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THE

GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE

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VOL. IX.

JULY—DECEMBER.

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PREFACE.

SUPPOSING Dr. Johnson had lived during the last three months, I wonder if he would have changed his opinion concerning the effect of atmospheric influences on the mind. Boswell tells us that Mr. Cave's famous contributor treated with contempt the opinion that our mental faculties depend in some degree upon the weather. "He that shall resolutely excite his faculties," said the doctor, "or exert his virtues, will soon make himself superior to the seasons, and may set at defiance the morning mist and the evening damp, the blasts of the east and the clouds of the south." Boswell was a shrewd, thoughtful, and clever man. He made a very sensible reply to the doctor. He might have answered him over dinner at the Mitre, but he waited until his guide, philosopher, and friend was lying under the large blue flagstone in Westminster Abbey. Then he wrote, "Johnson might as well have bid defiance to the ague, the palsy, and other bodily disorders; such boasting of the mind is false elevation." Boswell was right. The depressing influence of the season through which we are now passing may be seen in our literature, journalistic and otherwise. A philosopher might find in the rain an historical text, pregnant with curious speculation. In my memory there has been no such season of moisture as this. The last few months might have almost done duty for a rainy season in Central America. With Johnson's note of defiance in my memory I have fought the rain and mist, day after day, fought the reeking twins with mind and body, but not victoriously. Even the laughing genius of Joy could not have held his own for a week under the dun dripping clouds that have enveloped us. I have seen giants of intellect and physical strength succumb to the melancholy influences of the time, melting under them as completely as Johnson's false philosophy in this case disappears before the practical common sense of Boswell.

Let it not be inferred that the last two or three numbers of my new volume call for excuse on account of the weather. The arrangements of a monthly magazine are not subject to the exigencies of the hour. For my latter numbers, as well as for their predecessors, I claim a position of literary worth and current value. Taking my inspiration direct from the earliest days of SYLVANUS URBAN, I have endeavoured, while modernising the *Gentleman's Magazine*, to maintain for it that special place which it has always held among its contemporaries. Just as I feel sure Cave would have done in connection with such a work as "The Impeachment of the House of Brunswick," I have had Mr. Bradlaugh's views duly considered and exposed. Whether Dr. Johnson would have consented to my predecessor granting to the Republican the privilege of replying I am not prepared to say; but in these days we do not care to ignore discussion upon any public question; and for my own part I hope my respect for "the right of reply" is, of the age, just, and true to that spirit of inquiry which cannot be hurtful to a good cause. In my next volume, therefore, will be found Mr. Charles Bradlaugh's answer to my contributor's strictures in this. Meanwhile let me commend to the excited frequenters of the Hall of Science, Old-street, the remark of Dr. Johnson to Sir Adam Ferguson:—"Why all this childish jealousy of the power of the Crown? The Crown has not power enough. When I say that all Governments are alike, I consider that in no Government can power be abused long—mankind will not bear it. If a Sovereign oppresses his people to a great degree, they will rise and cut off his head. Had not the people of France thought themselves honoured in sharing the brilliant actions of Louis XIV., they would not have endured him; and we may say the same of the King of Prussia's people."

Whatever doubt I may entertain concerning Dr. Johnson's toleration of Mr. Bradlaugh, I have none about his appreciation of "A Hampshire Ghost Story," which it has been my privilege to publish from the original letters and documents referred to in the Life of the Rev. Richard Barham. Not only was Johnson superstitious, but Cave believed in ghosts. What shadows these men are to me, sitting here in the firelight and trying to keep up this good old custom of

Prefaces! "Talking of ghosts," remarks Boswell, "Dr. Johnson said he knew one friend who was an honest man, and a sensible man, who told him he had seen a ghost—old Mr. Edward Cave, the printer at St. John's Gate. He said Mr. Cave did not like to talk of it, and seemed to be in great horror whenever it was mentioned."

In presence of that vast array of volumes which dates back to 1731, I, too, sometimes believe in ghosts. They come and go, the shadowy years; they come and go in the firelight, with whispers of great names, and low moanings of direful deeds. On that very page of history which records the birth of the *Gentleman's Magazine* I read "The Prince Royal of Prussia still kept in prison; Lieutenant Kattie, one of his favourites, beheaded before his face, the Prince being obliged to stand at the prison window and see the execution. A young lady of fifteen whom the Prince seemed to be fond of was whipped through the town, for no other crime than because the Prince liked her." Taking up the long chain, year after year, to forge fresh links in the unbroken line—stretching back to that execution and to the days of Berkeley, Hume, Fielding, Richardson, and to the death of Defoe—I find in it a strange vibration of living history, reviving events that are happily softened and toned down by the soothing influences of Time. Listening for the first sounds of the Christmas bells that

"Answer each other in the mist,"

I seem to join hands with the men who built up the wonderful history that is enshrined in the familiar volumes of my illustrious predecessors. I sit and muse over the shadows, and it occurs to me as an odd coincidence (the only circumstance, by the way, in common with myself and so learned a man) that Dr. Johnson came up to London from the Midland counties to improve this periodical. It was my lot, about one hundred and thirty years afterwards, to make a journey from the same district for a similar purpose. But I initiated and carried out changes which only a young man would have dared to undertake. I had resuscitated Mr. Berrow, the oldest provincial journalist, and made him popular; why should I not be equally successful with SYLVANUS URBAN? Under my advice the father of all magazines was good enough to lay aside his buckled shoes and ruffles, and adapt himself, in dress and manners, to these modern days. The time had arrived when it was absolutely necessary that he should bow to the practical spirit of his founder, and acknowledge the existence of steam engines, telegraphs, and penny newspapers. Representative in the past, he became representative in the present, and thousands of his friends—new and old—have endorsed the wisdom of the change. However much of the *Gentleman's* continued prosperity is derived from a sentimental regard for old associations, it would be affectation to deny that I feel proud as well as grateful in acknowledging the distinguished consideration which has been extended to the work since I had the honour of introducing to the world the present "entirely new series" of the world's oldest magazine.

JOSEPH HATTON.

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THE
GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE
JULY, 1872.

SATANELLA.

A STORY OF PUNCHESTOWN.

BY G. J. WHYTE MELVILLE, AUTHOR OF "THE GLADIATORS," &c.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A HARD MORSEL.

LIKE the feasts of Apicius, that dinner at the London Tavern was protracted to an unconscionable length. Its dishes were rich, various, and indigestible, nothing being served *au naturel* and without "garnish" but the brave simplicity of the guests.

> Wines too there were that would have slain young Ammon;

and old comrades seldom part under such conditions without the consumption of much tobacco in the small hours. Nevertheless, St. Josephs rose next morning fresh and hopeful as a boy. He ordered his horse for an early canter in the park, and shared the Row with divers young ladies of tender years but dauntless courage, who crammed their ponies along at a pace that caused manes and tails and golden hair to float horizontal on the breeze, defiant even of the mounted inspector, whose heart, though professionally intolerant of "furious riding," softened to a pigmy with snub nose and rosy cheeks, on a tiny quadruped as round, as fat, and as saucy-looking as itself.

St. Josephs felt in charity with all mankind, and returned to breakfast so light of heart that he ought to have known, under the invariable law of compensation, some great misfortune was in store.

He had little appetite; happiness, like sorrow, when excessive, never wants to eat; but he dressed himself again with the utmost care, and after exhausting every expedient to while away the dragging hours, started at half-past eleven for the abode of his ladye-love.

Do what he would, it was scarcely twelve when he arrived at her door, where his summons remained so long unanswered that he had leisure to speculate on the possibility of Miss Douglas being indisposed and not yet awake. So he rang next time stealthily, and, as it were, under protest, but in vain.

The General then applied himself to the area-bell. "They'll come directly now," he argued; "they'll think it's the beer!" And sure enough the street-door was quickly unfastened, with more turning of keys, clanking of chains, and withdrawal of bolts than is usual during the middle of the season, in the middle of the day.

A very grimy old woman met him on the threshold, and peering suspiciously out of her keen, deep-set eyes, demanded his business in a hoarse voice, suggestive of gin.

"Miss Douglas baint here," was the startling answer to his inquiries. "She be gone away for good. Hoff this morning, I shouldn't wonder, afore you was out of bed."

"Gone!" he gasped. "This morning! Did she leave no message?"

