerce were dying out, and the new were as yet but half established, it was necessary for trade with distant parts to be carried on in ships of war, and for merchants to be soldiers as well as sailors. In the infancy of the English navy, moreover, it was the wise custom to take into the royal service all mariners of acknowledged skill and courage, so that merchant captains found it their interest, as well as their duty to sovereign and country also, to be admirals. But this medley of callings, if it did good service to commerce by encouraging a spirit of adventure, and increasing the courage and perseverance of the merchant-voyagers, made impossible the legitimate exercise of foreign and colonial trade. The merchants felt this themselves. Never loth to serve their nation with the wealth which it was their special province to multiply for the good of all, and willing, when the need arose, to use the sword in defence of liberty and the resistance of wrong-doing, they saw that their calling, to be properly exercised, must be one of peace. Therefore they made it so as far as they could. For many generations to come, most of all in the business of the East India

Company, the merchant had to travel with the sword at his side. But henceforth we shall not find the great merchants of England acting as soldiers or pirates, or naval commanders attaining eminence as merchant princes.

H. R. F. B.

www.libtool.com.cn

AN EAST-INDIAN CARRACK (*circa* A.D. 1600).

THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.'

CHAPTER XIX.

CALUMNIATED.

JANE DASHWOOD had said rightly that Mrs. Strangways' nature would furnish a good subject for moral dissection; but she was wrong in believing it one that Esther's simple mind could ever have conducted.

Esther, like all untutored people, had strong instinctive likes and dislikes, and could form incisive and frequently correct opinions as to nearly every person she was thrown with: a far wider experience than any that she, happily, possessed would have been required to study closely, a character so complex and so artificial as Mrs. Strangways.

'Eager and athirst for attention;

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

RIVAL CHARMS.

See "The Ordeal for Wives," Chapter XXII.

www.libtool.com.cn

willing to cast her own repute away with her own hands sooner than not be spoken of at all;' Jane Dashwood's precocious knowledge of the baser side of human nature had prompted her to give a tolerably true summary of one part of Mrs. Strangways' character in the remark, that to Esther had seemed almost unintelligible. Supine in affection, cold in love, passionless in passion, there was yet one desire in this woman's soul that no food could satisfy, no surfeit satiate. She could neglect her children, neglect her home, give up her worldly reputation even, so that she could but purchase that which was a thousand times dearer to her than all—the admiration of men, and the world's acknowledgment of such admiration. To win this, yes, even in any one individual case upon which she had set her mind, she could be patient for weeks, or months, or years; could make a thousand painful and unworthy sacrifices, could bear with indifference or rebuff or insult. The notes which Arthur Peel's sense of honour had allowed him to show Jane Dashwood, were but one sample of the hundred insidious modes of attack that Mrs. Strangways could bring to bear upon the object that, for the time being, she had in view. She was too indolent, possibly too really weak, for the commonest exertions of life to which her master passion did not lend an interest. If she got up to breakfast when she was living at home it made her faint; attempting to teach one of her children his letters was an actual torture to her nerves; to take the commonest care of a household of three servants was a superhuman exertion to her. But she could go to five balls a week; could travel, without halt, from London to Vienna; could go through labyrinths of small intrigues, whose details were all tedious and laborious in the extreme, when she had an object to encompass. The same spirit—unflinching, unresting, unscrupulous—that lay in her fragile body would have made a first-rate general, a first-rate statesman, a first-rate head of the Society of Jesus. Mrs. Strangways being only a woman, and a pretty woman, her peculiar genius had narrower scope for action. But genius it was. This insatiate passion for love—it is neither passion, nor love itself; it goes with a temperament never made by nature to experience either—has been, I suspect, the real motive-power which has made the great majority of celebrated women celebrated. The cold white hand under whose sway England rose to her greatest glory belonged, you must remember, to just such a woman as Mrs. Strangways. If *she* had been a queen, do you think she would not have won the hearts of her people, and have chosen the popular religion, and have carried on platonic loves with half her court, and murdered any younger or fairer woman who chanced to stand in her way? It is on the focus from which we look at things, moral as well as physical, that their magnitude depends. As a queen Mrs. Strangways might have been as good and great as Elizabeth. Bound down by fortune, forced to be content with the admiration of dozens and not thousands, to intrigue for the regard of a court made up of men like Arthur Peel, to stab her rivals by words not by the dagger, she was only a miserable, disappointed woman. Already, after a reign of just a dozen years, her courtiers were beginning to grow slack in their devotion; her rivals, bitterer test! to fear her hatred less. Already she was obliged to stoop to humiliating concessions, such as making Jane Dashwood her companion, unless she would lose every satellite who used to do homage round her throne. The ambition which would have made a queen great; the fixed, unshrinking purpose which would have carried a man on to the attainment of any of the honest desires of life,—had brought her to two-and-thirty, scarce beyond her youth, and stranded her there, without any other view of the future than this certainty—that every year should bear her more hopelessly away from the empire which it had been the struggle of all these years of alternate victory and defeat to win!

Mrs. Strangways had married

early, and the first two or three years of her married life had been passed in Paris, where her husband then held some small office about the embassy. A great many people held those two or three years responsible for all the errors of her subsequent career. She had learnt French morality, they said, during her Parisian experiences: this is what comes of spending one's youth among the wickednesses of a foreign capital. Others, wider in their views, held that a nature so thoroughly vain and unscrupulous would have ripened into much the same maturity wherever she had lived; indeed (and, whatever the theory, this was true), that Mrs. Strangways did care more for her children and her home in her extreme youth than she ever cared again for either in England. Whether her passionate thirst for admiration was inborn, or partially grafted on her nature by the examples of wedded life that she saw in French society, she was, undeniably, at her present age as perfect in the science of pleasing, as finished in every seductive grace that art can give, as any velvet-eyed Frenchwoman, *de trente ans*, who ever drew breath. As perfect; but very far from as happy. A Frenchwoman lives and moves and has her being avowedly only for successes of society. It is an institution of her country that she should remain at home the two or three first years after her marriage, then commit her son and daughter to the care of their grandmother or governess, and betake herself to her *vie de jolie femme* in earnest. She is adored till she is thirty; after thirty, she adores. The two phases of adoration divide the twenty best years of her existence pretty equally; and at forty she sinks quietly into a dressing-gown and devotion for the rest of her life. Circumstances, not any extraordinary bias of her own nature, make her what she is, and French society recognises in her simply the brilliant spoilt child of its own creation. Her family, including the husband, regard her as a model-wife and mother of a family, and a touching epitaph shall one day be suspended above her grave in Père la Chaise, recording all the angelic domestic virtues and affections of which she was so fair an example when on earth.

But Mrs. Strangways was an Englishwoman. Not the usages of conventional life, but her own innate tendencies, joined to the empire with which beauty of no common order had endowed her, conspired to make her what she was. Every hour of triumph she enjoyed she had to purchase by hours of humiliation; every night of intoxicating success by days and weeks of bitterest mortification. All the homage she received from one sex was made good to her in worse than positive neglect or insolence from the other. She struggled against all this bravely. When everybody so nearly cut her after that last Viennese expedition alluded to by Mrs. Tudor, she gave an immense fancy ball and sent invitations to people who had passed her without recognition the very same day, and bore up against dozens of refusals, and looked handsomer and brighter than ever when the evening of her ball came, and finally fought her way back to the position she had so nearly lost by her own unaided pluck and determination of not allowing her enemies to cast her down. But do you think there was so little of humanity in this woman's heart that she did not feel every indignity—yes, every small stab, every ingenious little cruelty, that was put upon her at that fancy ball? Do you think Mrs. Strangways, or any other woman, ever fought long against the united hosts of her own sex without thousands of poisoned shafts rankling, however hid away, within her breast? Mrs. Strangways endured it: she could have endured more, sooner than give up the one passion which was the very breath of her life: but she felt every cold look, every supercilious bow, to the full as sharply now as she had done when she first began to receive them a dozen weary years ago. More sharply, probably; she had youth and the feelings of youthful beauty to the fore, then; she who had so many slaves among men could easily bear the want of a few friends among women. But now when she

began to see men's eyes following younger faces than hers abroad, when she began to have more frequent and less occupied hours at home, her tired heart dwelt with bitterer emphasis than ever upon every look or word of slight that she endured, while still the desperation of waning power made her more resolutely loath to accept the lot by which alone her peace with her own sex could have been sealed—oblivion.

Mrs. Tudor, bordering on fourscore years (sixty of which, at least, had been spent in frivolity),—Mrs. Tudor, whose own youthful follies were probably still remembered by herself, although buried away from every one else beneath the accumulated dust of half a century—Mrs. Tudor thought it right to find out, precisely, who was visiting Mrs. Strangways before returning the call which she paid to herself and Esther, two days after their meeting in the railway carriage on their return from Weymouth.

'We owe these things to ourselves and to society, child,' she remarked, virtuously, to Esther. 'It is not what Mrs. Strangways *does* that it concerns us to pry into; indeed, our charity as Christians demands that we should not be over-scrupulous as to each other's personal and hidden failings. If a certain class of people still visit Mrs. Strangways, we will return her call this afternoon; if not, I will leave a card upon her in the course of the week; and our manner when we meet her next can show that we don't desire any continuance of her acquaintance.'

And Miss Whitty, who usually performed any little dirty work of the kind for Mrs. Tudor, was sent off at once to ascertain, through such underhand domestic channels as her abilities could suggest, what families of consideration in Bath still continued to invite Mrs. Strangways to their houses.

The result was satisfactory alike to Mrs. Strangways' repute and to Mrs. Tudor's nice moral sense.

'The Davenports and the Wardlaws, mim; and since her fancy ball, Dean Oxenham's family, and I can't tell you how many besides. A good many people were giving her the cold shoulder after all the odd stories that were afloat upon her return from Germany; but what with her great ball, and her constant *tea dansangs*, and one thing and another, she's quite up again in public esteem. Most surprising, really, Miss Fleming, how some people can do everything, and yet be visited. I can assure you, the stories about her last spring——'

'Miss Whitty, I must beg of you not to repeat anything disparaging of Mrs. Strangways to my niece,' interrupted Mrs. Tudor, the whole of whose scruples had received their *quietus* at the mention of Dean Oxenham's name. 'These scandals are not in any way improving for young people to hear, and it would be much more becoming in you, at your age, to refrain from trying to injure the reputation of others.'

'But as we were talking about it this morning, mim, I thought——'

'If you were talking about any subject this morning, it is a quite sufficient reason for your not talking about it this afternoon, Miss Whitty. At all events I must beg of you not to repeat any idle Bath gossip to my niece, in my presence.'

Miss Whitty looked duly guilty for having presumed to think lightly of any one who was visited by the Davenports, and the Wardlaws, and (since her fancy ball) by Dean Oxenham's wife and daughters; and Mrs. Tudor and Esther, in another hour, were receiving very sweet smiles from Mrs. Strangways herself, in the rose-coloured light of that calumniated lady's own drawing-room.

CHAPTER XX.

A SERIOUS BRINGING-UP.

A good deal of a certain kind of gaiety might soon have fallen into Esther's way had she chosen to make the most of it. One dinner, one 'At Home,' and one card party were, however, quite enough to convince her that the dissipations that suited Mrs. Tudor at threescore years and ten, were by no means seductive to

herself at eighteen; and with very sincere goodwill she begged for the future to be left out of all entertainments in which the amusements of people of her own age were not the primary matter of consideration.

Mrs. Tudor was not likely to dispute a point which promised to save herself the purchasing of white kid gloves and evening dresses for Esther. She thought her dear niece showed a very praiseworthy principle in not wishing to acquire that taste for society which must so inevitably unfit her for her quiet life at home. She would wish her dear niece in this, as in everything else, to consult her own feelings as long as she remained her guest; and her dear niece soon found that she would have five or six evenings in every week very much, indeed, at her own disposal.

The consequence of this freedom to Esther was a great and growing intimacy with Jane Dashwood. Milly made professions still of the deepest regard for her old school friend; but the elements of real affection for anything or person beyond herself were quite rudimentary in poor little Milly's shallow nature. She had liked Esther at school, as she candidly avowed, because Esther wrote her exercises, and mended her stockings for her. She liked her now because she was a complacent listener to narrations of successes, and also—in Millicent's opinion—not good-looking enough ever to stand, at any time, in one's own way. But Jane, who with all her faults could love, had taken a real liking to the repose of Esther's face and nature from the first day on which they ever saw each other in the train. Possibly like Milly, she, too, imagined Miss Fleming to be one who would never rival her in the closest interests of her life; but she saw, too, in her a strong calm character, wholly opposed to her own feverish and fitful one, an original fresh way of thinking widely different to the hackneyed flippancy or assumed reserve of the young women she had hitherto dignified by the name of friends. Esther was the only person of her own sex, except her sister, with whom she had ever felt anything like real interest in talking; and then Esther did not admire Arthur Peel, and Arthur Peel only thought Esther a fine-looking girl, not at all in his style. It was on the occasion when he had expressly stated his final decision on this important subject, that poor Jane first came, self-invited, to spend the evening with Esther, and ask her to allow her, Jane Dashwood, to be her friend for life.

Esther's temperament was not one that urged her on into sudden and violent young-lady friendship under ordinary circumstances; but still Jane Dashwood's companionship was welcome to her. It was difficult to write to Oliver, or even think of him, during all the hours in which Mrs. Tudor left her alone. To her who had seen so little of life there was infinite zest in all Miss Dashwood's *savoir vivre* and stories of her own conquests, and triumphs, and regrets. It was not unamusing to hear Jane talk of Paul. He was the last man, Esther assured herself, for whom, even if disengaged, she could entertain any other feeling than curiosity; but still it was *not* uninteresting, in default of better matter, to have his character set forth in Jane's lively way, and from the Dashwood point of view.