"None that I knows of. The servants didn't say nothink about it; leastways, not to *me.*"

"But she's coming back?"

"Not likely! The maid *did* suppose as they was a-going for good and all. It's no business of mine. I'm not Miss Douglas's servant. I'm a taking care of the 'ouse for the landlord, I am. It's time I was a-tidying of it up now."

With this broad hint, she proceeded to shut the door in his face, when the General, recovering his presence of mind, made use of the only argument his experience had taught him was universal and conclusive.

Her frown relaxed with the touch of money on her palm. "You're a gentleman, you are," she observed approvingly. "Won't ye step in, sir? It's bad talking with the door in your 'and."

He complied, and sat down on one of the bare hall-chairs, feeling as he had felt once before, when badly hit, in the Punjaub.

She went on with her dusting, talking all the time. "You see they sent round for me first thing in the morning; and I says to Mrs. Jones—that's my landlady, sir"—(dropping a curtsey)—"'Mrs. Jones,' says I, 'whatever they can be up to,' says I, 'making such an early flitting?' says I——"

"But do you mean they've left no letter?" he interrupted, starting from his seat; "no directions—no address? Are all the servants gone? Has Miss Douglas taken much luggage with her? Did she go away in a cab? Oh, woman! woman! tell me all you know! It's a matter of life and death!"

She looked at him askance, privately opining that, early as it was, the gentleman had been drinking, and sympathising with him none the less for that impression.

"They're off," said she stubbornly; "and they've took everythink along with them—bags and boxes, and what not. There was a man round after the keys—not half an hour gone. I should say as they wasn't coming back, none of 'em no more."

This redundancy of negatives forcibly expressed her hopelessness of their return, and the General's good sense told him it was time wasted to cross-question his informant any further. Summoning his energies, he reflected that the post-office would be the best place whereat to prosecute inquiries, so he bade the old woman farewell, with all the fortitude he could muster, leaving her much impressed by his manners, bearing, and profuse liberality.

At the post-office, however (an Italian warehouse round the corner), they knew nothing. The General, at his wits' end, bethought him of those livery-stables where Satanella kept her namesake, the redoubtable black mare.

Here his plight excited the utmost interest and commiseration. "Certainly. The General should have all the assistance in their power. Of course, the lady had forgotten to leave her address, no doubt. Ladies *was* careless, sometimes, in such matters. A *beautiful* 'orse-woman," the livery-stable keeper understood, "an' kep' two remarkably clever ones for her own riding. Had an idea they went away this very morning. Might be mistaken. John could tell. John was the head-ostler. It was John's business to know." So a bell rang, and John, in a long-sleeved waistcoat, sleeking a close-cropped head, appeared forthwith.

"Black mare and chesnut 'oss," said John decidedly. "Gone this morning; groom took with him saddles, clothing, and everything. Paid up to the end of their week. Looked like travelling—had their knee-caps on. Groom a close chap; wouldn't say where. Wish he (John) could find out. Left a setting-muzzle behind, and would like to send it after him."

There seemed nothing to be done here, and the General was fain to retrace his steps, hurt, anxious, angry, and more puzzled when he reached home than he had ever before been in his life.

For an hour or two the whole thing seemed so impossible, and the absurdity of the situation struck him as so ridiculous, that he sat idly in his chair to wait for tidings. In this nineteenth century, he told himself, people could not disappear from the surface of society, and leave no sign. Rather, like the sea-bird diving in the waves, if they go down in one place, they must come up in another. There were no kidnappings now, no sendings off to the Plantations, no forcible abductions of ladies, young or old. Then his heart turned sick, and his blood ran cold, while he recalled more than one instance in his own experience where individuals had suddenly vanished from their homes and never been heard of again.

Stung to action by such thoughts, he collected his ideas to organise a comprehensive system of pursuit, that should embrace inquiries at all the railway-stations, cab-stands, and turnpikes in and about the metropolis, with the assistance of Scotland Yard in the background. Then he remembered how an old brother-officer had told him, only the other day, of a similar search made by himself, and attended with success. So he resolved to consult that comrade without delay. It was now two o'clock. He would find him eating luncheon at his club. In five minutes the General was in a Hansom cab, and in less than ten leaped out on the steps of that military resort.

Had he gone there an hour ago it would have spared him a good deal of mental agitation, though perhaps any amount of anxiety would have been preferable to the dull, sickening resignation which succeeded a blow that could no longer be modified, parried, nor escaped. In after-times the General looked back to those ten minutes in the Hansom cab as the close of an era in his life. Henceforth every object in nature seemed to have lost something of its colouring, and the sun never shone so bright again.

In the hall an obsequious porter handed him a letter. He staggered when he recognised the familiar handwriting on the envelope, and drew his breath hard for the effort before he tore it open.

There were several pages, some of them crossed. He retired to the strangers' room, and sat down to peruse the death-warrant of his happiness.

"You will forgive me," it began, "because you are the kindest, the best, the most generous of men; but I should never forgive myself the blow I feel I am now inflicting, were it not that I regard your pride, your character, your high sense of honour, before your happiness. General, I am unfit to be your wife: not because my antecedents are somewhat obscure—*you* know my history, and that I have no reason to be ashamed of it; not because I undervalue the happiness of so high and enviable a lot—any woman, as I have told you more than once, would be proud of your choice; but because you deserve, and could so well appreciate, the unalloyed affection, the complete devotion, that are not mine to give. *Your* wife should have no thought but for you, no hopes independent of you, no memories in which you do not form a part. She should be wrapped up in your existence, identified with you, body and soul. All this I am *not*. I never have been—I never *can* be now. Had I entertained a lower opinion of your merits, admired and *cared for* you less, I would have kept my promise faithfully, and we might have jogged on like many another couple, comfortably enough. But *you* ought to win more than mere *comfort* in married life. You merit, and would expect, *happiness*. How could I bear to see my hero disappointed? For you are my hero—my beau-ideal of a gentleman—and my standard is a very high one, or you and I had never been so unhappy as I firmly believe we both are at this moment. It is in vain to regret, and murmur, and speculate on what might have been, if everything, including one's own identity, were different. There is but one line to take now, even at the eleventh hour. Some day you will acknowledge that I was right. We must never meet again. I have taken such precautions as can baffle, I do believe, even your energy and resource. You have often said nobody was so determined when I made up my mind. I am resolved that you shall never find out what has become of me; and I entreat you—I adjure you—if you love me—nay, as you love me—not to try! So now, farewell—a long farewell, that it pains me sore to say. I shall never forget you. In all my conflict of feelings, in all my self-reproach and bitter sorrow, when I think of your pain, I cannot bring myself to wish we had never met. I am proud of your notice and your regard—proud to remain under obligations to you—proud to have loved you so far as my false, wicked nature had the power. Even now I can say, though you put me out of your heart, do not let me pass entirely from your memory. Think sometimes, and not unkindly, of your wilful, wayward—

"BLANCHE."

So it was all over.

"It's a good letter," murmured the General; "but I prefer the one Julia wrote to Juan." Then he read it through again, and found, as is usually the case, that the second perusal reversed his impression of the first. Did she *really* mean he was to abstain from all attempt to follow her? He examined the envelope; it bore the stamp of the

General Post Office; the contents certainly afforded him no clue, yet, judging by analogy, he argued that no woman would lay such stress on the precautions she had taken if she did not wish their efficacy to be proved. When he found, however, that nothing short of police detectives and newspaper advertisements would avail him, he took a juster view of her intentions, and in the chivalry of his nature resolved that under this great affliction, as in every other condition of their acquaintance, he would yield implicitly to her wish.

So he went back into the world, grave, kindly, and courteous as before. There were a few more grey hairs in his whiskers, and he avoided ladies' society altogether; otherwise, to the unobservant eye, he was little altered; but a dear old friend whom he had nursed through cholera at Varna, and dragged from under a dead horse at Lucknow, took him into a bay-window of the club library, and thus addressed him—

"My good fellow, you're looking shamefully seedy. Idleness never suited you. Nothing like work to keep old horses sound. Why don't you apply for employment? There's always something to do in the East."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"SEEKING REST AND FINDING NONE."