With such mutual sources of interest, confidence could scarcely fail of proceeding rapidly between two young women of the respective ages of eighteen and twenty-one. At the end of a fortnight Esther knew every one of the antecedents of Jane's life, except such portions of it as belonged to Arthur Peel; and Jane had received every confidence Esther had to give, except the recountal of those few short weeks that had been the exclusive property of Mr. Carew.

'I am quite glad to see Jane becoming intimate with you, Miss Fleming,' Mrs. Dashwood observed to Esther the second time she saw her. 'It would be something new to me to see either of Colonel Dashwood's daughters caring for anything more vital than dress, and vanity, and balls. If you find that you acquire the slightest influence

over poor Jane, may I—*may* I ask you, as a duty you owe to yourself and her, too, to try and turn it to a serious account?'

Esther answered, as civility demanded, that she would be very glad indeed to do anything to serve Mrs. Dashwood; but she had already obtained sufficient insight into Jane's temper to know that whatever influence was to be gained over her must be an indirect one. She might be swayed by example or by love; the kind of war of extermination that her stepmother had carried on against her, ever since she was seven years old, was, Esther felt, the precise means of making poor Jane's heart stand firmest rooted in its own rebellion.

Mrs. Dashwood was a woman of undeniably good intentions. She held firm views as to her own perfectly elect state of mind and excellent future prospects in another world, and really did her best to convince the people she lived with of their errors. Esther's ignorance of theological matters prevented her from discerning whether Mrs. Dashwood's views were high or low, Calvinistic, or Tractarian, or broad. Whatever may have been her doctrines, however, she held them to the extreme, and made her family duly miserable by their propagation. For, in addition to her views, Colonel Dashwood's wife had nerves. Views and nerves both in the same woman! When she got worsted in her frequent theological and moral arguments with Jane, she had nerves to fall back upon at the crowning-point of her defeat. When Colonel Dashwood offended her by his worldliness, in any shape that involved neglect of herself, she could, at the very shortest notice, attire herself, metaphorically, in her grave-clothes, and propose to meet her end. Every man—whatever, in the bracing atmosphere of masculine confidence, he may assert to the contrary—every man that breathes is utterly subjugated and powerless when his wife makes preparations for death. If he struggles, he is made to feel himself a brute, and has to give in in the end: if he does not struggle, he is made equally to feel himself a brute, and has to give in at the onset. Her step-daughters were sufficiently out of the reach of her immediate and personal power to bear a great many of Mrs. Dashwood's death-throes with fortitude; but long experience had taught her husband that his wisest course lay in prostrate and abject submission, and it was quite beautiful, when he was asked to a whist party or a club dinner, to hear the conditional acceptance 'depending on poor Mrs. Dashwood's wretched state of health;' that was all the meek, submissive old Colonel dared to give.

And yet the meek, submissive old Colonel was far from miserable in his thraldom. Years had accustomed him even to Mrs. Dashwood; and some of his more intimate friends, including his own children, went so far as to say that there was a point of view from which the austerity of his wife's views, and the feebleness of her health, were by no means distasteful to Colonel Dashwood. They saved him from the expense of entertaining; and to be saved expenditure in any shape was what Colonel Dashwood lived for. When he summed up in his mind the dinner-parties, the balls, the theatre tickets from which Mrs. Dashwood's views saved him, I can really quite believe that the calculation served to reconcile him to a great many of the intestinal broils and personal bullyings that were his everyday food. The girls had to be married, of course: indeed, Colonel Dashwood's view of daughters went no further than the primary expense of their dress, and his own ultimate hopes of making over this expense into the hands of another man; and with a woman fond of them, and of the things they liked, a woman such as their mother might have been had she lived, what would not have been required of him in costly entertainments every winter? If you set up for ball-giving at all, you must, according to all the laws of watering-place civilization, give two large balls a year. The supper for a ball costs so much; item, waiters; item, musicians; the musicians alone sufficient to buy his fish in the Bath

market for a twelvemonth: and then come smaller parties, and impromptu teas, and dinners, and all the reckless expenditures that women abandon themselves to, when once you give them their head at all. When Colonel Dashwood pondered over these things, and saw that his daughters managed to be invited out and admired merely on the strength of their own good looks, and one inexpensive, semi-polemical 'At Home' a year—I repeat it, I can quite believe he felt duly thankful for the nerves and views, and blessed saving of money generally, that the second Mrs. Dashwood, together with her nice little fortune of so many thousand pounds, had brought to him.

But Jane and Milly saw in their father's ready submission to his wife's wishes only another cause of righteous detestation to their stepmother, another element of discord in their loveless, disunited home. All the practical efforts of Mrs. Dashwood's religion, were, as far as they were concerned, deprivation of the things they cared for. All Colonel Dashwood's philanthropy (and he was very philanthropical—took chairs at meetings, and made long twaddling speeches after the manner of his kind) was put off, his children said, on the threshold of his own house, and never extended to them. As Esther got to know more of their home and of their training, she wondered less and less at the scanty affection bestowed by the Dashwood girls upon the members of their own family, and at the cool and systematic deceit existing between every one of the entire household towards the rest. Upon Milly, faulty though she was, her bringing up had exercised a less powerful influence for bad than upon Jane. Millicent Dashwood's, like her father's, was a temperament precisely fitted for extracting the greatest possible amount of personal gratification, and the very smallest of personal suffering, out of any position of life in which she might find herself placed. Her loves, her sympathies, her dislikes, were all of the same moderate and prudent temperature. You could just look onward twenty or thirty years, and imagine her then as Colonel Dashwood was at present; performing all expedient duties well, and digesting her dinner, and living within her income, and caring very little for anything beyond her own ease, and being very well thought of indeed by the world at large.

Was she upright? was she conscientious? No one living—no, not herself—ever knew as much as that of Millicent Dashwood. Common sense and thorough selfishness and a cool temperament kept her—as they keep hundreds like her—from ever infringing any law, the infringement of which should entail penalty on herself. She simply did not know the meaning of refined or fierce temptation, and consequently it was impossible for her to be tempted beyond her power of resistance. Jane's sensitive organization and utter deficiency of moral strength made her whole life a series of struggles and failures; of struggles against conditions and temptations too strong for her; of surrenders to things which, even while they conquered her, she had enough nobility of soul to revolt from and despise. And Milly, like the true little Pharisee that she was, already indulged in much secret thankfulness to Providence that she was not as poor dear Jenny in her frequent short-comings, and spasmodic endeavours after impossible perfection.

The fact was, no real moral discipline in childhood had fitted Jane Dashwood either for the temptations or the weariness of ordinary human life. Mrs. Dashwood, in accordance with the traditions of her class, had early talked a great deal to her stepdaughters about their sins, and spiritual helplessness, and need of repentance and forgiveness; and Millicent, by the time she was eight years old, had improved so much upon her instructions as to be able to mourn, in the orthodox, casuistic *argot*, over all the iniquities of her childish days, and obtain little prizes of tracts and picture cards as a recompense for the sensitiveness of her conscience. But Jane could not play fast and loose with her own soul, even then. She could no more

lament over unfelt sins than she could steal the almonds and raisins from the sideboard, and go to sleep half an hour afterwards unhaunted by remorse, like Milly. Whatever she felt was real, and so, as she faithfully believed all that she was told in such matters, her conscience became really excited into precocious and unnatural sensitiveness. She thought herself fallen and lost, and she preferred despairing hymns to story books, and she heard mysterious calls and voices, and sustained raptures and trances.

'And so I got used up in religious feeling, as I am now in everything else,' she said to Esther, once. 'I do things that I ought to repent for, as I repented then, and I can't. All the straining after repentance before I really knew what wrong was seems to have exhausted my repenting powers for life.'

She was mistaken in this, as her constant fits of self-upbraiding proved. Her temperament was too acute a one for even Mrs. Dashwood's training to have wholly deadened its capacities for suffering. But her repentances were still merely emotional, like those she had played at when she was a child: passionate revulsions of feeling bearing no fruit whatsoever beyond present tears and speedy longings after renewed and stronger excitement.

Esther Fleming was the first person she had known in whom her feverish unsettled spirit could find anything like repose. Esther was so little excitable, so strong, so rarely moved! Everything she said and felt was so real, so unlike the sentiments developed in the Dashwood atmosphere. Religion with her had been, as a little child, to learn her lessons, to weed the garden, to mend her clothes, to go to church, to obey. Miss Joan abhorred questioning children about their feelings; 'fostering their vanity, and training them to be hypocrites, as though *that* won't come fast enough without any assistance of ours.' She held that the only way to train them was to bring them up in stern obedience to all natural law, moral and physical, to make them temperate, enduring, self-reliant, strong; and trust to their early-instilled unreasoning reverence for church and Sunday, and their Bibles, to keep them right in theology. And probably her theory was as right as any theory of education ever can be; Esther's nature, at all events, had not developed badly under it.

'You would be better if you thought less about yourself, altogether, Jane,' she would answer when Miss Dashwood had been mourning over the decay of her repenting powers. 'I am not at all sure you don't at heart like the sensation of being wicked. Self-analyzation, as you call it, may be a very fine and useful exercise, but I can't help thinking that if you would just give up flirting with Arthur Peel, and not seek so many occasions of falling, it would be more to the purpose.'

Esther did not know then how near poor Jane's heart her foolish passion lay. When she found what the girl's love for Arthur Peel really was, she could never bring her lips to say anything harsh or strong-minded upon the subject again.

CHAPTER XXI.

FIFTY THOUSAND POUNDS.

One morning early, Miss Dashwood came round alone to ask Esther to walk with her. Milly had gone to spend the day with some friends of her own, and Jane felt a strong inclination for a quiet country walk; besides, she added, she had something very particular indeed, that she wished to talk to Miss Fleming about; something concerning which she desired especially to ask Miss Fleming's opinion.

'You must give me yours on something equally important to me,' said Esther. 'I have had an invitation this morning to a party at Mrs. Strangways for next Thursday, and Aunt Thalia and I cannot decide whether I shall accept it or not.'

'Paul will be there,' said Jane, laconically. 'I had a note from him this morning, to say that he will return to Bath next week.'

'And is Mr. Chichester sure to be at any party given by Mrs. Strangways, Jane?'

'Quite certain, Esther—under some circumstances. There will be people at Mrs. Strangways' house on Thursday whom Mr. Chichester cares to meet.'

'I am sure everybody seems to be taking up with Mrs. Strangways now,' cried Miss Whitty, who was busily disrobing Mrs. Tudor's chandeliers for an approaching tea-party. 'Whom do you think I saw with her this morning, Miss Dashwood?'

'Oh! I am sure I don't know,' answered Jane, turning sharply away.

'Why, Miss Lynes—*the* Miss Lynes—the heiress, and Mrs. Strangways, and Mr. Peel was with them, on horseback. I was coming back from my little early walk on the common, and I knew who it was directly, though I've not been introduced. Miss Lynes's face is so familiar to me from her likeness to her uncle, Sir Samuel Lynes, whom I've played with scores and scores of times when I was a child.' (It was a peculiarity of Miss Whitty's to have played with everybody when she was a child: knights, baronets, poets-laureate, generals, dukes; nothing short of royalty stopped her.) 'And most surprised I was, dearest Mrs. Tudor, I can assure you, to see Sir Samuel's niece in such company.'

'Then your surprise was very ill-placed, Miss Whitty,' replied Mrs. Tudor. 'A clothier's niece—'

'Oh, dear mim! an army agent's—'

'An army agent's, a clothier's, a tailor's niece, like Miss Lynes, may be well content that her fifty thousand pounds have brought her at all into the society of gentlemen and ladies. Mr. Peel means to marry the young woman, I hear, and, considering the family of ruined spendthrifts he belongs to, 'tis about the best thing for him to do.'

Esther saw that Miss Dashwood writhed visibly under Mrs. Tudor's last words, and began to talk of other things as soon as they left the house; but Jane, of her own will, recurred at once to the theme of Arthur Peel and Miss Lynes.

'Your 'aunt is right, Esther; all the town is mentioning their names together. *I* know, of course, that there is nothing in it; how can there be? the very idea is preposterous; but still it makes me sick and miserable even to hear his name spoken of with any other woman's. That's what I want to talk to you about. We'll not walk in the town, we'll go away through the park to the common, where we shall meet nobody, unless, indeed, we are lucky enough to fall in with that riding-party Miss Whitty told us of.' And then Jane laughed rather bitterly.

The ordinary Dashwood idea of a walk consisted in making the greatest number of turns that were possible, without being actually notorious, before the club-house, and up and down the principal gangways of Bath; and Esther felt a good deal relieved that for once they were to go away into the country and be spared the manœuvring which walking for two consecutive hours along three streets demands. It was a clear, still day of late autumn; the air summer-like, but for its intense stillness and fragrance from the dying woods; the colouring on the surrounding amphitheatre of hills full of those tender hues of russet-gold and delicate greys which render some mornings in December fairer than all the brightest days of May or June.

'Bath is a beautiful place,' Esther remarked as they turned in the upper park to look back across the town. 'If I was condemned to live in any city all my life, I think I would choose this.'

'And I would sooner choose any other in the inhabited world,' said Miss Dashwood. 'I hate, I detest, I loathe Bath—Bath, and its people too.'

'The people you have spent all your life among, Jane?'

'The people I have spent all my life among, Esther. Leaving out papa and Milly, I shouldn't shed a tear at all the people I know in Bath being swallowed up by an earthquake at this moment.'

'The riding party on the common excepted, of course.'

'Arthur Peel excepted; the other two might share the general fate, for any wish of mine to the contrary. Not that either of them have injured me, or have it in their power to injure me,' she added quickly. 'Mrs. Strangways detests me, but as to poor Miss Lynes, with her great fat white lymphatic face, I shouldn't think it was in her to like or dislike anyone; and I am sure I could never have the slightest feeling of either kind towards her.'

'And are you sure that Mrs. Strangways does detest you, Jane? She is always wanting you to be with her; she is dreadfully affectionate to you in her manner. What can you have ever done to make her detest you as you say she does?'

'Not any one particular action, perhaps. It is not one great palpable injury, but a series of small rivalries, that make dear friends like Mrs. Strangways and me detest each other. I am a dozen years younger than she is—men ask me to dance oftener than they do her. She can look back upon scores of times when my vanity has been gratified at the expense of hers. Paul Chichester, who would not under any conditions pay her attention, became my friend the first day he saw me. Are not these sufficient reasons for her to hate me?'

'And yet she always wishes you to be with her.'

'Oh, yes, she has got to the point where rival aid has to be called in. A humiliating point that, Esther, eh? I wonder when I am thirty whether I shall be what Mrs. Strangways is now?'

'God forbid, Jane,' said Esther. 'I hope you will be happily married, and caring nothing for balls and parties long before then.'

'Married—to whom?'

Esther hesitated. Miss Dashwood's position as nominally engaged to one man, and unconditionally in love with another, made the question a rather difficult one to answer.

'Married to whom?' repeated Jane. 'Speak out, Esther, I want to have your opinion.'

'I hope you will be married to a man you can respect, Jane. You would never be happy unless you did respect him.'

'Shall I tell you what I think of that style of moral sentiment, Esther? I think, like all copy-book things, it means nothing whatever. No pretty little axioms can fit everybody; good and bad, passionate and phlegmatic, alike. Respect and esteem may be necessary elements to some people's love; they are not to mine. I can love without either.'

'I spoke of happiness, Jane.'

'And love is happiness. When I am married to Arthur, I shall be happy, whatever he is, whatever he has been. It is just the one subject in which reason does not enter, you see, Miss Fleming. I suppose you allow that?'

'I—I don't think I know much about very passionate love,' said Esther; and recollecting her numerous remarkably cool judgments upon the defects in Oliver's character, the truth was borne in upon her, not without a sense of shame, that Jane's attachment, hopeless and misplaced though it might be, had yet stronger vitality, more of the genuine element of love in it than hers. 'I don't think I know much about passionate love, except what I have heard, and read in books. I think, now, that I could always reason, whatever I might feel.'

'And pray to Heaven that you may always feel so!' cried Miss Dashwood. 'Pray that you may never love any human being better than yourself; above all, that you may never commit the desperate folly of staking your hopes of happiness upon the miserable chance of any man's heart being as stable as your own.'

'Have you done that, Jane?'

'Have I not done it? you should say. Am I not giving up the best years of my life, giving up all other prospects or hopes; am I not ready to sacrifice everything—my own soul if it would help him—to Arthur Peel! and how does he return it all? Don't speak, please, don't say anything; I can bear to say these things, but not to hear them said. Does Arthur really love me, Esther? He *must* do that;' she turned her face, white and excited, to Esther;

'he must do that,' she repeated passionately. 'Men are not like women, of course: they require excitement, amusement, a thousand things that look like infidelity, yet are not really so. Arthur's whole life is spent in committing actions that make me miserable, and still, at heart, I know he loves me. Why, just think how long our engagement has been going on—three years! It makes me old to think of it.'

'Engagement! I never knew before that there was anything like an engagement in the case,' said Esther, with a feeling of more interest in Jane's love affairs than she had ever known before. 'Do you mean me to think that you are actually engaged to be married to Mr. Peel?'

'Well, yes. I don't see the good of making any more half-confidences. In our way, Arthur and I are engaged.'

'Oh, Jane! and I have laughed at you about it, and said such things about Mr. Peel! How I wish you had told me all from the first!'

'Never mind,' cried Miss Dashwood, with rather a forced laugh. 'You need not take it so dreadfully *au sérieux*. I said we were engaged in one way, and our way would not be yours, Esther. I amuse myself pretty well, as you see, in this odious life of ours at Bath, and I dare say Arthur pines no more than other young Guardsmen pine in London. Whatever you have said is not half so bad as what people in general say of both of us.'

'But people in general don't know that you are engaged to each other, I suppose.'

'Not now. My little attentions to Paul have drawn others as well as papa on the wrong scent, as I meant them to do. Very good-natured of Paul to help me out so well, wasn't it?'

'I don't know, Jane. I am dense in such matters. I don't quite understand the advantage of it.'

'It is very simple. Papa thinks I am safe, and does not watch me. Mrs. Dashwood thinks some one is really going to be fool enough to take me off her hands, and abstains occasionally from bullying me. Between them I get my freedom, and see Arthur, and write to him as much as I choose. And Mr. Peel himself is regarded as so perfectly free, that all the world set him down as about to marry Miss Lynes.'

'But if I were in your place I don't think I should like such perfect liberty as that.'

'You wouldn't care if you knew, as I do, that all these reports are utterly malignant and preposterous,' exclaimed Miss Dashwood. 'Arthur marry Miss Lynes! with his fastidious tastes and admiration of refinement! I should like you to see her, Esther; I should only like you once to see her! You wouldn't be so desperately sure of her becoming my rival, if you did.'

Miss Dashwood's wish was destined to be accomplished. Almost while the words were yet on her lips, a sharp turn in the path brought them in full sight of three people on horseback, who had just turned into the upper park from the common, and Esther recognised instantly that two of the three were Mrs. Strangways and Mr. Peel.

'A most extraordinary coincidence, as your friend Miss Whitty would say, Esther. Please talk away to me, and let us have the manner of being unconcerned as we pass. Mrs. Strangways and that—that other person will be hoping to see me look annoyed: but they will be disappointed. Do look at the heiress's figure! Arthur likes delicate *mignon* lines—must not that waist be fearfully seductive to him?'

Miss Dashwood tried hard to make her manner natural, and probably succeeded well enough to prevent Mrs. Strangways and that—that other person from detecting the effort; but Arthur Peel knew, long before they reached her, what kind of feelings were masked by Jane's smiling face and ringing laugh. He felt horribly ill at ease himself. Women can carry off such a situation readily enough: indeed, I have known some of them, who are never so thoroughly natural, and in their element, as when they have to play one lover off against another, doling out equal hope to both, and utter despair to neither. But

coquetry is not inborn in men,—in Englishmen, at all events. There are male coquets, as there are male milliners and male dancers; but Nature asserts herself in every case. Just when the last perfection in art is required, they lack those finer graces of the sex whose attributes they are infringing, and become ridiculous. Arthur Peel could carry on any number of flirtations apart; could parry jealous questionings with a mixture of *aplomb* and indignant tenderness that belonged almost to the highest stage of science; but yet to the very highest he could not reach. Meeting the woman who loved him, in the company of the woman whose fifty thousand pounds he desired to possess, he looked more foolish, more awkward, than any schoolgirl of fifteen would do if suddenly called into a position in which just the same amount of tact should be required of her.

But, whatever the feelings of the others, Mrs. Strangways, at least, looked radiant, and would on no account pass Jane and Esther with merely bowing. She stopped, she shook hands, she made playful surmises as to the object of their early walk; finally she introduced Jane to Miss Lynes. The heiress nodded with the affability that her wealth and her magnificent mount and her groom behind her, and her present success with Arthur, warranted her to feel: Jane drew up her little figure and inclined her head about three-quarters of an inch with an awfully supercilious ghost of a smile, extending as much to Mr. Peel as to Miss Lynes.

'Have you walked far, Miss Fleming?' Arthur inquired, bringing his horse nearer to the path and farther from the heiress, but not daring to address Jane herself. 'We did not see you on the common. I suppose—ah—'

He was assisted out of his dilemma by Jane. That one word 'we' had sent all the angry blood from her heart to her cheeks, and Mr. Peel knew, before she spoke, the kind of answer he had to expect.

'We haven't been far, Mr. Peel. Milly has gone to spend the day with those dreadful school-friends of hers, the Smithetts, and as I never can stand the cotton atmosphere for more than five minutes without a sensation of choking, I made my escape, and asked Esther to come out with me here for a little purer air.'

It was not a refined thrust: Jane was the first to confess herself afterwards that she had been positively unladylike. But it took the desired effect at the time. No fine shaft could have pierced so tough a skin, morally and physically, as Miss Lynes's; but the slightest allusion to trade made her actually shiver. She was so exultingly proud of her money, so thoroughly ashamed of the way in which her money had been made!

'Who are the Smithetts?' she cried, in that quick familiar way with which people of her breeding always try to throw off their confusion. 'I never met them out—I never heard of them. Are they in society?'

'Some persons visit them,' said Jane, in a frightfully clear, syllabic manner. 'I believe old Mr. and Mrs. Smithett belong to a highly respectable class of persons. The daughters, from being ashamed of their parents and of their business, are insufferable. Is that really one of Stone and Mason's horses, Mrs. Strangways? It is a much more decent-looking creature than any papa ever gets for Milly and me.'

'Oh, I hope you won't get any hack-horses when you ride with me again, Mrs. Strangways,' interrupted Miss Lynes. 'They're such miserable screws, I don't care to be seen with them; and you know you can always have one of mine, whenever you like. I keep three, beside the groom's.'

Arthur Peel had always felt a mild chronic distaste for Miss Lynes's person; but at this moment it rose into something very near strong repugnance. Her corpulent figure, her stunted features had never stood out in such strong relief as they did now, with Jane Dashwood's delicate form and proud little patrician face straight before him. Her bragging pride of wealth and innate vulgarity of soul had never revolted him as they did now, with Jane's mock-

ing wit ready to call them out and treasure them for his especial gratification and benefit hereafter.

How devoutly he wished Jane Dashwood had Miss Lynes's money—or half of it! He thought he would marry her to-morrow with half of it, and let Miss Lynes and her three horses, besides the groom's, go to the deuce. He almost thought, looking at the two young women together, that he would marry Jane without a penny, and leave Miss Lynes with all her wealth for some one of stronger stomach than himself.

He almost thought so: but Arthur Peel was too old a hand ever to act upon any foolish impulse. A delicate lithe figure and proud little patrician face are very nice things indeed for a man who can afford to pay for them—which he could not. He was over head and ears in debt; his family were bankrupts; his only hope of being able to save his commission, or his position in life at all, rested upon his being able to bring his own handsome face to a good matrimonial market as speedily as possible. As much love as it was in his nature to feel he felt at this moment for Jane Dashwood; as much disgust as any woman, young and well-disposed towards himself, could fill him with he felt for Miss Lynes; and for an instant, as I have said, the desperate folly of being true to the one and throwing up the other did enter his brain.

That instant was enough to show him the danger of allowing feeling ever to dally with principle. Young women, however vulgar, with fifty thousand pounds to their portion, are not readily met, and are quickly lost. Already two or three men of family as high, and with position less desperate than his own, were steadily in pursuit of Miss Lynes. A little well-founded jealousy on her part, a slight suspicion as to the disinterestedness of his motives, and his game might be up.

Mr. Peel turned his eyes resolutely from Jane Dashwood's face, and fixing them upon Miss Lynes, asked her, in rather a low voice, if she was ashamed of riding with him, as he was on a hack-horse? If so, she had only to speak, and, whatever the violence to his own feelings, he would go at once in an opposite direction.

'You droll creature!' cried Miss Lynes in her loudest tone. 'As if I had ever taken the trouble to look what your horse was like! Nothing like the vanity of men I do believe—and all the time, do you know you are losing your flower? I shall take care how I waste one of my rare winter roses upon you another time.'

And she leant forward, and with an air of the most perfect, recognised familiarity adjusted a flower that was nearly falling from Mr. Peel's buttonhole.

It was more than Jane Dashwood's strength could bear. She had marked Arthur's low tone; she intercepted the look which passed from his eyes to the heiress as she stooped forward towards him now; and a feeling nearer akin to positive anguish than any he had ever yet caused her, contracted her heart. That he could never love Miss Lynes, she knew; but, tempted by his own need, might he not be brought in time,—might he not already have brought himself, to the thought of marrying her?

'Esther, it is time for us to go on. These November days are so short, and we have not got half through our walk yet.'

'And we were to have been at the Crofton's at two, and it is now half-past one,' said Mrs. Strangways, looking at her watch. 'Thank you, Jane dear, for reminding me of the time. I could not get those young people on when we were in the country. They persisted in calling it warm, and looking out for violets, in spite of all my assertions about its being the depth of winter. Miss Fleming, I am to see you on Thursday, I hope? That is right. Come early with Jane and Milly. You will have an opportunity of renewing your acquaintance with a Weymouth friend—that is, if Miss Dashwood will give you *carte blanche* for doing so.'

And then Mrs. Strangways' affection for her young friends could not be satisfied without another warm

shake of the hand; and Jane had to submit to another patronizing nod of triumph from Miss Lynes, as, laughing and talking in an under tone to Arthur Peel, she rode off by his side.

www.libtool.com.cn

'Well, what do you think of my rival now?' she cried, after a minute, to Esther. 'Do you think there is imminent danger of Arthur Peel's falling in love with Miss Lynes?'

'With Miss Lynes, herself,—no!'

'But with her money, yes. You think her rare roses in November, the three "orses besides the groom's" will tempt him? *I* don't, Esther. It is not in Arthur's nature to sell himself to such a woman as that. Look at them together! Did you ever see such a contrast? I can tell by the turn of Arthur's head, even at this distance, that it is she who is doing all the talking—just in the same forward way that she volunteered to button his coat for him. I suppose, however hideous a woman is, men feel flattered at having love made to them with such outrageous warmth—but to return it by love! Ah, that is another thing.'

Through the long vista of leafless trees Miss Dashwood continued to watch the riding-party as long as they were in sight. Just as they turned into the town park, and when the archway across the road would in another moment have shut them out of sight, Mr. Peel turned, checked his horse for an instant, and raised his hand to his hat.

The blood rushed up crimson into Miss Dashwood's face.