But great nations do not plunge recklessly into war, nor even do mountain tribes rise suddenly in rebellion, because an elderly gentleman is suffering like some sentimental school-girl from a disappointment of the heart. General St. Josephs extorted, indeed, from a great personage the promise that if anything turned up he would not be forgotten, and was fain to content himself, for the time, with a pledge in which he knew he could place implicit trust. So the weary, hot months dragged on, and he remained in London, solitary, silent, preoccupied, wandering about the scenes of his former happiness like a ghost. He went yachting, indeed, with one friend, and agreed on a pedestrian excursion through Switzerland with another: but the "sad sea waves" were too sad for him to endure, and the energy that should have taken him over a mountain or up a glacier seemed to fail with the purchase of a knapsack and the perusal of a foreign Bradshaw, so the walking tour was abandoned, and the friend rather congratulated himself on escaping such a mournful companion.

When autumn came round with its many temptations to Scotland, where the muir-fowl were crowing about their heathery knolls, and the red-deer sunning their fat backs on the leeward side of the corrie, he did indeed avail himself of certain invitations to the hospitable north; and the General, who could level rifle or fowling-piece, breast a hill, or plunge through a moss with his juniors by twenty years, strove hard in fatigue of body to earn repose for the mind. But he did not stay long; the grand, grave beauty of those silent hills oppressed and tortured him. He pitied the wild old cock, flapping its life out on its own purple heather, fifty yards off, mowed down by his deadly barrel, even as it rose. When he had stalked the "muckle red hart," with antlered front of royalty, and three inches of fat on those portly sides, up the burn, and under the waterfall, and through the huge grey boulders of eternal rock, to sight the noble beast fairly from a windward ambush, and bring it down, pierced through the heart with a long and "kittle" shot, his triumph was all merged in sorrow for the dead monarch lying so calm and stately in the quiet glen, not perhaps without a something of envy, for a creature thus insensible, and at rest for evermore.

The foresters wondered to see him in no way triumphant, and when they heard next morning he was gone, shook their heads, opining that "It was a peety! She was a pratty shot, and a fery tight shentlemans on a hill."

It was *work* the General required, not amusement; so he journeyed sadly back, to await in London the command he hoped would ere long recall him to a profession he had always loved, that seemed now to offer the sympathy and solace of a home.

Sometimes, but this only in moments of which he was ashamed, he would speculate on the possibility of meeting Miss Douglas by accident in the great city, and it soothed him to fancy the explanations that would ensue. He never dreamed of their resuming their old footing; for the General's forbearance hitherto had sprung from the strength, not the weakness, of his character, and the same stubborn gallantry that held his position was available to cover his defeat; but it would be a keen pleasure, he thought, though a sad one, to look in her face just once more. After that he might turn contentedly Eastward, go back into harness, and never come to England again.

In the meantime, the days that dragged so wearily with St. Josephs danced like waves in the sunshine through many of those other lives with which he had been associated in his late history. Amongst all gregarious animals it is the custom for a sick or wounded beast to withdraw from the herd, who in no way concern themselves about its fate, but continue their browsings, baskings, croppings, waterings, and friskings, with a well-bred resignation to another's plight worthy of the human race. If the General's friends and acquaintance asked each other what had become of him, and waited for an answer, they were satisfied with the conventional surmise—

"Gone to Scotland, I fancy. They tell me it's a wonderful year for grouse!"

Mrs. Lushington, yachting at Cowes, and remaining a good deal at anchor, because it was "blowing fresh outside," thought of him perhaps more than anybody else. Not that she felt the least remorseful for the break-up she believed to have originated solely in her own manœuvres. She was persuaded that her information conveyed through the anonymous letter had aroused suspicions which, becoming certainties on inquiry, detached him from Satanella, and completely mistaking his character, considered it impossible but that their dissolution of partnership originated with the gentleman. How the lady fared interested her but little, and in conversation with other dearest friends she usually summed up the fate of this one by explaining—

"It was *impossible* to keep poor Blanche straight. Always excitable, and unlike other people, you know. Latterly, I am afraid, *more* than flighty, my dear, and *more* than odd."

Besides, Mrs. Lushington, as usual, had a great deal of business on hand. For herself and her set Cowes was nothing in the world but London gone down to the sea. Shorter petticoats, and hats instead of bonnets, made the whole difference. There were the same attractions, the same interests, the same intrigues. Even the same bores went to and fro, and bored, as they breathed, more freely in the soft Channel air. Altogether, it was fresher and quieter, but, if possible, stupider than Pall Mall.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Lushington, being in her natural element, exercised her natural functions. She was hard at work, trying to mate Bessie Gordon, nothing loth, with a crafty widower, who seemed as shy of the bait as an old gudgeon under Kew Bridge. She had undertaken, in conspiracy with other frisky matrons, to spoil poor Rosie Barton's game with young Wideacres, the catch of the season; and they liked each other so well that this job alone kept her in constant employment. She had picnics to organise, yachting-parties to arrange, and Frank to keep in good-humour; the latter no easy task, for Cowes bored him extremely, and, to use his own words, "he wished the whole place at the devil!" She felt also vexed and disappointed that the General had withdrawn himself so entirely from the sphere of her attractions, reflecting that she saw a great deal more of him before he was free. Added to her other troubles was the unpardonable defection of Soldier Bill. That volatile Light Dragoon had never been near her since Daisy's marriage—a ceremony in which he took the most lively interest, comporting himself as "best man" with an unparaleled audacity, and a joyous flow of spirits, that possessed, for a gathering composed of lively Hibernians, the greatest attractions. People said, indeed, that Bill had shown himself not entirely unaffected by the charms of a lovely bridesmaid, the eldest of Lady Mary's daughters; and it was impossible to over-estimate the danger of his position under such suggestive circumstances as must arise from a wedding in the house.

Then a grey hair or two had lately shown themselves in her abundant brown locks; while of the people she chose to flirt with, some neglected her society for a cruise, others afforded her more of the excitement produced by rivalry than she relished. None paid her the devoted attention she had learned to consider her due. Altogether, Mrs. Lushington began to find life less *couleur de rose* than she could wish, and to suspect the career she had adopted was not conducive to happiness, or even comfort. Many people make the same discovery when it is too late to abandon the groove in which they have elected to run.

Daisy, in the meantime, true to his expressed intention of turning over a new leaf, found no reason to be dissatisfied with his lot. You might search Ireland through—and it is saying a good deal—without finding a more joyous couple than Captain and Mrs. Walters. The looked-for promotion arrived at last, and the bridegroom had the satisfaction of seeing himself gazetted to a troop on the very morning that provided him with a wife. Old Macormac was pleased, Lady Mary was pleased, everybody was pleased. The Castle blazed with light and revelry, the tenants drank, danced, and shouted. The "boys" burnt the mountain with a score of bonfires, consuming whisky and breaking each other's heads to their own unbounded satisfaction. In short, to use the words of Peter Corrigan, the oldest solvent tenant on the estate, "The masther's wedding was a fool to't! May I never see glory av it wasn't betther divarsion than a wake!"

But Norah's gentle heart, even in her own new-found happiness, had a thought for the beautiful and stately Englishwoman whom, if she somewhat feared her as a rival, she yet loved dearly as a friend.

"What's gone with her, Daisy?" she asked her young husband before they had been married a fortnight. "Sure she would never take up with the nice old gentleman, a general he was, that marked the race-cards for us at Punchestown. Oh, Daisy! how I cried that night, because you didn't win!"

They were walking by the river-side, where they landed the big fish at an early period of their acquaintance, and Norah brought the gaff to bear in more ways than she suspected; where they parted so hopelessly, when, because of his very desolation, the true and generous girl had consented to plight him her troth; and where they had hardly dared to hope they would meet again in such a glow of happiness as shone round them to-day. It was bright spring weather when they wished each other that sorrowful good-bye. Now, the dead leaves were falling thick and fast in the grey autumn gloom. Nevertheless, this was the real vernal season of joy and promise for both those loving hearts.

"What a goose you were to back me!" observed Daisy, with a pressure of the arm that clung so tightly round his own. "It served you right, and, I hope, cured you of betting once for all!"

"That's no answer to my question," persisted Mrs. Walters. "I'm asking you to tell me about my beautiful Blanche Douglas, and why wouldn't the old General marry her if she'd have him."

"That's it, dear," replied her husband; "she *wouldn't* have him! She—she accepted him, I *know*, and then she threw him over."

"What a shame!" exclaimed Norah. "Though, to be sure, he might have been her father." Then a shadow passed over her fair young brow, and she added wistfully, "Ah, Daisy! I'm thinking I know who she wanted all the time."

"Meaning *me?*" said Daisy, with a frank, saucy smile, that brought the mirth back to her face, and the sunshine to her heart.

"Meaning *you*, sir!" she repeated playfully. "But it's very conceited of you to think it, and very wrong to let it out. It's not so wonderful, after all," she added, looking proudly in his handsome young face: "I suppose I'm not the only girl that liked you, dear, by a many. I oughtn't to expect it!"

"The only one that's *landed* the fish!" laughed Daisy, stopping in the most effectual manner a little sigh, with which she was about to conclude her peroration. "You're mistaken about Miss Douglas, though," he added. "I give you my word. She hadn't your good taste, my dear, and didn't *see* it! Look, Norah, there's the very place I left Sullivan's fishing-rod. He'll never get it again, so it's lucky I bought his little brown horse. I wonder who found it. What a day that was! Norah, do you remember?"

"*Remember!*"

So the conversation turned on that most interesting of topics—

themselves, and did not revert to Satanella or her doings. If Norah was satisfied, Daisy felt no wish to pursue the subject. However indiscreet concerning his successes, I think when a man has been refused by another lady, he says nothing about it to his wife.

CHAPTER XXIX.

UNDIVIDED.

The late autumn was merging into early winter, that pleasantest of all seasons for those sportsmen who exult in the stride of a good horse and the stirring music of the hound. Even in Pall Mall true lovers of the chase felt stealing over them the annual epidemic, which winter after winter rages with unabated virulence, incurable by any known remedy. A sufferer—it would be a misnomer to call him a *patient*—from this November malady was gaping at a print-shop window, near the bottom of St. James's Street, wholly engrossed in the performances of a very bright bay horse, with a high-coloured rider, flying an impossible fence, surrounded by happy hunting-grounds, where perspective seemed unknown.

"D'ye think he'll get over, Bill?" said a familiar voice, that could only belong to Daisy Walters, who had stolen unperceived behind his friend.

"Not if the fool on his back can pull him into it," answered the other indignantly. And these comrades, linking arms, turned eastward, in the direction of their club.

"How's the missis?" said Bill, whose boast it was that he never forgot his manners.

"Fit as a fiddle," replied the happy husband. "Had a long letter from Molly this morning. Sent her best love—no, scratched that out, and desired to be kindly remembered to *you*."

Molly, called after Lady Mary, was the eldest, and, in Bill's opinion, the handsomest daughter, so he changed the subject with rather a red face.

"About to-morrow, now," said Bill. "I've got Martingale to do my orderly. Are you game for a day with the stag?"

"Will a duck swim!" was the answer. "Norah is coming too. I shall mount her on Boneen. He's own brother to the little horse that beat us at Punchestown."

"Couldn't do better in that country," asserted his friend. "He'll carry her like a bird, if she'll wake him up a bit, and it's simply *impossible* to get him down. By Jove, Daisy, there's St. Josephs going into the club. How seedy he looks, and how old! Hang me, if I won't offer him a mount to-morrow. I wonder if he'll come."

So this kind-hearted young sportsman, in whose opinion a day's hunting was the panacea for all ills, mental or bodily, followed his senior into the morning-room, and proffered his best horse, with the winning frankness of manner that his friends found it impossible to resist.

"He's good enough to carry the Commander-in-Chief," said Bill. "I've more than I can ride till I get my long leave. I should be *so* proud if you'd have a day on him; and if he makes a mistake, I'll give him to you. There!"

St. Josephs was now on the eve of departure for the employment he had solicited. While his outfit was preparing, the time hung heavy on his hands, and he had done so many kindnesses by this young subaltern that he felt it would be only graceful and friendly to accept a favour in return, so he assented willingly, and Bill's face glowed with pleasure.

"Don't be late," said he. "Nine o'clock train from Euston. Mind you get into the drop-carriage, or they'll take you on to the Shires. I'll join you at Willesden. And if we don't have a real clinker, I'll make a vow never to go hunting again."

Then he departed on certain errands of his own connected with the pugilistic art, and the General reflected sadly how it was a quarter of a century since he used to feel as keen as that reckless, light-hearted boy.

He waited on high authorities at the War Office, dined with a field-marshal, and through a restless night dreamed of Satanella, for the first time since her disappearance.

A foggy November morning, and a lame horse in the cab that took him to Euston Station, did not serve to raise his spirits. But for Bill's anticipations of a "clinker," and the disappointment he knew it would cause that enthusiast, the General might have turned back to spend one more day in vain brooding and regret. Arrived on the platform, however, he got into a large saloon-carriage, according to directions, and found himself at once in the midst of so cheerful a party that he felt it impossible to resist the fun and merriment of the hour.

St. Josephs was too well known in general society not to find acquaintances even here, though he was hardly prepared to meet representatives of so many pursuits and professions, booted and spurred for the chase, and, judging by the ceaseless banter they interchanged,

All determined to ride, each resolved to be first.

Soldiers, sailors, diplomatists, bankers, lawyers, artists, authors, men of pleasure, and men of business, holding daily papers they never looked at, were all talking across each other, and laughing incessantly, while enthroned at one end of the carriage sat the best sportsman and most popular member of the assemblage, whose opinions, like his horses, carried great weight, and were of as unflinching a nature as his riding, so that he was esteemed a sort of president in jack-boots. Opposite him was placed pretty Irish Norah, now Mrs. Walters, intensely excited by her first appearance at what she called "an English hunt," while she imparted to Daisy, in a mellower brogue than usual, very original ideas on things in general, and especially on the country through which they were flying at the rate of forty miles an hour.

"It's like a garden where it's in tillage, and a croquet-lawn where it's in pasture," said Norah, after a gracious recognition of the General, and cordial greeting to Bill, who was bundled in at Willesden, panting, with his spurs in his hand. "Ah! now, Daisy, it's little of the whip poor Boneen will be wanting for easy leaps like them."

"Wait till you get into the Vale," said Daisy; "and whatever you do, let his head alone. Follow me close, and if I'm down, ride over me: it's the custom of the country."

The General smiled.

"I haven't been there for twenty years," said he; "but I can remember in my time we were not very particular. I shall follow my old friend," he added, nodding to the president, whose nether garments were of the strongest and most workmanlike materials; "when a man has no regular hunting things, he wants a leader to turn the thorns, and from all I hear, if I can only stick to mine, I shall be in a very good place."

Everybody agreed to this, scanning the speaker with approving glances the while. St. Josephs, though wearing trousers and a common morning coat, had something in his appearance that denoted the practised horseman, and when he talked of "twenty years ago" his listeners gave him credit for those successes which, in all times, are attributed to the men of the past.

"Mrs. Walters must be a little careful at the doubles," hazarded a quiet good-looking man who had not yet spoken, but whose nature it was to be exceedingly courteous where ladies were concerned. "A wise horse that knows its own rider is everything in the Vale."

Norah looked in the speaker's dark eyes with a quaint smile.

"Ah, then! if the horse wasn't wiser than the rider," said she, "it's not many leaps any of us would take without a fall!" and in the general laughter provoked by this incontestable assertion, a slight jerk announced that their carriage was detached from the train, and that they had arrived.

Though it requires a long time to settle a lady in the saddle for hunting, even when in the regular swing of twice or thrice a week, and though Norah was about to enjoy her first gallop of the season, in a new habit, on a new horse, she and Daisy had ample leisure for a sober ride to the place of meeting, arriving cool and calm, pleased with the weather, the scenery, the company, and, above all, delighted with Boneen.

They were accompanied by the General on a first-class hunter belonging to Bill, and soon overtaken by its owner, who, having lingered behind to jump a four-year-old over a tempting stile for educational purposes, had crushed a new hat, besides daubing his coat, in the process.

"Down already!" said St. Josephs. "What happened to him? What did he do?"

"Rapped very hard," answered Bill; "found his friend at home, and went in without waiting to be announced;" but he patted the young pupil on its neck, and promised to teach it the trade before Christmas, nevertheless. Certainly, if practice makes perfect, no man should have possessed a stud of cleverer fencers than Soldier Bill.

And now, as she reached the summit of a grassy ascent, there broke on Norah's vision so extensive and beautiful a landscape as elicited an exclamation of amazement and delight.