'Do you see him, poor fellow?—Esther, do you see him? He wants me to know by that look that he wishes he was here, and that his companions are odious to him. How wrong I was to show such annoyance before those women—as if it could matter to me Mrs. Strangways having entrapped him, for once, into riding with her and Miss Lynes! I was very wrong—wasn't I?'

'You acted naturally, Jane,' said Esther, who felt herself unable to decipher such worlds of meaning in Arthur's parting salutation. 'Mr. Peel seemed quite intimate enough with Miss Lynes to justify your annoyance. Shall we walk on a little quicker? the common is some distance from us yet.'

But all Jane Dashwood's desire for the country was gone. 'There is no good in walking up that terrific hill, Esther. It is quite as pleasant here. Let us sit down for a few minutes and rest. I have yet something I want particularly to say to you.'

Esther knew that something particular, with Jane Dashwood, must mean the only subject of real interest to her in the world—her own love-affairs; accordingly, she was quite prepared for another indignant outburst about Arthur Peel's seeming flirtation with the heiress. When Jane began to speak, however, all indignation had left her voice, and her face was as soft and gentle as though no tornado of fierce jealousy or quick repentance had just swept across her heart.

'You think my love and my trust, too, are unreasonable, Esther. I am quite sure you do; but you don't know what has made them both so deep in my heart. You don't really know how long and *how* I have trusted Arthur Peel.'

'Three years, you told me, Jane. You must have been almost a child when your acquaintance with him first began.'

'I was never a child, Esther; we were not brought up to be children. I was just as much a woman at sixteen as I am, or as Milly is, now. But I was not quite sixteen when I first met Arthur. I went to spend the Christmas holidays with my aunt Roberts, papa's sister, in Leicestershire; and Arthur, who was going to stay in the house, too, travelled down in the same carriage with me. He was quite a boy then, he had only just got his commission, and he was as simple as possible, much simpler than I was. Well, you know how such things go on! We played battledore and shuttlecock, and sang duets, and gave each other flowers, and went through all the established stages of a boy-and-girl flirtation; and then, one evening in the greenhouse, he made me an offer. I don't think I cared very much about him, but I accepted him because I always meant to accept

the first man who offered to me. The Robartses encouraged it all immensely, and papa wrote me the only affectionate letter I ever had from him in my life, and everybody let me know, directly or indirectly, how wonderfully clever I had been at sixteen to get hold of such a catch as Arthur Peel.'

'The engagement was a permitted one, then?'

'Permitted! I should think it *was* permitted. Arthur had an old aunt living at that time, who was expected to leave him the whole of her money, something like twenty or thirty thousand pounds, and we all felt sure we had got hold of this money, and thought Arthur the most delightful, promising, excellent young man living. Well, the aunt died, about six months after I was engaged, and left every shilling she had to her solicitor. When Arthur wrote and told me of his fallen prospects, and said it need make no difference to us, and his profession in time would be enough for us to marry on, I first really felt that I loved him. Papa was in a great rage, and stormed about Arthur, as if he had taken us in, instead of being disappointed himself. He said the engagement shouldn't go on a day, that it was a mockery for a penniless cornet to talk of marrying one of his daughters, that the Peels were a dissipated, ruined family (I never heard of their bad morals before, you must know), and he should have me back upon his hands in a twelvemonth, if he was fool enough to consent to such a beggarly marriage. If I was pretty enough to get as good an offer as Mr. Peel's *had been* at sixteen, I should be sure to have another as good if I waited. As to love, he and Mrs. Dashwood both knew very well I had accepted the offer simply because it was an eligible one. Mrs. Robarts had informed them my manner showed *that* pretty plainly from the first, and so on.

'I didn't make any opposition, for I knew, if they chose, they could hinder me from seeing Arthur; but I swore in my heart I would never give him up as long as he himself wished to marry me. I had accepted him half through vanity, half through worldliness; but at the first word of being false to him, under his fallen prospects, something stronger seemed to rise up in my heart, and I have kept to it. Yes, Esther, I have kept to it ever since.'

'I am sorry for you, Jane. Whatever other people may think, I say you determined right.'

'Sometimes I think so, too; but, you know, wrong is so mixed up with right, or so grows of it, that however one starts one seems forced into evil as one gets on. I may have been right in determining to stand by Arthur, whether he was rich or poor, but I have been wrong a hundred, a thousand times, in all the deceit and prevarication, and sometimes the downright falsehoods, of the last three years. Just in the same way wrong seems in time to become right. Papa was worldly and harsh in making me break with Arthur Peel as he was then; but I believe, if I could judge dispassionately, I should consider any father right, who held his daughter back from marrying such a man as Arthur Peel is now.'

'Oh, Jane! can you say this?'

'I can both say it and feel it. If we had married early, if we had been openly engaged, he might—God knows if it be so, but I try to think it!—he might have been different, for my sake. But only bound as he has been to me (and such, even, as our engagement is, we have ourselves broken it off half a score of times), he has had nothing to hold him back from becoming like all the rest of his family. It is inborn in every one of the Peels to be extravagant and dissipated, and a gambler. His two eldest brothers are outlawed, the third is following fast on their steps, and Arthur himself—' but here Miss Dashwood's voice trembled, and she stopped short.

'I wish you had married him long ago,' cried Esther. 'It is not very like me to counsel runaway marriages, but I do think a runaway marriage would have been better for you both than the sort of engagement that binds you now. Marry Arthur Peel while you still love each other, and while there is a

hope of reclaiming him. I will be your bridesmaid, Jane.'

Miss Dashwood laughed bitterly: then the quick blood started to her cheek again. 'Your proposal might have been worth listening to three years ago, Esther. We were younger and simpler, and more sentimental then than we are now. Arthur Peel, at two-and-twenty, is a great deal too old to commit an action of such surpassing folly as to add a penniless wife to the heavy burthen of his other encumbrances.'

'Jane, do you mean?——'

'I mean,' cried Miss Dashwood, starting up suddenly, 'that Arthur and I thoroughly understand each other, and ourselves. We are engaged in our way, which, as I told you, would never be yours, and if I talked to you for a hundred hours, instead of one, you would know no more about us than you do now. You would still be Esther Fleming, and we should still be Arthur Peel and Jane Dashwood. Oh, no,' she added, as Esther turned towards the common which was to have been their destination—'oh, no, let us get on home at once; we want a few turns in Milsom Street, to enliven us after all this solitude. Country walks are very innocent and charming, and sentimental in theory, but in practice—*va!*

'What do you mean to wear on Thursday? Papa and Mrs. Dashwood are so shamefully stingy that Milly and I will be obliged to go in our washed muslins. How I wish philanthropy occasionally bore fruits at home as well as abroad!'

The tide had turned again: all that the fickle nature contained of seriousness had evaporated. Blue grenadines and white silks; gored skirts and plain ones; the advantages of fair women over dark women in possessing a wider range of becoming colours: these formed the staple of Miss Dashwood's conversation during the remainder of the day.

CHAPTER XXII.

RIVAL CHARMS.

When she first left Countisbury Miss Fleming would have scouted the idea that she could ever find pleasure either in dress, or in parties, or in anything save letters from Malta during Oliver Carew's absence.

As the evening approached, however, on which she was again to meet Paul, she could not hide from herself that she was looking forward with an unusual amount of interest to the event; also that she made more little rehearsals with flowers and muslins and lace for several successive evenings than she had ever done before in her whole simple life.

Was she growing vain, avid of general admiration, or—and this question gave her conscience a sharper prick—were all these rehearsals proof of a desire to stand well with one man, and that one another than Oliver?

'You look distinguished, Esther, said Mrs. Tudor, as her niece stood before her for approval on the evening of the party, 'and it is the highest praise I could give you. The simple unstudied style suits you. Little *mignon* persons require small fripperies; large dark women demand few and flowing lines. Our styles are the same. I never wore more in my hair in my life than you have now. Our cast of features can afford to set fashion aside.'

Esther was dressed in a black lace that Mrs. Tudor's own cast-off stores had furnished forth. A single scarlet flower was in her hair, a gold bracelet, a loan also of Mrs. Tudor's, was her only ornament. But that nameless something, which neither dress nor fashion, nor always birth, can give; that fine grace which, lacking a better word, we call distinction, was Esther Fleming's inherited portion, and Mrs. Tudor was right when she added to her other praise a prophecy that her niece would be by far the most refined and best-bred young woman in Mrs. Strangways' rooms.

'Some families take up every plebeian face that they have the misfortune to be allied with, Esther, but we retain our own features, excepting Joan, whom I regard as a mere accidental offset, the one crooked branch you will see on the handsomest tree. We shall con-

tinue to show our good blood through a dozen generations. Your mother, poor thing, had no beauty and no birth either. I believe I have told you so before, but you have not inherited a look—no, not a single feature from her. You have Garratt Fleming's face, line for line, and I cannot pay you a higher compliment. Your dear grandfather was unfortunate in his domestic concerns.' This was Mrs. Tudor's pretty way of stating the fact that a man was an unprincipled spendthrift; 'but he was the noblest-looking man and the most perfect dresser of his time. Enjoy yourself well, child, and be sure, if Colonel Dashwood offers to pay their share of the fly, you take the money at once. It shows very ill-breeding ever to make any difficulty about the settlement of small accounts.'

This last injunction of Mrs. Tudor's proved her to be ignorant of the finer part of Colonel Dashwood's character. He accompanied his daughters to the carriage; he took and held Esther's hand with that paternal warmth he seemed always ready to feel for all young women except his own children; finally, he remarked how kind it was of Miss Fleming to call round for Jane and Milly. They must do as much for her the next time they were all going to the same party. But Colonel Dashwood knew, as well as Mrs. Tudor herself, when it was decently possible to be spared eighteenpence.

'Papa has given me a colour for the evening,' said Jane as they drove off. 'It does make my cheeks burn so when I hear those polite little roundabout ways of being mean that our family excel in.'

'I hope your dress isn't very fresh, Esther,' cried Milly. 'What is it, black? Oh, how dowdy! however, it's all the better for us. I was afraid you would have a new white muslin, and we are in our old washed ones. You have got a bouquet, I see, so have I. Wasn't it good of Jane? Papa presented us with two shillings to buy flowers—just fancy, two shillings, twenty-four pence between us—and she gave up her share to me. Jenny's always so good in these little things.'

'I wish you would have mine, Jane,' cried Esther; 'they are very good ones that were sent to Aunt Tudor this morning; but they are not of the least use to me. Do take them off my hands as a kindness.'

Jane Dashwood's nature was not irrevocably selfish, like Milly's, but the temptation of a hothouse bouquet was a strong one. She thought of her washed muslin; of Miss Lynes' certain costly freshness; she knew Arthur had so often told her so that one of her most irresistible *poses* was when she held her lips upon a bouquet and half raised her eyes towards her partner's face. 'It seems dreadfully selfish to rob you, Esther, but if you really don't want them.'

'I am very glad to give them you, Jane,' said Esther, thinking with a little pang of her unbroken black dress. 'You know better what to do with such things than I do.'

'It is thoroughly base of you, Miss Dashwood, for all that,' remarked Milly, when Esther had made over her sole ornament into Jane's hands. 'We poor wretches who are on our promotion want adorning more than engaged people, you know.'

'That is just why I am selfish, Milly,' replied Miss Dashwood. 'I am so utterly thrown on my own resources, so hopelessly on my promotion again! Paul usurped, in secret, by mysterious influences, and openly by Miss Fleming, and Mr. Peel given by the unanimous consent of all his friends to Miss Lynes. It is a pity there are not a few willow-leaves among these flowers, Esther. My position to-night would make them a very appropriate endowment for me.'

'You don't mean that, Jenny,' said Millicent. 'You know that in spite of your washed muslin you are bent on Miss Lynes's utter discomposure and retreat, and feel very sure of it, too. I wish I had some especial work on my hands like you. It is so insipid dancing and talking with everybody and not caring for any one in particular. I hope John Alexander won't have managed to get there, though. He's all very well when one spends the day with his sisters, but I could not stand

looking intimate with him before people.'

Which little exposition of feeling, I think, pretty surely affords the key-note to Miss Millicent Dashwood's general views of life. She liked knowing the Smithetts and spending days with them, because they were rich, and wealth was the one thing that Milly, in her inmost heart, most yearned after and respected. She liked John Alexander's attentions very well indeed when only his sisters were by to witness them. She could even look forward a few years and picture herself marrying John Alexander, if she were not sufficiently lucky in the mean time to meet with any one who happened to be a gentleman as well as rich. But to meet Mr. Smithett among a room full of decent people, to have to receive his attentions and listen to his silly jokes and vulgar laugh, with other persons listening to them too, would have given Milly about as much pain as anything not directly and absolutely wounding her own self-love, could have power to inflict on her.

Next to money, the opinion of her little world was Millicent Dashwood's god. I think, though the struggle might have been sharp, she would really sooner have given the Smithetts up, with their dinners, riding-horses, presents, John Alexander's attentions, and all the other benefits that she received from them, than have it said by the people at Mrs. Strangways' ball that she was intimate with a family of stocking-weavers. Any foolish sentiment about the Smithett girls themselves, or inconvenient gratitude for any of the kindness they had shown to her, it was not at all in Millicent Dashwood's way to feel.

Not many people had arrived when they reached the Strangways', and the first object that met Jane's eyes on entering the cloak-room was Miss Lynes standing in solitary and absorbed attention before a cheval-glass. The heiress was dressed in a brocaded pink silk, of a hue and texture gorgeous to behold. This dress was made with excess of trimmings, with fringes, with bows of ribbon, with bouquets of flowers, with lace. From poor Miss Lynes's head (that *pièce de résistance* to all innately tasteless or newly-made women) depended a coronet of many colours, fern-leaves, grasses, fruits; all things of merit and price in themselves, but very hideous to look upon in their present position.