Mile after mile, to the grey horizon, stretched a sweep of smooth wide pastures, intersected by massive hedges, not yet bare of their summer luxuriance, dotted by lofty standard trees, rich in the gaudy hues of autumn, lit up by flashes of a winding stream, that gleamed here and there under the willows with which its banks were fringed. Enclosures varying from fifty to a hundred acres gave promise of as much galloping as the heart of man, or even woman, could desire. And scanning those fences, the Irish lady admitted to herself, though not to her companions, that from a distance they looked as formidable obstacles as any she had confronted in Kildare.

"It's beautiful!" said Norah. "It's made on purpose for a hunt. Look, Daisy, there are the hounds! Oh, the darlings! And little Boneen, he sees them, too!"

Gathered round their huntsman, a wiry, sporting-looking man on a thoroughbred bay horse, they were moving into sight from behind a haystack that stood in a corner of the neighbouring field. Rich in colour, beautiful in shape, and with a family likeness pervading the lot as if they were all one litter, a fox-hunter would have grudged them for the game they were about to pursue—a noble red-deer, in so far tame that he was fed in a paddock, and brought to a condition that could tax the speed and endurance even of this famous pack. The animal had already arrived in a large van on wheels, drawn by a pair of horses, and surrounded by a levee of gaping rustics, whose eagerness and love for the sport reminded Norah of her countrymen on the other side of the Channel.

"Will they let him out here, Daisy?" said she, in accents of trembling excitement. "I wish they'd begin. What are we waiting for?"

"Your patience will not be tried much longer," said the General, lighting a cigar. "Here comes the Master, at a pace that looks as if the mare that landed him the Thousand Guineas, the Oaks, and the St. Leger had been made a cover-hack for the occasion!"

"With the Derby winner of the same year for second horse!" added her husband. "If you want a pilot, Norah, you couldn't do better than stick to *him*, heavy as he is!"

"I mean to follow *you*, sir," was the rejoinder. "If you don't mind, Daisy, maybe I'll be before ye."

Even while she spoke a stir throughout the whole cavalcade, and a smothered shout from the foot-people, announced that the deer had been enlarged.

With a wild leap in the air, as though rejoicing in recovered liberty, the animal started off at speed, but in the least favourable direction it could have taken, heading towards the ascent on the side on which the horsemen and a few carriages were drawn up. Then it slackened its pace to a jerking, springing trot—paused—changed its mind—lowered its head—dashed wildly down the hill, to disappear through a high thick bull-finch, and after a few seconds came again into view, travelling swift and straight across the Vale.

The General smoked quietly, but his eye brightened, and he seemed ten years younger for the sight.

"It's all right now," said he; "the sooner they lay them on the better."

Soldier Bill, drawing his girths, looked up with a beaming smile.

"They say there's a lady, a mysterious unknown, in a thick veil, who beats everybody with these hounds," he observed. "I wonder why she's not out to-day."

"I think she *is*," replied Daisy, shooting a mischievous glance at his wife. "I fancied I caught the flutter of a habit just now behind the haystack. I suppose she's determined to get a good start and cut Norah down!"

Ere the latter could reply, the hounds dashed across the line of the deer. Throwing their tongues in full musical notes, they spread like a fan, with noses in the air; then, stooping to the scent, converged, in one melodious crash and chorus, ere they took to running with a grim, silent determination that denoted the extremity of pace. Every man set his horse going at speed. Nearly a dozen selected their places in the first fence—a formidable bull-finch. The rest, turning rather away from the hounds, thundered wildly down to an open gate.

Amongst those who meant riding straight, it is needless to say, were Mrs. Walters and her three cavaliers. These landed in the second field almost together—Daisy, closely pursued by his wife, stealing through a weak place under a tree; the General sailing fairly over all, and Bill, unable to resist the temptation of a gap, made up with four strong rails, getting to the right side with a scramble that wanted very little of a nasty fall.

The hounds were already a quarter of a mile ahead, with nobody near them but a lady on a black hunter, who was well alongside, going, to all appearance, perfectly at her ease; while her groom, on a chesnut horse, left hopelessly behind, rode in the wake of the General, and wished he was at home.

Daisy, whose steeplechasing experience had taught him never to lose his head, was the only one of our party who did not feel a little bewildered by the pace. Taking in everything at a glance, he observed the black hunter in front sail easily over a fence that few horses would have looked at. There was no mistaking the style and form of the animal. "Of course it is!" he muttered; "Satanella, by all that's inexplicable! We shall not catch them at *this* pace, however!" Then, pulling his horse to let his wife come up, he shouted in her ear, "Norah, that's Miss Douglas!"

Whether she heard him or not, the only answer Mrs. Walters vouchsafed was to lean back in her saddle and give Boneen a refresher with the whip.

Unlike a fox, whose reasons are logical and well considered, a deer will sometimes turn at right angles for no conceivable cause, pursuing the new line with as much speed and decision as the old.

In the present instance the animal, after leaping a high thorn fence with two ditches, broke short off in a lateral direction, under the very shadow of the hedge it had just cleared, and at the pace they

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were going the hounds, as a natural consequence, overran the scent.

Miss Douglas pulled up her horse, and did not interfere. There being, fortunately, no one to assist them, they flung themselves beautifully, swinging back to the line and taking it up again with scarcely the loss of a minute. The President, two fields off, struggling hard to get nearer, was perhaps the only man out who sufficiently appreciated their steadiness. Like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, "he blessed them unaware." Bill, I fear, did the *other* thing, for the fence was so high he never saw them turn, and jumped well into their midst, happily without doing any damage. This slight delay, however, had the effect of bringing Daisy, his wife, Soldier Bill, and the General into the same field with Miss Douglas. She heard the footfall of their horses, looked round, and set the black mare going faster than before. If—as, indeed, seemed probable—she was resolved not to be overtaken, the pack, streaming away at speed once more, served her purpose admirably. No horse alive could catch them; and Satanella herself seemed doing her best to keep on tolerable terms at that terrific pace. The majority of the field had already been hopelessly distanced. The General found the superior animal he rode fail somewhat in the deep holding meadows. Bill was in difficulties, although he had religiously adhered to the shortest way. Even Daisy began to wish for a pull, and only little Boneen, quite thoroughbred, and as good as he was sluggish, kept galloping on, strong and as full of running as at the start. For more than a mile our friends proceeded with but a slight alteration in their relative positions—Satanella, perhaps, gradually leaving her followers, and the hounds drawing away from all five. In this order two or three flying fences were negotiated, and a fair brook cleared. Daisy, looking back in some anxiety, could not but admire the form in which Norah roused and handled Boneen. That good little horse, bred and trained in Ireland, seemed to combine the activity of a cat with the sagacious instincts of a dog. Like all of his blood, he only left off being lazy when his companions began to feel tired; and Mrs. Walters, coming up with her husband, as they rose the hill from the waterside, declared, though he did not hear her, "I could lead the hunt now, Daisy, if you'd let me. Little Boneen's as pleased as Punch! He'd like to pull hard, only he's such a good boy he doesn't know how!"

Bill's horse dropped its hind legs in the brook, and fell, but was soon up again with its rider. The General got over successfully; nevertheless, his weight was beginning to tell, and the ground being now on the ascent, he found himself the last of the five people with the hounds.

At the crest of the hill frowned a black, forbidding-looking bullfinch; on this side a strong rail; on the other, if a horse ever got there, *the uncertainty*, which might or might *not* culminate in a rattling fall. Daisy glanced anxiously to right and left, on his wife's behalf, but there was no forgiveness. They must have it, or go home! Then he watched how the famous black mare would acquit herself a hundred yards ahead of him, and felt little reassurred to detect such a struggle in the air while she topped the fence, as by no means inferred a pleasant landing where she disappeared on its far side.

He wavered, he hesitated, and pulled his horse off for a stride; but Norah's impatient "Ah, Daisy! go on now!" urged him to the attempt, and he *chanced* it, with his heart in his mouth, for her sake, not his own.

Taking fast hold of his horse's head, he got over with a scramble, turning afterwards in the saddle to watch how it fared with his wife and little Boneen. Her subsequent account described the performance better than could any words of mine.