As she continued intent upon her employment, which was to hinder her hair from parting, as thinnish sandy hair has a habit of doing upon high, nude, glossy foreheads, Jane Dashwood danced lightly behind the unconscious heiress, and by pantomimic gestures conveyed to Esther and Milly her own sense of the varied graces of her wealthy rival's dress and figure. Just as she had commenced a very graphic representation of the set of two square-looking red elbows, Miss Lynes caught sight of her in the glass, and turned round sharply.

'La, Miss Dashwood, how you startled me! I declare I never heard you come in at all. I'm so used to servants it seems quite odd to do anything for myself. Do you think my hair will do?'

'Oh, perfectly, I should say,' Jane answered, looking slowly up and down Miss Lynes's figure. 'Your dress is quite magnificent.'

'This? La, no, I think it very plain, I can assure you; but for a little party it don't look well to be over-dressed. Your sister, I suppose?' looking at Milly. 'You're not out yet, are you?'

It was not in Millicent Dashwood's nature to be anything but civil to the owner of fifty thousand pounds, and she answered very sweetly indeed that she *was* out. She had been to balls for the last six months.

'Dear me! I thought from your dress you weren't;' and she glanced at Milly's skirt, which, like Jane's, had shrunk from its pristine length in washing. 'Just set the door open for me,' she added, turning to Esther. 'It's enough to tear one's dress to pieces cramming in and out of these little pokey bedrooms.'

Esther looked straight between Miss Lynes's eyebrows for a moment, then turned away, and the heiress, with all the rustle of vulgar

assurance, stalked away by herself down stairs.

'Oh, you dear old Esther!' cried Jane, and in her exultation she ran up and embraced Esther round the waist. 'I never saw such a lovely take-down in my life—so utterly demolishing, and yet so dignified. I would give anything to have let that woman's impertinence down as you did.'

'If her skin is not as thick as a buffalo's, which it looks, she must have felt your sarcasm when you were praising her looks, Jane,' said Milly. 'Did you ever hear anything so odious as her telling me that my dress was short? Only that I knew you and Esther were quite strong enough without me, I would have let her see pretty plainly how intensely vulgar I thought her.'

'She is not worth thinking about,' interrupted Jane, quickly, as the sounds of approaching steps told that more people were arriving. 'If you are ready, Esther, we will go down at once. It would be the height of indecorum for three young women without a chaperon to enter a room in which more than half-a-dozen people were assembled. Miss Lynes, you see, has nestled her innocent head under Mrs. Strangways' wing already.'

There were, however, a good many more than half-a-dozen people in the room when they entered; and Miss Lynes, though, in the metaphorical language of ball-rooms, under Mrs. Strangways' care, was, in commonplace speech, already flirting hard with Mr. Peel upon a remote and isolated ottoman.

A glance—less than a glance—an instinctive momentary chill told Esther, as she went in, that Paul was not there, and she at once retreated quietly to a corner, with a general sense of extreme weariness of spirit, and with no other desire than to be a passive spectator of what was going on about her for the remainder of the evening.

'Vous me manquez—je suis absent de moi-même!' I suppose, at some period of life, every human being, in some form of speech or another, has repeated that line of Victor Hugo's to his own heart. Esther Fleming, who knew nothing whatever of sentiment, and had never read a word of French poetry, was repeating it now, but unconsciously (and, after all, that is the only way to do such things truly. All the fine aroma, all the exquisite half-pain of love is gone, when we are once thoroughly conscious of what we are about). She really thought the rooms were dark to her because she had no taste for balls, no zest in little intrigues and triumphs like Milly's; no one strong interest like poor Jane's; and when she took her place between two frightfully-old Bath young ladies upon a sofa, quite simply and seriously believed herself to be intent on watching the arrival of Mrs. Strangways' guests—not the door through which Paul Chichester's face might possibly appear.

Mrs. Strangways' guests, whatever they might think or speak about their hostess, at any other time, were very numerous this night; and Mrs. Strangways, dressed with all the exquisite art that to her was second nature, and with a slightly heightened shade of pink upon her cheeks, looked superbly handsome as she received them.

Did she remember the slights, the coldness, the positive insults to which she had submitted at different times from nine-tenths of these smiling guests of hers? Did her smiling guests remember the condemnation they had so often and so loudly expressed of the woman who was entertaining them, as they now shook her by the hand?

Esther asked herself this while she watched repetition after repetition of the same little comedy of bows and smiles and compliments, as group after group of white and pink and blue floated up to Mrs. Strangways and away again. But poor Esther was, you know, quite barbarian in all her ideas of life and of right and wrong. Who thinks of what they have once said of a hostess, when they are just going to spend a pleasant evening at her expense? Who remembers that the Dean of Sarum's wife and daughters were once so bitter to one, when the Dean of Sarum's wife and

daughters are just going to give tone and respectability to one's whole party? Every one pronounced that Mrs. Strangways was looking charming, and that her rooms were lit and decorated with an effect that only her Parisian taste could produce. Mr. and Mrs. Strangways (with Minnie in white muslin, as a sort of domestic angel by their side) smiled and talked to each other, and to their child, in the intervals of entertaining their visitors, with a harmony and affection quite rare to see. And Esther—probably the only honest person present—felt herself to be positively misanthropic and bad of heart, for wondering how much of genuine truth lay beneath all this outside show of excellent taste and kindly feeling.

Just as the first dance had ended, she heard Mr. Chichester's name announced. The crowd of people between herself and the doorway prevented her from seeing him, even if a certain feeling of shyness had not hindered her from seeking to meet his eye; but the running commentaries of the two aërial virgins at her side soon put her in possession of what Paul was doing with himself.

'Look at him, Isabella, at that Jane Dashwood's side already, although she has only eyes and ears for Mr. Peel, and giving her a bouquet, too; what infatuation! No, he is only showing it to her; he is coming this way.' Esther's pulse quickened a very little. 'How foolish it looks to see a man with a bouquet! Why, he's coming over to us. Oh, Bella dearest, I do believe he's going to ask me to dance.'

But Mr. Chichester, as it turned out, had other intentions. He returned the expectant smiles of the two veteran nymphs with a low bow, and then passed quietly on to Esther's side.

THE BAY-WINDOW OF OUR CLUB.

THE place of places for a chat,
A lounge, a smoke, a modest glass:
The place where lords and wits have sat—
And will sit, till the world shall pass:
The 'cosy-rie' as members dub
This great bay-window of our club!

A spot by all the fair sex loathed—
Seductive as the Siren-shore—
Hateful alike to the betrothed,
Who does her absent love deplore,
And to the wife, whose faithless 'hub'
Wooes the bay-window of our club.

Full many kinds of men, I trow,
Have watched the world through yonder pane:
Familiar faces, missing now,
Shall ne'er be seen thereat again!
For we must leave—'ay, there's the rub'—
E'en the bay-window of our club.

Where's Vane—the invariably well-drest?—
Great friends that gallant lad and I—
The brave young soldier takes his rest
Beneath the scorching Indian sky:—
'Tis many a year since he, a sub,
Left the bay-window of our club.

Where's Markham? He, so people say,
Carries a cross before the Pope.
Where's Bruce? The ruined man one day
Ended his troubles with a rope.
Where's Barrington? He keeps a 'pub'—
Shuns the bay-window of our club.

These are some changes I have seen—
  Some names struck out of friendship's scroll:
And 'tis almost enough, I ween,
  To make one play the cynic's *rôle*—
A sour Diogenes, whose tub
Is the bay-window of our club.

* * * * *

Behind this barrier of glass
  A zoological display
Our club presents, to all who pass,
  Of the strange creatures of the day:—
Donkey, bore, lion, bear, and cub
Deck the bay-window of our club.

Here's Gobemouche dropping in to learn
  'What is the latest news of who?'—
Ah me! how distant ears must burn,
  While characters we piecemeal strew
As bait for this voracious chub
In the bay-window of our club.

Here's Parvenu, familiar snob,
  Who calls one by one's Christian name,
Who loves with lords to hob and nob,
  Who'd climb by noble skirts to fame,—
One of those men 'tis vain to snub
In the bay-window of our club.

* * * * *

Pshaw! what's the use in being sour!
  There's something noble still and true—
Despite the follies of the hour—
  In man; and if this jaundiced view
We see from here; 'twere well to scrub
This same bay-window of our club.

The world is not so very bad,
  Though gold and dross together run;
There's lots of pleasure to be had,
  And lots of labour to be done;—
Knights may find giants still to drub,
Oh, old bay-window of our club!

The seasons change for evermore,
  And evermore the world revolves;—
And still we mortals sink or soar.
  With stronger will or weak resolves
One mounts—a fly, one crawls—a grub,
In the bay-window of our club.

Here as elsewhere—so Heaven decrees—
  For those who in their race believe,
E'en with surroundings such as these,
  The man who labours may achieve;—
Why, laurels!—I have seen the shrub
In the bay-window of our club.

So let the world wag on, say I,
  As through these ancient panes I gaze.
There's but one end for low and high;—
  The cypress sure if not the bays—
Death comes recruiting, rub-a-dub,
To the bay-window of our club.

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

THE BAY-WINDOW OF OUR CLUB.

Drawn by C. A. Doyle.

See the Verses.

www.libtool.com.cn

SEARCHING FOR SUMMER QUARTERS.

THE season languishes, the heat increases, the children grow pale, and Paterfamilias mentally groans as he recognises these signs of his approaching time of trial, his annual vexation of spirit, the trouble, disappointment, and bodily fatigue that seem the inevitable result of searching for summer quarters.

Happy the man that has even a 'farm of two acres' to run down to. His fate is fixed. The how, when, and where shall he go disturbs not his tranquil mind. No wonder he grows fat, and looks pleasant, and shakes off the fatigue of London life in a few days, and is ready, perchance, for another move in six weeks' time again; he cannot realize what many a Londoner has to go through in order to obtain a little fresh air: rich and poor are worried alike. Take the case of a rich man, perhaps, who has dined out a good deal in the season, and means to dine out a good deal more; but sending for his doctor after a few sleepless nights, &c., is by him peremptorily ordered out of town; for the doctor (being a disinterested M.D.) sees that it is the only chance of warding off illness—a case, in short, where prevention is better than cure.

'Out of town so soon! Where shall we go?' cries Dives, in despair, after seeing twenty 'delightful residences,' and finding nothing good enough, or large enough, or near enough town, or cheerful enough, or quiet enough. 'Anywhere,' answers Æsculapius; 'anywhere, my dear sir, where you can't dine out; but go, and go at once.' And so, perhaps, Brighton, that refuge for the destitute rich, is mentioned as a resource, and saves our patient from a lunatic asylum, or at the best an irritant fever.

But worse is the case of the hapless Belgravian, who, spurred on by those letters in the 'Times,' married his Julia, not upon 300*l.*, but 500*l.* a year. How many delightful plans this gentle couple annually form for a few weeks here, or a little trip there; and, indeed, how fearlessly they sped to Scarborough in the east, or Tenby in the west, and were *not* ruined, in the early days of their wedded felicity. But, alas! a time has come to them when 'multiplication is vexation;' the long journeys must be renounced, a limit set to their migratory movements, defined by the inexorable 'Bradshaw.'

'Oh, how can people be so wicked!' exclaims poor Julia, as day after day her worn-out spouse returns from his daily hunt for summer quarters, having found the 'Spacious farmhouse apartments' nutshells they could not turn in, or the 'Charming cottage, moderate in price,' far beyond their maximum three guineas a week, or the four bedrooms resolved into two, with two cupboards. 'How can people write and print such falsehoods!'

'I will go no more, my dear,' says poor Benedict, with a sigh, thinking of the days when he packed his portmanteau, and was off at six hours' notice, fresh and full of pleasurable anticipation, for Scotland or the Rhine. He forgets, vexed man that he is, all the long, dull hours of the after winter in gloomy chambers, or unhome-like club. He forgets the merry Christmas he has so lately passed through, brightened by the happy faces, cheered by the gay, glad voices, warmed by the loving hearts now around him; he forgets all this, and only remembers present worry, or dreads the removal and the luggage. And so he repeats, very decidedly—

'It is throwing away one's money uselessly; so I shall not rush about any more as I have been doing all this week. We must make up our minds to stay in town.'

But a piteous 'Oh, papa!' from his little white-faced Fanny, and a good night's rest, spur him up to another venture, and to 'Country apartments in a delightful farmhouse, three miles from a station,' he starts off on one of the hottest of days in the hottest of Junes. He reaches the designated station, and inquires his way. Three miles

there and three miles back is six; but he can rest after seeing the rooms, so he will be economical and walk. He is cautious; he continues to inquire his way; he is on the right road, but he completes one mile, two miles, three miles, and yet no sign of his farm-house. He enters the first house he sees, and asks for information, and learns that he is three miles still from this possible summer residence. It is true that by the fields it is little more than three miles; but that is a road no stranger could find, being through woods and over commons, and by the high road it is six or more.

'And a nasty, onconvenient place when you get there,' continues his informant. 'The baker don't call more nor twice a week, or the butcher nor once; and everything else you must send for fra' Bromley.'

This dreadful prospect decides our hero; tired, hot, and hungry, he retraces his steps. We will not attempt to describe his feelings: those who have suffered likewise can realize them. But one more incident, and his cup was full.

As he approached the station his eyes fell upon a most attractive-looking abode, of modest proportions, it is true, but shaded by trees and buried in flowers, conveying at once the impression of coolness, airiness, and cheerfulness with retirement. His heart beat high as he noticed the ticket announcing 'Apartments to let,' and rang the bell in consequence. 'The very place!' thought he, as he entered the pretty garden. 'How came I to miss it on my way to that infernal farm?'