"When I loosed him off at it," said she, "I just touched him on the shoulder with the whip to let him know he wasn't in Kildare. He understood well enough, the little darling! for he pricked his ears, and came back to a slow canter; but I'd like ye to have felt the bound he made when he rose to it! Such a place beyond! 'Twas as thick as a cabbage-garden—dog-roses, honeysuckles, I'm not sure there wasn't cauliflowers, and all, twisted up together to conceal a deep, wide, black-looking hole, like a boreen.* Well, I just felt him give a sort of a kick, while he left the entire perplexity ten feet behind him, and when he landed, as light as a fairy, Daisy, I'm sure I heard him laugh!"

Mrs. Walters, like most of her nation, abounded in enthusiasm. She could not forbear a little cry of delight at the panorama that opened before her, when she had effected the above-mentioned feat. To the very horizon lay stretched a magnificent vale of pasture, brightened by the slanting rays of a November sun. Far ahead, fleeting across the level below, sped a dark object, which she recognised for the deer; a field nearer were the hounds, running their hardest, in a string that showed they too had caught sight of their game. Half-way down the hill she was herself descending the other lady was urging the black mare to headlong speed, very dangerous on such a steep incline. Fifty yards behind Satanella came Daisy, and close on his heels, Norah, wild with delight, feeling a strong inclination to give Boneen his head, and go by them all. The little horse, however, watched his stable-companion narrowly, while his rider's eyes were riveted on the hounds. Suddenly she felt him shorten his stride and stop, with a jerk, that nearly shot her out of the saddle. Glancing at Daisy for an explanation, she screamed aloud, and covered her face with her hands.

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* "Boreen,"—Irish for a deep, stone-paved lane.

When she looked again, she was aware of her husband's horse staring wildly about with the bridle over its head; of Daisy himself on foot; and a few yards off the good black mare prostrate, motionless, rolled up in a confused and hideous mass with her hapless rider.

Down hill, at racing pace, Satanella had put her fore-feet through a covered drain, with the inevitable result—the surface gave way, letting her in to the shoulders, and a few yards farther on she lay across her mistress, with her neck broken, never to stir those strong, fleet limbs again.

"Oh! Daisy, they're both killed!" whispered Norah, with a drawn, white face, while her husband, busying himself to undo the girths, and thus extricate that limp, helpless figure from beneath the weight that crushed it so sorely, shouted for assistance to Soldier Bill and the General, who at that moment entered the field together.

"I trust in heaven *not!*" he replied aloud; and, below his breath, even while his heart smote him for the thought, "It might have been worse. My darling, it might have been *you!*"

CHAPTER XXX.

THE BITTER END.

It was indeed a sad sight for those joyous riders, exulting but a moment before in all the triumph and excitement of their gallop. Saddest and most pitiable for the General, thus to find and recognise the woman he had loved and lost. While they took her gently out from under the dead mare's carcase, she groaned feebly, and they said, "Thank God!" for at least there seemed left a faint spark of life. Assistance, too, was near at hand. As Norah observed, "'Twasn't like Kildare, where ye wouldn't have seen a shealing or maybe so much as a potato-garden for miles. But every farm here was kept like a domain, and they'd built a dwelling-house almost in every field." Within a short distance stood the comfortable mansion, surrounded by its well-stocked fold-yards, of a substantial yeoman; and Bill, with two falls, was there in two minutes! A few of the second flight also, persevering resolutely on the line the hounds had gone, straggled up and did good service. What became of the field, and where the deer was taken, none of these had opportunity to ascertain. All their energies, all their sympathies, were engrossed by that helpless, motionless form, that beautiful rigid face, so wan and white, beneath its folds of glossy raven hair.

Carrying her softly and carefully on a gate to a place of shelter, it looked as if they formed a funeral procession, of which the General seemed chief-mourner.

His bearing was stern and composed, his step never faltered, nor did his hand shake; but he who wrestled with the angel of old, and prevailed against him, could scarcely have outdone this loving, longing heart in earnestness of purpose and passionate pleading of prayer.

"But once more!" was his petition. "Only that she may know me, and look on me once more!" And it was granted.

For two days Blanche Douglas neither spoke nor stirred. Mrs. Walters constituted herself head nurse, and never left her pillow. The General remained the whole time at the threshold of her chamber.

The surgeon, a country practitioner of high repute, who saw her within an hour of her accident, committed himself to no opinion by word or sign, but shook his head despondingly the moment he found himself alone. The famous London doctor, telegraphed for at once, preserved an ominous silence. He, too, getting into the fly that took him back to the station, looked grave and shook his head. The hospitable yeoman, who placed his house and all he had freely at the sufferer's disposal, packing off the very children to their aunt's, at the next farm, felt, as he described it, "Downhearted—uncommon." His kindly wife went about softly and in tears. Daisy and Bill hurried to and fro, in every direction, as required, by night and day; while Norah, watching in the darkened room, tried to hope against hope, and pray for that which she dared not even think it possible could be granted.

The General looked the quietest and most composed of all. Calm and still, he seemed less to watch than to wait. Perhaps some subtler instinct than theirs taught him the disastrous certainty, revealed to him the inevitable truth.

Towards evening of the second day Norah came into the passage and laid her hand on his shoulder, as he sat gazing vacantly from the window, over the fields and orchards about the farm. They loomed hazy and indistinct in the early winter twilight, but the scene on which he looked was clear enough—a bright sunny slope, a golden gleam in the sky above, and on earth a dark heap, with a trailing habit, and a slender riding-whip clenched in a small gloved hand.

"She has just asked for you," whispered Norah. "Go to her—quick! God bless you, General! Try and bear it like a man!"

The room was very dark. He stole softly to her bedside, and felt his fingers clasped in the familiar clinging touch once more.

"My darling!" he murmured, and the strong man's tears welled up, thick and hot, like a child's.

Her voice came, very weak and low. "The poor mare!" she said; "is she much hurt? It was no fault of hers."

He must have answered and told her the truth without knowing it; for she proceeded, more feebly than before:

"Both of us! Then it's no use. I was going to give her to you, dear, and ask you to take care of her for my sake. Have you—have you forgiven?"

"Forgiven!" His failing accents were even less steady than her own.

"I vexed you dreadfully," she continued. "I was not good enough for you. I see it all; and, if it could come again, I would never leave you—never! But I did it for the best. I took great pains to hide myself away down here; but I'm glad—yes, I'm very glad you found me out at last. How dark it is! Don't let go my hand. Kiss me, my own! I know now that I *did* love you dearly—far better than I thought."

The feeble grasp tightened, stronger, stronger yet. The shadows fell, the night came down, and a pale moon threw its ghostly light into the chamber. But the face he loved was fixed and grey now, the hand he clasped was stiff and cold in death!

The General carried to India a less sore heart, perhaps, than he had expected. There was no room left for the gnawing anxiety, the bitter sense of humiliation, the persistent struggle against self, that distressed and troubled him in his previous relations with her he had loved so dearly, and lost so cruelly even in the hour she became his own. He was grave and silent no doubt; in feelings and appearance, many years beyond his real age; but every fresh grey hair, every additional symptom of decay, seemed only a milestone nearer home. Without speculating much on its locality, he cherished an ardent hope that soon he might follow to the place where she had gone before. None should come between them there, he thought, and they need never part again.

Soldier Bill and Daisy saw the last of him when he left England:

the former rather envied every one who was bound for a sphere in which there seemed a possibility of seeing real service; the latter, comparing his senior's lonely life and blighted hopes with his own happy lot, felt a humbler, a wiser, and a better man for the contrast.

Mrs. Walters, though losing none of her good-nature and genial Irish humour, became more staid in manner, altogether more matronly; and though she went out hunting on occasion, certainly rode less boldly than before the catastrophe. Her sister Mary, however, who came over to stay with her about this time, kept up the family credit for daring, and would have taken Bill's heart by storm (if she had not won it already) with the fearlessness she displayed in following him over the most formidable obstacles. After a famous day on Boneen, when she bustled that lazy little gentleman along in a manner that perfectly electrified him, Bill could hold out no longer, but placed himself, his fortunes, Catamount, and Benjamin, at her disposal. All these she was good enough to accept but the badger; and that odorous animal was compelled to evacuate his quarters in the wardrobe for a more suitable residence out of barracks, at a livery-stable. So they were married in London, and inaugurated the first day of their honeymoon by a quick thing with the Windsor drag-hounds.