A gentleman came out as he went in. The interior justified his expectations: it was fresh, clean, prettily furnished—exactly what he wanted. The owners had but recently come, they were anxious to let, so the terms they asked were moderate—but there was a bedroom short. By no contrivance in the world could two nurses and three children be got into the one small room proposed for them.

'Are you sure you have nothing else? Can't you spare a room yourselves?' he inquired, seeing the woman of the house look vexed, and as unwilling to give up the negotiation as he himself was. 'What have you here?' he exclaimed, opening a door near him, and discovering a spacious bedroom he had not seen before. 'Why cannot I have this?'

'Oh! I'm so sorry; but we have just let that; the gentleman went out as you came in.'

'But can't you get off? Won't he give it up?'

'No! I am sure he won't, for he is an artist come to paint the neighbourhood, and he has taken it for six months, and is to board with us. We didn't wish to let the room to him,' continued the woman, hurriedly, seeing her auditor's dreadful looks of despair, 'but he gave us an hour to think about it, that there might be no going back, he said. He came down by the same train you did, sir. Oh! if you had only come here first you should have had all the house!'

This announcement that he had lost this desirable place by his own blind hurry was too much for our friend; he seized his hat, rushed out of the house, just caught the train to London Bridge, rushed frantically down the steps, and just caught the boat ere it pushed off.

The heat and fatigue he had undergone produced exhaustion, the worry and disappointment fevered his blood, the foul smell of the water finished the business by causing excessive nausea; so on reaching home he had only strength to stagger up to his bed-room and stretch himself upon his bed in a sort of faint, to the excessive alarm of his Julia, who administered brandy, and then sent for the doctor, who, after three days of attendance, declared he had warded off an attack of low fever, and now the sooner 'his patient left town the better.' These words fell like a heavy weight on the poor man's heart, but his courageous wife (had she not married on 500*l.* a year?) replied, 'Certainly; we will go to-morrow.' And forthwith, after a profound study of the map of England, she discovered, within

thirty miles of London, three country towns that were as yet unvisited by a railroad. She selected one: it happened to be Sevenoaks. Arguing that there must be either lodgings, or houses, or inns for forlorn summer pilgrims, probably less in request for there being no railroad, than elsewhere, she packed up only what, as she told her husband, was strictly necessary, and was therefore contained in seven large trunks of modern dimensions. She announced her intention of proceeding thither the next day with him, leaving children and servants to follow after, fully determined to be provided with accommodation for their reception by the time they should arrive.

This bold course of conduct met with the reward it deserved. They found their summer quarters there; and in the delicious shades of Knoll, Benedict forgot all, even the luggage—all but the pure happiness of wandering through the woods and glades of that delightful country with one he loved, and seeing the rosy hues of health revisit the pale cheeks of his little children.

'All's well that ends well.' And following Julia's example, there is no better plan than for those in search of country or seaside quarters to go down to the place itself at once, and secure the best thing vacant; if inconvenient, or too expensive, it may be endured for a week, and during that time something more suitable may be found; for, unless previously acquainted with a locality, writing is of little service.

One reason for the steady popularity of Brighton is, that the great demand for accommodation having been met by increasing building, those who are disappointed of quarters elsewhere, or those obliged to make a move suddenly, have a certainty of finding at all times and all seasons something to suit their requirements there—small rooms and moderate, large rooms and dear, whole houses or half, near the sea or far away. In winter its keen air is tempered by its brilliant sun, in summer its heat and glare modified by its fresh breezes, and the lightness of the atmosphere is peculiarly reviving after the heavy warmth of London in July and August; and thus, despite its expense, Brighton retains its prominent position amongst the watering-places frequented by London society. Unfurnished houses are, perhaps, on the whole, not more expensive than at many other places, and every gradation of size and rent may be found there; neither are furnished houses or apartments in the winter season much, if anything, above the same kind of accommodation at St. Leonard's, Scarborough, and Dover during their best seasons. These are the conveniences of Brighton, and few other watering-places can offer them. Let us take a hasty glance of those nearest the metropolis, and see what they do towards accommodating the population ejected by London in August and September, and which endeavours, if possible, to refresh itself within two or three hours' reach of the great Babylon.

We do not so much allude to the very wealthy or to those who, taking their establishments with them, live much the same life in a house in the country or by the sea, as in town. They have perhaps less difficulty in procuring summer quarters than would be supposed. With them it is a question of price only; the demand for detached country-houses with grounds, &c., being nothing compared to the demand for a few weeks' lodging in a pure air by those who intend to leave their household comforts or cares, whichever they may be, behind them.

It has been remarked that if all the landed gentry owning residences in London, and all the people deriving incomes from hereditary property, stood closely packed together, they would not do much more than fill two or three of the new squares occupied by people who derive their incomes from trade or business. The labyrinths of streets and terraces that perplex the old Londoner about Tyburnia, Belgravia, Kensington, and Kilburn, are peopled by those who have been the architects of their own fortunes, or, at most, inherited a business from their fathers.

Every appliance of luxury and comfort is theirs. The only thing they cannot afford is to be long absent, or very far away from the mine out of which they dig their wealth. But the holiday, short as it is, must be had at any price; and as every one takes it about the same time, it follows that much inconvenient crowding, and much increase in prices in places near London, is the result; and the more circumscribed professional man, or the younger son, finds it difficult to give his young family a change when a long expensive journey is out of the question. Let us consider his case. Where shall he go? The river is convenient, and time in the transit is of no importance to him. Southend, Gravesend, and Margate he considers as resigned to the London tradesman. Ramsgate? Could he be there in June he might enjoy the fine clear air, the delightful sea view, and the good bathing, from rooms facing the sea, at three guineas a week (nay, sometimes lower) and upwards. But it is late in July, and everything desirable is taken; far from the sea a few expensive lodgings may, perhaps, be had, but there is nothing in Ramsgate to compensate for the loss of the sea view. An ugly country, hot, bare, dusty, dangerous cliffs for children, crowded streets, still more crowded sands.

Broadstairs? A quiet place, with little external pretension; but the houses are so small that if his family is numerous he is driven to take an entire one, which involves, of course, servants and trouble. If not blessed with olive branches, he may be accommodated with nice pleasant rooms at a guinea or two less per week than in a larger place. But Broadstairs, it must be confessed, is not an interesting place; inland the country does not attract; there is Ramsgate and Margate on either side, but the walks along the cliffs, pleasant in the evening, are hot and glaring by day. The bathing is indifferent: at high tide the water is apt to be muddy, and the sands, always circumscribed, are then so much contracted that for those who have no children of their own for whose especial enjoyment they can consent to any annoyance, they become disagreeably crowded and noisy. The class of people who frequent Broadstairs, however, are (to use a vulgar expression) 'eminently genteel;' and the consciousness of being select is a great comfort to an Englishman, even when such trifling incidents occur as no fresh butter, or some other needful provision, being forthcoming for his late dinner or early supper, and he is quietly told there is none to be had in the town. The fact is, that poor little Broadstairs comes badly off between these two monster consumers, Margate and Ramsgate. Living is consequently dear, without being especially good; and many a family has found it cheaper to pay six guineas a week for a lodging at Dover than four at Broadstairs.

Not so at another equally quiet, but far more attractive place to those who like a little rural scenery, namely, Walmer. Its proximity to Deal, of which, indeed, it may be said to form a part, gives it the advantage of a town whilst enjoying the retirement of the country.

The village of Upper Walmer, about a mile from the sea, is well wooded, stands high, and contains many charming villas, private residences, and a few good lodgings, delightful quarters for those who have a carriage; for those who have not, the beach, with its row of pretty villas in gardens, is more attractive. The long flat extent of shingle has, it is true, no beauty in itself, but the sea at full tide is clear and deep. One can sit close to it, and children find almost as much amusement in playing with the many-coloured stones as in digging in the sands. Between the round tower of Walmer Castle, where the Duke breathed his last, on the right hand, and Deal's sister building on the left, the eye may range and count hundreds of vessels of different sizes, from the tiny pleasure-boat to the eighty-gun frigate, anchored in the Downs.

If the visitor is disappointed of accommodation here, he can drive back to the other side of Deal, and perhaps find it in the new terrace called Sandown, not far from the castle of that name, familiar to those

who have read Mrs. Hutchinson's Memoirs, as having been many months her husband's prison. The sea is fast wearing away the outer walls of this once strong fortress, and at low water the large fallen masses of stone can be seen bedded in the sand, which we meet with again here. A high belt of shingle separates it and the sea from a sort of common formed by sand-hills, covered with herbaceous plants, grass, and wild flowers, the delight of the children of Deal. They come here and dig in sand-pits whilst their parents or nurses sit on the shingle at high tide, at the very edge of the sea, as it were—getting thus nearer to water than it seems possible to do at any other place, even at Walmer, without wet feet. If Deal itself had only better accommodation it would be a popular place, more so than Walmer; for the barracks and soldiers there are a far greater objection than the brave honest boatmen and fishermen of Deal. Upper Deal, with the parish church, is, like Upper Walmer, a mile and a half away from the sea. Lower Deal consists of two long streets, running parallel to each other, connected by smaller ones at right angles.

The Esplanade, a small part of Beach Street, is occupied by shops, above which are furnished apartments. They are small and not over good, but to be opposite the sea is a necessity at Deal, to watch the busy life and movement on the water in wet weather or fine, the vessels arriving or departing from the Downs, the steamers that pass, the busy little tugs that come and go, the boats plying to and from the ships; otherwise at the back of the town somewhat better accommodation is to be had at prices from two to five guineas a week, seldom more.

Deal is a homely, not a vulgar place. The magnificent toilets of Margate are not seen here; her *habitués* are of the dowdy school decidedly, preferring the substantial comforts they meet with to outside show, and enjoying, with an appetite given by the bracing air, the good things with which no watering-place is better supplied. A market is created by the demand from the ships touching here, quite independent of summer visitors; there is no failure, consequently, in the supplies, and the long, quaint, old-fashioned street has, despite the humble exterior of many of its shops, a lively, thriving air. The inhabitants seem too busy to think of modernizing their dwellings, and find the more solid advantages they can offer appreciated by the old-fashioned quiet tradespeople, who chiefly make it their summer quarters.

It has, like Walmer, its objects of interest for drives and excursions. The railway takes those who have an antiquarian taste to Sandwich, that dull but little altered and ancient town, still surrounded by its moat, now turfed over and planted, with its town gates and old houses, in one of which Queen Elizabeth was lodged; its custom-house when a port; its leper-house; and last, not least, within a pleasant walk, the remains of the old Roman station of Richborough. Then the drive to Dover is delightful. Dover, one of the most interesting of our near seaside resorts, with its recollections of the past, its evidences of present advancement, in its wondrous harbour and pier now constructing—a Cyclopean labour, costing a Cyclopean price—its fortifications, its railroads, its busy life, and natural beauties.

There is perhaps no place where in the winter one may be more moderately or comfortably lodged, no place where in the summer, or rather autumn season one may pay so dear, or be more uncomfortable.

The accommodation, owing to its position between two hills, and the military works occupying all available building space, is limited; the present hotels can do little more than lodge the travellers to and from the Continent, so that every house is arranged to hold two and even three families. The proprietors find short lets under this system answer better than letting the whole house; and as visitors in the summer do not seem to remain much beyond a month or six weeks at a time, small houses might not answer even if there were many to be met with. The houses are good, well furnished,

and the attendance wonderful, when one reflects that two maidservants often perform their multifarious duties for three families at once,—a party in the dining-room paying four guineas a week; a party in the drawing-room giving eight; and a truly unfortunate family up stairs paying two or three guineas a week —unfortunate, because their wants and necessities come nowhere in the domestic arrangements. They must make their dinner hours suit the views of the drawing and dining-room floor, and accept the bedrooms rejected by them.

The principle, however, upon which the Dover landlords proceed, when apportioning their sleeping apartments, is that of mixing up their various inmates together as much as possible, so that it is impossible for the most retiring and reserved of his or her sex to avoid constant rencontres with their fellow-lodgers. To the family in the dining-room is given a bedroom adjoining; sometimes one on the drawing-room floor, a third above, whilst the maid or man is stowed away in an attic. The party in the drawing-room are disposed of in the same divided fashion, and the occupants of the sitting-room upstairs may, if very fortunate, as in some of the larger houses in Waterloo Crescent, get a slip of a room adjoining, curtailed from their sitting-room, the rest of the bedrooms being in the attics. It does not seem to occur to the owners, that many a person would pay as good a price almost for his sitting-room upstairs, as for one below, if all the bedrooms on the same floor were given up to him with it; whilst the family in the drawing-room, if accommodated with the whole of the extra floor, would be so placed together, that they would gladly resign the larger rooms below. No! to make their lodgers as much acquainted with each other's habits, tempers, hours, &c., seems to be, in the summer, their aim; in the winter they are more reasonable. Fancy the feelings of the amiable and modest Miss Singles, sisters of a certain age who last year with their maid occupied two or three rooms in a spacious house in ——. A large family were in possession of the drawing-rooms, under the charge of a mother, governess, and two nurses. 'Where they all sleep,' observed Miss Amelia Jane, 'I dare not inquire! it is wonderful they like such crowding, as Susan tells me they have a fine place of their own in Sussex, and, what is more extraordinary, the gentleman who is engaged to the eldest daughter is coming to-day.'

'Well, my dear,' replied her sister, 'that is their business, not ours; it cannot affect us who they have, or have not, to visit them.'

But Miss Single soon found that it did affect her in some degree. The young gentleman and lady in question, desirous, perhaps, of a little private conversation away from papa and mamma, governess and sisters, resorted to the landing outside the drawing-room as the most convenient place for the same. More than once it occurred to the Miss Singles to interrupt this interesting *tête-à-tête* on their return home from their evening walk. At first the sisters felt for the young people whom they thus unavoidably disturbed; at last they felt for themselves, when they saw that these *promessi sposi* were as unabashed by their momentary presence, as if they had been blind and deaf; and when they transferred their meeting-place to the landing outside Miss Single's sitting-room, and kept Miss Amelia Jane quite a prisoner one evening, she not knowing what she might witness if she ventured out, Miss Single was forced to allow that it did signify something, whether the inmates of the house were people of gentlemanlike feeling or not; and that it made all the difference in the world in these warren-like habitations whether they showed due respect to the feelings of others, or were utterly careless about being observed or observing!