Of Mrs. Lushington there is little more to be said. The sad fate of her former friend she accepted with the resignation usually displayed by those of her particular set, in the face of such afflictions as do not immediately affect themselves and their pleasures. She vowed it was very sad, talked of wearing black—but didn't! and went out to dinner much as usual. Even Bessie Gordon showed more feeling, for she *did* cry when she heard the news, and appeared that night at a ball with swollen eyelids and a red place under her nose. Many people asked what had become of Miss Douglas. The answer was usually something to this effect—

"Don't you remember? Painful business; shocking accident. Killed out hunting. Odd story; odd girl. Yes—handsome, but very peculiar style."

They buried the good black mare where she fell. Long before the grass was green over her grave rider and horse had been very generally forgotten. Yet in their own circle both had created no small sensation in their time. But life is so far like the chase that it admits of but little leisure for hesitation; none whatever for regret. How should we ever get to the finish if we must needs stop to pick up the fallen, or to mourn for the dead?

In certain kind and faithful hearts, however, it is but justice to say the memory of that hapless pair remains fresh and vivid as on the day of their fatal downfall.

There is a stern, grey-headed soldier in the East who sees Blanche Douglas nightly in his dreams; and Daisy Walters, in his highest state of exultation, when he has been well carried, as often happens, through a run, heaves a sigh, and feels something aching at his heart, that recalls the black mare and her lovely wayward rider, while it reminds him in a ghostly whisper that "there never was one yet like Satanella!"

THE END.

RIP VAN WINKLE IN THE GALLERY.

WHERE are the parliamentary orators of 1882 and of 1892? The Gladstones, the Brights, the Disraelis, the Lowes of the next ten years—and of the next? Thumbing Latin and Greek lexicons at Westminster, Eton, or Harrow; working hard for Fellowships at Oxford and Cambridge; taking their first lessons in parliamentary oratory by asking questions now and then from the back benches of the House of Commons, or poring over the blue books in the Temple and Lincoln's Inn, and keeping their eyes upon the newspapers for a vacant seat? You can hardly spend a couple of hours in the gallery of the House of Commons now and then, as it is my privilege to do once in ten or fifteen years, without asking yourself this question; and without the prophetical eye you will be puzzled in glancing along the ranks of the Opposition and the Ministry to spot the head of the Government and the leader of the Opposition in 1882 and 1892. Yet you have only to turn to *Dod* to see how improbable it is that any of the parliamentary chiefs of to-day will be in their seats ten, fifteen, or twenty years hence. There are hardly half a dozen men of high parliamentary mark under fifty. Disraeli is sixty-seven. Gladstone is sixty-three. Bright is sixty-one. Lowe, sixty. Mr. Bruce, fifty-seven. Mr. Cardwell, fifty-five. Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Forster, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, and the Marquis of Hartington are the youngest men of Cabinet mark now on the Ministerial benches: Mr. Gathorne Hardy and Mr. Hunt on the front row of the Opposition. These are all still under fifty, and Mr. Goschen and the Marquis of Hartington are only just forty. Most of the under-secretaries are, as it happens, still in the first blush of their manhood; and Mr. Gladstone, it is said, like Sir Robert Peel, is particularly anxious to press the flower of the House of Commons into the service of the State and to found a school of statesmen. But this of course is and must always be a work of time, and the present race of under-secretaries is not, I am sorry to say, particularly distinguished by its skill or eloquence in debate, or even, as far as it is permitted to us outsiders to judge, by its aptitude for the work of administration. Mr. Grant Duff is perhaps the most brilliant and striking representative of the class; and what is Mr. Grant Duff but the perfection of mediocrity, a man who has pored over blue books, and the speeches and writings of Cobden and Bright, till he has coloured his mind with their ideas as a polypus takes the colour of the rock on which it feeds? He has not a spark of native eloquence, no power apparently of spontaneous thought, when upon his legs in the House of Commons. He can and often does write thoughtful and suggestive essays for the perplexity of the group of shepherds, fishermen, and drysalters of the Elgin burghs. But this, apparently, is all; and Mr. Grant Duff is the only under-secretary who possesses even this gift. Take Gladstone, Bright, and Disraeli out of their seats, and who is left to preserve the traditions of our parliamentary eloquence, to keep the shades of Palmerston, of Peel, Canning, Pitt, and Fox still lingering about the Speaker's chair as they now linger to listen to the speeches of the men who by their thought, wit, and eloquence still preserve the memory of the days when the House of Commons was the arena of all the proudest spirits of the Empire?

This, to my thinking, is with most of our parliamentary veterans the question of questions; and it is a question that may well perplex the most sagacious of us. Yet, after all, it is not a new question. It has been asked a dozen times within my recollection; I expect to hear it asked three or four times yet again before the century is out. It was asked in 1701, and asked without an answer. It will, I have not the slightest doubt, be asked in 1901, and asked then as it was in 1701, and as it is asked to-day, without an answer. Yet if any of the 658 M.P.'s who were then peering through the curtain which hangs between us and to-morrow had known how and where to look for a statesman and an orator, he might have been found on the back benches of the House, as the Premier of 1882 is perhaps to be found to-day, if we only knew how to distinguish a statesman and an orator from a chairman of quarter sessions, a colonial governor, or a puisne judge in the crowd of squires, Q.C.'s, Yorkshire cotton spinners, London brewers, and half-pay colonels who make up the rank and file of the House of Commons; and if in 1701 a political critic with the gift of second-sight had set his mark on "the sturdy, bull-necked, red-faced young member for Castle Riding, who looked like the son of a small farmer, and seemed by his gait as if he had been brought up to follow the plough," and pronounced him the Prime Minister of 1730, what would the House of Commons have thought of the selection? This plain Norfolk squire could hardly put ten words together in grammatical order, and stuttered and stammered till the House of Commons laughed in his face as it has laughed in the face of a dozen Premiers on the back benches before now, and will yet laugh in the faces of a dozen more before Sir Charles Barry's palace is as grey as Westminster Abbey. But Sir Robert Walpole knew how to lead the House of Commons, how to foil the opposition of a Pulteney, a Carteret, and a host of foes in and out of the House, how to govern a Court with a perverse and cantankerous king, with an heir apparent in opposition, and how to rule an empire single-handed, even when, according to the old epigram, England had to be ruled by "bad Latin." Skip five-and-thirty years, and then take your seat on the Treasury bench with this sturdy, bull-necked Norfolk squire, look round the House, and ask him quietly who is to take the reins out of his hands when he shakes hands with the Speaker, and quits the scene to stroll off to the House of Lords, to hide his head in a coronet, and to take his seat with a sneer among the junior barons as one of the most insignificant men in the country. The Tories furnished little more than rows of ponderous fox-hunters, fat with Staffordshire or Devonshire ale, men who drank to the king over the water, and believed that all the fund-holders were Jews; men whose religion consisted in hating the Dissenters, and whose political researches had led them to fear, like Squire Western, that their land might be sent over to Hanover to be put in the sinking fund. The eloquence of these zealous squires, the remnant of the once formidable October Club, seldom went beyond a hearty aye or no; and the only man with the slightest touch of eloquence among the Whigs was a cornet in the Blues, with the down still upon his lip, who had been cashiered for one saucy speech, and made Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales for another. He was the leader of what Walpole called the boys, and Sir Robert turned his heels upon them when they asked for a place or two for themselves in the lower ranks of his Ministry in return for their votes. Yet in less than ten years this terrible cornet of horse, as plain William Pitt, was a more powerful and popular Minister than Sir Robert Walpole had been at the time of his greatest power and popularity.