Again, Mrs. Plantagenet Price, do what she would, could not prevent her son and heir from making acquaintance with those good-natured but vulgar Browns in dining-rooms. They met on the stairs, and this sensible child, aged three, finding the mount up fatiguing, invariably

requested Miss Brown to carry him up, which she invariably did—no small exertion in hot weather, and for which Mrs. Plantagenet P. could not avoid thanking her. This led to bowing when they met; 'And what would have followed had I not been ordered to Homburg for my health, I cannot say,' observed Mrs. Price to a friend.

But nonsense apart, the objections that apply to two or more families in a house at any place, seem aggravated at Dover; for, restricted in its walks, people are perpetually meeting each other, and constitute a considerable drawback to this pleasant place, where something is always going on to amuse and interest the visitor. Folkestone, within half an hour by rail, has nothing but its more bracing air to recommend it above Dover. Sandgate, adjoining it, is a pretty quiet little place, which after having been at the height of favour at one time, like Eastbourne, suddenly lost its popularity, owing to a visitation by fever, and has never quite regained the same position, although the cause has long since been removed. Hastings and St. Leonard's have been too fully described in this magazine to make it necessary for us to do more than mention them now; but with all these—with Bognor, quiet, healthy, cheap, and dull; and Worthing, a nice place now it has been well drained, for those who like a mild air, with fine sands, a pretty country, charming drives, and a house or lodgings moderate and good—with all these, one would think there was choice enough for the Londoner near home. Yet everyone of these places is full to overflowing. Even Harwich and the still unfinished Dovercourt; quiet little Walton-on-the-Naze, with its golden-coloured sands; ugly, bracing Aldborough, enjoying the roll and swell of the German Ocean; even the more distant Lowestoft may be considered as near enough for the Londoner's summer quarters, and are literally taken possession of by him at certain seasons.

Those, however, who can go to a distance, and who wish to avoid the high prices, and close packing of watering-places near London, may, in these days of railroads, be transported to many a pleasant spot east, south, or west. Such places as Scarborough or Blackpool are, of course, as dear and as frequented as Brighton; the large northern towns send forth their hundreds and thousands to them; but they do not so entirely fill up the smaller places as the population of the metropolis does in Kent and Sussex. The races, regattas, and such watering-place amusements have so much attraction for them, that they care less for the quieter Gilsland, Filey, or Cromer, and thus leave some room for the tired-out Londoner who wants little more than rest and fresh air.

What charming summer quarters, too, on the north coast of Devon, or in Wales—preserved by their very remoteness from being vulgarized, over built, or over frequented! Certainly 285 miles is a long distance to go for a few weeks, and 2*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.* a long fare to pay for more than two people; but if these two considerations can be made light of, then, dear reader, go to Tenby—not, of course, if you want German bands, and promenades, or to read the last new novel in your last new costume, but if you love nature, and simple, kindly people, a delicious air and climate at once mild and bracing, a bright-looking little place, clean, inviting, and, with all, moderate as yet in expense, with a fine expanse of sand, and yet a bold rugged outline of rocky cliffs rich in the loveliest colouring that Nature can paint her rocks in, and rich, too, in those wondrous productions that delight the naturalists and excite the interest of the most ordinary observer—if you want all this, we repeat, go to Tenby. The length of the journey from London is a drawback, we must allow; but the latter part of it is full of interest or beauty from the moment you leave grim old Chepstow to the moment the broad waters of Milford Haven are reached. Old castles, ruins, mountains, towns are passed, and more than once glimpses of the ocean itself vary the scene, till you are cheated into forgetting the hours as they come and go, and make up your mind not

to shorten the railroad journey by stopping at Narberth Road Station, and thence to Tenby; but to proceed to Milford—the better plan—as the drive is shorter, over a good road and more interesting country. This may involve sleeping at Milford; but then if time allows next day, the Pembroke Docks can be visited; if not, a tiny steamer ferries you across the haven to Pater, rather a miserable-looking place, where the landlord of the good hotel at Milford has ordered you a carriage for Tenby. In a very short time after your arrival there, you may have walked all over the town, decided which situation you prefer, even seen and taken your rooms; or arranged to remain at one of the good hotels, which you can do without being ruined.

Tenby has no architectural beauty to boast of; but several good houses have been built within the last few years, and many comfortable lodgings are to be had, according to the accommodation required, at prices ranging from thirty shillings a week to three and four guineas. Provisions are good and moderate, fish abundant, the bathing good. One can have a sheltered walk on the north sands when a south-west gale prevails, or a pleasant, sunny stroll on the south sands in those early months when the sun has hardly warmed the sea breezes to their summer heat. Charming, too, are the views from one's window of the sunny bay, the ruined castle on the height, the rocky isle beyond; and charming, too, the walks inland, over heathery and moss-grown moors to an old Norman castle, or ancient church, or rude cross, or still ruder habitation of some ancient Briton, which the uninitiated mistake for a heap of stones.

Those who love such expeditions, such objects for a long walk, may add that pleasure to the other charms of seaside life at Tenby, and will find their paths, too, strewn with flowers: for wild roses in some places carpet the ground, and masses of bright colour seen on some distant cliff will be found, on approaching, to be only another of Flora's gay mantles spread out to delight one.

'But oh! the long, expensive journey!' sighed Julia to Benedict. 'We shall never be able to go to Tenby now, for, with the nurses, we are seven——'

'Never mind, my love,' responds Benedict, bravely (before his hunting-season begins); 'think of all the places near London, to which you have never been! There is Richmond, Barnes, or Putney.'

'Suburban,' retorts Julia.

'But pretty.'

'And dear.'

'Surbiton?'

'A town.'

'Well, Esher?'

'Delicious! but nothing to be had there, or at Hampton Court, beyond a house or two; and the hotels, as you know——'

'Then take another line. Bromley,—Blackheath?'

'Too near London.'

'Reigate?'

Julia paused. She once spent some pleasant days at the capital inn, the 'White Hart,' at Reigate. Villas and houses of every kind have since sprung up there, with marvellous rapidity, but increase of building has brought increased prices. Reigate is a dear place, both in living and rent: it is becoming the permanent residence of many City men; and thus the lovely country, and healthful air of the hills and commons around, are difficult now to be had for such as would enjoy them in the summer months only.

Farther on there is Betchworth, half-way to Dorking, and pretty little Brockham Green, where two or three small houses are sometimes to be met with; and then Betchworth Park, with its magnificent beeches—studies for artists; and here, in the very park itself, are two houses, not far from the ruins of the old mansion, that can offer very fair quarters, for those who want a shady, cool retreat in July or August. As we go on to Dorking, both in and all round the town one can discover apartments to let—none of them remarkably good, and dear at two guineas a week: three, and four, and five being the price often in summer; but gladly occu-

pied by those who in fine weather do little more than sleep in them. So varied are Nature's charms here, that visitors spend their lives in the open air. If lodged in, or very near Dorking, there are walks and drives in every direction. You can mount the steep hill to Denbies, past the princely mansion built by Mr. Cubitt, and emerge on the wild and picturesque common of Ranmore. A walk over this heath, through a wood, past Sir Walter Farquhar's charming place, brings you to Great Bookham—high ground, from which fine views over Surrey may be had. From Bookham it is not far to one of the most beautiful spots in England —Norbury Park. Here the eye, enchanted with the woodland scenery, the variety of foliage around, wanders, delighted, to the happy-looking village of Mickleham, below; but the stranger need not linger there, for, unless at the nice clean little inn, or in some private house that may chance to be to let, he will find no quarters; but as he takes the high road again to Dorking, he can explore Westhumble on his right, not far from Camilla Cottage, Madame D'Arblay's loved retreat; or inquire at the pretty little inn, at the foot of Box Hill, just where the bridge crosses that odd little river the Mole.

On the Holmwood Common, a mile or two on the other side of Dorking, on the Horsham road, he can have a greater choice. There are a few good houses, several small ones, scattered over the common, and plenty of indifferent apartments around it. The country is less attractive, but being more open is, perhaps, healthier; and to compensate for the woods of Norbury, the beeches of Betchworth, or green slopes of Box Hill, you have charming bits of broken ground, distant views of Leith Hill, as a feature in your landscape. In fine weather the air on the common is delicious. It is a safe and happy playground for children; but for those who have no carriage of their own with them, it has inconveniences in being so far from the town. You are then dependent on the tradespeople of Dorking for your supplies, your newspaper, your letters. If they fail you, there is little or no resource in the neighbourhood: the farms around may supply butter, milk, eggs, but the bread and meat must come from the town. Nevertheless, in spite of drawbacks, these little abodes are generally well filled.

Tired of seaside lodgings, small country-houses, or expensive hotels, hundreds of people go abroad. In the character of travellers, we have nothing to do with them. But, as brief sojourners in summer quarters, we may glance slightly at the difficulties they have to encounter. The larger towns in Brittany and Normandy, as well as those on the coast of France, are so much frequented by the English, that English prices as well as English habits have crept in; and although the old difficulties about accommodation may no longer exist, the newer one as to expense does. Boulogne, Dieppe, or Havre, are as dear and crowded as our own coast towns; but let those who hope by going to an unfrequented place to escape these objections, understand what they undertake when they start with a family on such an expedition.

In the first place, it is rare, except in Anglicised towns, to find any apartment let by the week,—by the month, perhaps; but more generally a sum is asked for the season: '*La belle saison*,' as the French term that undefined period, which may mean six weeks or six months.

In some of the pretty regions round Paris, Meudon, Enghien, Montmorençi, Andilly, a villa could be had, a few years ago, for a thousand francs (40*l.*), or fifteen hundred francs (60*l.*) for the summer, or the year. These prices, cheap enough for the year, or six months, are dear if the house is only required for a few weeks; and few people like to bind themselves, nor would it be prudent to do so, for longer, in a strange place. At Versailles, and St. Germains, and places of that kind, apartments by the month are to be had; but even here, linen, plate, knives, and brushes must be found by the lodger, who, not having encumbered himself, perhaps, with all these extras, must hire them, at much expense.

These are the difficulties at places where plenty of accommodation is to be found. They are, of course, not insurmountable; but in going to an unfrequented place, you may find yourself compelled to choose between remaining at an hotel, leaving the place again, or at best taking an unfurnished house, and hiring furniture for a few months,—a plan more often adopted and more easily managed abroad than at home.

'Let us go to a French watering-place!' said a rash family, one day.

'Well, then, where shall it be? Dieppe is dear; Boulogne, dangerous from scarlet-fever, and Calais is dirty. Try Dunkirk.'

'Dunkirk une très belle ville,' said M. le Maistre, their French master, encouragingly; 'but more Flemish than French.'

To Dunkirk they went, *viâ* Mouscron, passing the (according to French authorities) magnificent mountain of Cassel, and seeming to be in a land of endless canals and poplar-trees.

They alighted at the excellent 'Hôtel de Flandres,' now no longer existing, and their party of twelve, including servants, were to be lodged, fed, and lighted for five francs a-head.

The first glance at this clean, well-built town, with its large houses, and lively streets busy with the life of a commercial town, not a watering-place, was reassuring; but its distance from the sea was dispiriting. Here and there 'Appartements garnis à louer' met their eyes; but persuaded of the existence of a terrace, English fashion, near the sea, they wended their way thither. Like the proud young porter, in the ballad of 'Lord Bateman'—

> 'Away and away went those ladies,
> Away and away went they,'

down to the quay, over the most agonizing stones, under one archway, over one drawbridge, then another archway, then another bridge—for Dunkirk is a fortified town—and miles on, it seemed to them, by the long sea canal, to find themselves, at last, arrived at a lighthouse, a small restauration for eating oysters, and a solitary house, which proved to be the 'Etablissement des Bains.' It contained an elegant reading-room, it is true, and there were plenty of bathing-machines on the splendid sands, over which blows the finest air in the world; but as a party of twelve could not live in a reading-room, they retraced their steps, and sought out the houses they had seen ticketed; but, alas! these tickets were perennial announcements, as far as present time was concerned, a lie. Nothing to be let, for months to come. In vain they walked round the handsome market-place, and surveyed Jean Bart's statue; in vain they ordered a carriage, and, to the surprise of the inhabitants, drove about, in a machine of the age of Queen Anne, with a pair of Flemish cart horses, as steeds; in vain they strove to resign themselves to the bustle and noise of the hotel: to take an unfurnished house for three months, and allow the enterprising upholsterer M. Boutel to furnish it, or to leave, were their alternatives. They chose the former. Boutel was summoned to a consultation,—requested to give a list; but overwhelmed at the requirements of this '*nombreuse famille*,' he could never get beyond the chimney ornaments: '*une pendule, deux flambeaux, deux*'—something else; but whilst thus engaged with some members of the family, another rushed in, exclaiming, 'We've found a house, and taken it—so good bye, M. Boutel!'

'Well, let us be thankful!' replied the rest, as they hurried to take possession of their cool, airy abode—literally the only vacant one in the town, and make acquaintance with the lively Flemish cook, whose husband was gone to the cod-fishery off Iceland, and who soon won their good opinion by her excellent cooking of the vegetables, especially potatoes, for which Dunkirk is famous. Certainly, its vegetables and pastry compensate for much. '*N'est ce pas?*' as the Dunkerquoise invariably asks.

This is a specimen of the risks that large families would be wise not to incur. Amongst French towns, we may mention Avranches, in Normandy, and Dinan, in Brittany, as pleasant summer quarters for those

who like to combine the advantages of education with change of scene. Masters, at both places, are good, as well as moderate; the country about both, very pretty—for France, remarkably so; and the cost of living, and house rent, is moderate enough to compensate for the length of the journey. Amongst smaller French watering-places, Tréport is one of the nicest. The row of pretty-looking houses, with their gay verandahs, opposite the sea, remind one of an English town. The line of coast is bold and picturesque; there are fair sands, charming country walks and drives to the town, and Château d'Eu, in its immediate vicinity, and more distant excursions, as to St. Valéry-sur-Somme, Dieppe, &c. Last, but not least, although lively as a French town must ever be during the season, it is always respectable, and the French families who frequent it are inclined to be sociable: the English, at present, have not overrun the place, to their exclusion, as at Boulogne. House rent is, however, dear at Tréport, and the French engage the best quarters, months before the season begins.

If the custom we have alluded to in France of having a ticket always displayed on a furnished house, whether vacant or not, be inconvenient, the German plan of having none, or some ill-written hieroglyphic at the corner of a street, where one would never dream of looking for it, is worse. The only way to proceed, therefore, in the Vaterland, is to knock boldly at the door of any house you fancy, and inquire for quarters. Little as the Englishman may like such a proceeding, he need not be afraid of offending, by so doing, in any recognized place of resort. Having learnt this lesson, his next experience will be that a German requires time to negotiate. First, he must have till *Uebermorgen* (the day after to-morrow) to make up his mind; then *Uebermorgen* to consult his wife; then till *Uebermorgen* to settle terms, and so on, till sometimes days, weeks, nay even months elapse, and the patient Englishman is fairly beat. Having mastered this fact, he is no longer surprised at the Germans engaging their summer quarters a year beforehand. This is possible in Germany; one lives so slow there, events don't seem to come tumbling in, in the harassing, upsetting way they do in dear old England.

Of course, rather more caution is requisite in unfrequented places, and a little local information is easily obtained, and then such mistakes as the following need not occur:—An English family, pleased with the scenery around a certain bright-looking little Austrian town, conceived the idea of spending part of the summer there, and as the first step towards accomplishing their wish, boldly proceeded to the handsomest-looking house in the neighbourhood, and inquired whether it, or any part of it, was to be let. They were scarcely surprised when they were told perhaps—it might be—by an individual who looked very much like a respectable English butler, and who offered to show them over the house. The unusual comfort, nay even, elegance of the interior, puzzled them—the bed-rooms, too, had more the air of those in an English country-house, with their baths, and other appliances, than the meagre fittings of a German sleeping-room. And when their guide finally showed them into a billiard-room containing a capital table, they expressed their alarm to each other that they had made some mistake, and prudently declined giving their names, in order, as their guide said, that the 'Herr Baron might write to them about terms.' On inquiring in the town, they found this respectable-looking individual, who had so gravely listened to all their remarks, was the Herr Baron himself, a man of fortune, who had married an Englishwoman, and had no more idea of letting his house than the king, but who quietly enjoyed the joke and their bewilderment.

This was not the only trouble these worthy people got into that year. After a long journey in the Tyrol, they came over the Vorarlberg to Lake Constance, a convenient halting-place for the rest of the summer. Despite its large gar-

rison, despite the travellers that pass through it, despite the evidences of care for its well-being in the neat little quay, the well-made, well-kept public walks beside the Lake, with seats placed so as to enjoy the view of the old castle and tower, the lofty Gebhard's Berg, backed by the snow-capped Sentis, and flanked by the rich valley of the Rhine,—despite all this, Bregenz has a dejected air. Nevertheless the travellers fancied the place, and liked the people. They lingered on, negotiating for a little villa by the Lake; but, lest that should fail, advertised in a Swiss paper for summer quarters round the upper end of the Boden See.

They went one day to inquire for answers at the post-office, which were to be addressed to A. B.

The usually polite official surveyed them with severity.

'Yes, gracious ladies, there are letters for you, but I regret to tell you I have been compelled to report you to the police.'

'The Polizei? What have we done?' Mamma, innocent of German, yet caught the word Police.

'You have caused letters under a fictitious name to be addressed to this office, when, according to law, such letters left here should have a person's name and title in full. Did you desire your correspondent only to know you as A. B., the letter should have been directed to your residence. But,' continued he with a reassuring smile, seeing the alarm of his hearers, who, educated in principles of hatred and dread of Austrian tyranny, had visions of prisons and punishment before them, 'I took upon myself to say that, as strangers, you were doubtless ignorant of our regulations. You are to have your letters this time, only do not do it again.'

They were eager to explain, and show him the letters; but he declined politely, having doubtless already read them.

This little alarm, however, and the unpleasant feeling that their names were perhaps in the bad books of the police, decided them not to wait till the owner of the villa could make up his mind, but to close with an active, business-like Swiss, who came over from Rorsbach, to offer a little château on moderate terms, which, in strong contrast to the Germans, he got completely ready for their reception by the day agreed upon, even to having the sheets aired and the beds made up.

Here in a cool and roomy house, situated on the brow of the hill overlooking the Lake, on one side, and the Canton of Appenzell on the other, they spent the rest of the summer. If the country had not the romantic beauty of the Tyrol, or the grandeur of other parts of Switzerland, it was yet varied and attractive enough when combined with the views over the magnificent sheet of water, to make them love these scenes, and linger long amongst them. How bright and lively was the lake on fine days, with its pleasure boats and steamers coming and going from the various little ports of Bavaria, Baden, Austria, or Switzerland! how glorious the sunsets! how exquisite the moonlight nights! How interesting their excursions, their visits to the far-famed Library at St. Gall, to the numerous convents about! How pleasant the being able to receive their travelling friends in the commodious house! How excellent were all the necessaries of life! how abundant the fruit, and how cheap it all was at 5*l.* a month! the price of one week's lodging in *dear* old England. But, lest Julia and Benedict should be tempted, after this description, to rush off to the Boden See, we must confess this was some years ago, before Rorschach's railroad was completed, and probably now, although it might be equally delightful, it might not be found, on economical grounds, quite so desirable as then for Summer Quarters.

LONDON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.

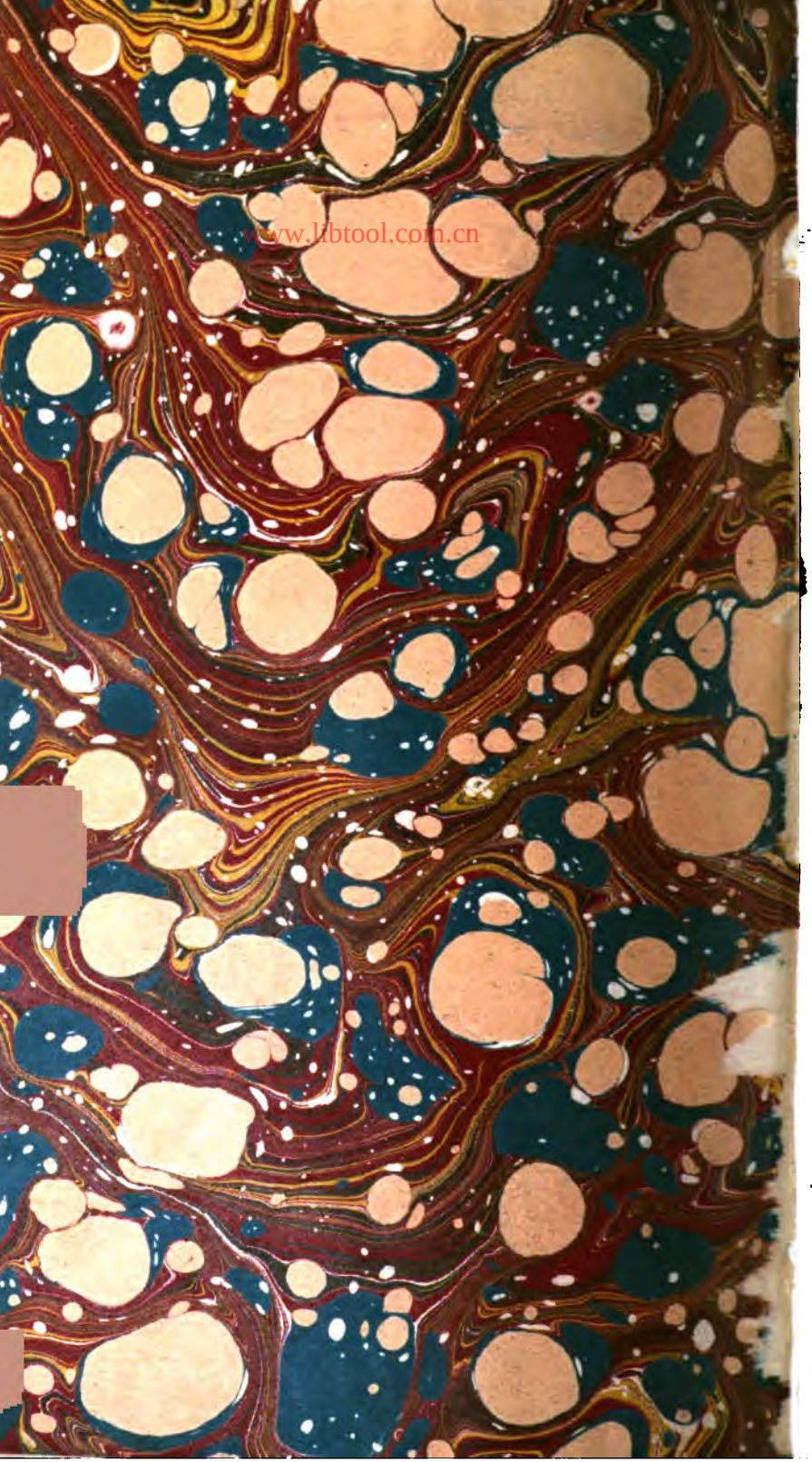
www.libtool.com.cn

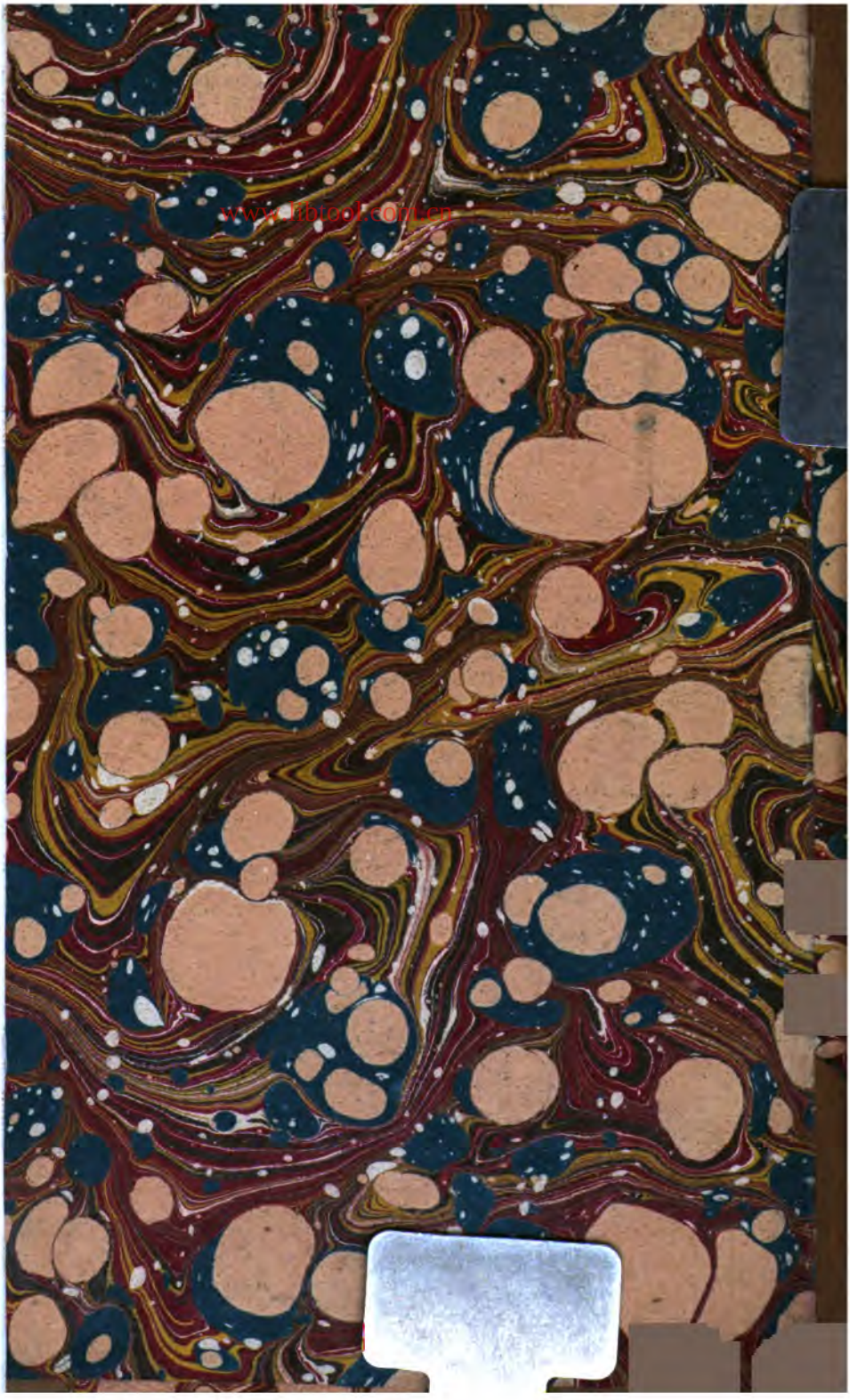
www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn

www.libtool.com.cn


www.libtool.com.cn



www.libtool.com.cn