In the early days of this century the House of Commons contained so many groups of able and distinguished men that it was impossible for any one to sit out a single debate and then go home to ask where the orators and statesmen of the next generation were to be found. Yet I heard this question asked in the gallery only a few weeks before Lord Rockingham sent his private secretary into the House upon the strength of a thin octavo volume on the "Sublime and Beautiful," and I still have a vivid recollection of a tall, handsome young Irishman, with a sparkling eye and a Bardolph nose, strolling up into the gallery to ask one of the reporters what he thought of his maiden speech. "Nothing at all, Mr. Sheridan," answered the reporter, in his bluff, downright way. "You are making a mistake. This is not in your line. Stick to your comedies; they will bring you fame. Take my word for it, your speeches in the House of Commons never will." This was honest criticism of Woodfall's, and, like all criticism with a little bitterness in it, was, I have no doubt, well meant. It brought a cloud over the brow of the Lessee of Drury Lane, and he rested his head on his hand thoughtfully for a moment. But it was only for a moment. "You are wrong," he said, looking round the House and brushing back his hair. "You are wrong. It is in me, and by God it shall come out!" It did not come out till ten years afterwards; but when it did come it came with dazzling splendour in the Begum speech, a speech which carried the House off its feet, and placed the author of "The School for Scandal" in the front rank of parliamentary orators. Pitt was marked out for high office from the first. "He will be one of the first men in Parliament," said a friend to Fox as Pitt sat down after his first speech. "He is so already," answered Fox, with characteristic generosity. But Pitt is almost the only orator within my recollection who has not made himself at the expense of his audience. This was particularly the case with Fox. He entered the House very young, and with little to recommend him—a short, thick-set youth, with a head and shoulders like those of a codfish, a lack-lustre eye, and a husky voice—and did little else for five or six sessions but ask questions, offer suggestions which had perhaps been anticipated, or make observations which the Ministers rarely condescended to answer. "During five whole sessions," as he used to tell his friends over a bottle of Madeira, "I spoke every night but one, and all I regret is that I did not speak on that night too." This was the secret of Fox's success as a parliamentary orator; and it was by practice of this sort that he rose with Burke and Pitt and Sheridan to the first place in the rank of parliamentary leaders, the Demosthenes of the House of Commons.

The House of Commons attained the meridian splendour of its eloquence under these men; and when they passed away the House of Commons, as an arena of the highest eloquence, suffered eclipse. Fox had fixed upon Lord Henry Petty as his political heir, and Pitt upon a tall handsome youth, with an equivocal pedigree, balanced by brilliant wit, high spirit, and an Oxford reputation, overlooking a quiet, demure "lad," fresh from Cambridge, who sat with Canning, Petty, Grey, Percival, and Romilly, on the fifth row of the House, hardly known beyond his own circle, and not to be known till thirty years afterwards out of the House as Viscount Palmerston. Pitt's *protégé* alone rose to anything like political distinction, and for a few years he kept alive the parliamentary traditions of the eighteenth century by his wit and eloquence, relinquishing power in the end to a series of scratch-Ministries, whose perversity, dulness, and mediocre abilities must have made Pitt and Fox turn in their shrouds in the Abbey. Lord Henry Petty soon disappeared in the scramble for power, hid his head in a coronet, and was hardly heard of again till the days of the Reform Bill, when "all the fiddle-faddle of the Cabinet" was allotted to him as the most cautious and practical man at the board.

The discussions upon the Reform Bill revived afresh all the fading recollections of parliamentary oratory, and brought many men of fluent tongues and brilliant parts to the front, men like Lord John Russell, Lord Lincoln, afterwards Duke of Newcastle, Sydney Herbert, Henry Brougham; and all eyes were fixed upon these men as the future chiefs of the House of Commons. But one by one they all disappeared from the scene; one, and only one, the Paymaster of the Forces, and that one perhaps personally the least striking of any of them, rising to the first position in the House—Lord John. Even in 1831 and 1832 Lord Palmerston was almost as deep in the shade as he had been at five-and-twenty, when he was consulting Plumer Ward as to whether he was likely to prove competent for either of the offices which the Duke of Portland had offered him, the offices of Secretary at War and of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he was hesitating whether he had nerve enough to face the House, or wit enough to take part in a Cabinet conversation; and he was the last man in the House that any one but Cassandra would have pricked for the Premiership. Gladstone was upon the back benches of the Opposition with the proofs of his first volume, that on the relations of Church and State, in his pocket—one of the sternest Tories in the House; and Disraeli was upon the plains of Troy, surrounded by the tombs of heroes, watching the lightning play upon the crest of Mount Ida, and planning his revolutionary epic. The hope of the House of Commons centred in 1832 upon Lord Stanley and a Chancery barrister who had recently been brought into the House by the Marquis of Lansdowne for a close borough in Wilts, upon the strength of a brace of keen and picturesque articles in the *Edinburgh Review* upon Milton and Machiavelli and a speech at Willis's Rooms; and perhaps had any one then ventured to lay his hand upon the author of "Church and State," who sat scowling behind Sir Robert Peel, hardly speaking three times in the course of the session, and upon the author of "Vivian Grey" and "Alroy," and selected them as the parliamentary leaders and orators of the next ten or fifteen years, he would have been set down as a lunatic. You can see by turning to Macaulay's Essay on Church and State what was thought of Gladstone even in 1839; and here you have his portrait drawn in the brightest colours of imagination as "a young man of unblemished character and of distinguished parliamentary talents, the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories who follow reluctantly and mutinously a leader whose experience and eloquence are indispensable to them, but whose cautious temper and moderate opinions they abhor." What was thought of "Vivian Grey" at that time all the world knows. He was a clever adventurer, over head and ears in debt, and that was all, out of Lady Blessington's drawing-room; and when, after contesting half a dozen boroughs under the auspices of Joseph Hume and Daniel O'Connell, coquetting now with Radicals, now with Tories, and using both in turns, he at last rose, pale and nervous, with his speech in his throat, and asked leave to say a few words in reply to O'Connell, he was hooted down. He could not get in ten words without an interruption, a laugh, or a sneer, or a shout. "I sit down now," said the pale spectre at last, shaking his ambrosial locks and drawing himself up to make his voice heard above the din, "but the day shall come when you will hear me." This was in 1836; and three or four years later, when Sir Robert Peel was forming his Administration, the member for Maidstone in a modest note offered his services to the Minister, thinking perhaps of nothing more than an under-secretaryship of £1,500 a year. He had been marked out for this by the clubs and the newspapers, and Douglas Jerrold in one of his "Q Papers" in *Punch* hits off the general expectation in sketching the probable Peel Administration thus:—"Of course Ben Disraeli will get a slice of secretaryship, may be allowed to nib a State quill if he must not use one." But Sir Robert Peel did not think so. The list of his Administration came out with Gladstone's name, but without Disraeli's. But Disraeli, although thrown back five or six years, was not extinguished, and within the next ten years he was equal with "the handsome Gladstone," and is to-day his only rival for the Premiership.

I take only the most conspicuous cases that occur to me in looking through our parliamentary annals; but these annals are, in fact, made up all through of the failures of brilliant men and the successes of men upon the back benches—of Walpoles, Pitts, Cannings, Palmerstons, and Disraelis; and when men ask, as Sir George Lewis did a few years ago, Where are the men to lead the House of Commons when Palmerston and Russell are gone? and as critics are asking now, when Gladstone and Disraeli are gone, the answer is—Upon the fifth row of the Ministerial and Opposition benches, where Gladstone and Disraeli themselves sat for years, and where Palmerston and Russell spent the first part of their parliamentary careers. The hour will bring the men; and if the past is an index to the future, I should say that the Premier of 1892 is now sitting below the gangway, taking anything but a conspicuous part in the discussions upon the ballot, but perhaps pondering deeply over some of those thorny questions which blanch the cheeks of men upon the Treasury bench—questions of Church and State, questions of land tenure, and questions of taxation; that the leader of Her Majesty's Opposition is trying his 'prentice hand upon a novel or a political squib, the Chancellor of the Exchequer writing leading articles in Sergeants' Inn for the *Times* or the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the Lord Chancellor coaching Wranglers at Oxford, and the ablest and most powerful orator of St. Stephen's, the "Tribune of the People," making his first speech from a tombstone in the churchyard of a Northern borough upon the 25th clause of the Education Act. Looking back, it seems but yesterday that most of the men in the present Administration were in these positions: Mr. Bright making his first speech upon church rates from a tombstone in the old churchyard of Rochdale, Mr. Lowe writing for the *Times*, Mr. Gladstone sitting below the gangway making his mark by tearing the Divorce Bill to pieces, and Mr. Disraeli writing "Coningsby,"—and that which has been is that which shall be. Men turn up in the House of Commons as they turn up hardly anywhere else—men who have been the oracles of coteries from their birth, who have gone through the regular process of gold medals, senior wranglerships, and double firsts, who have nightly sat down amid tumultuous cheering in debating societies, and can harangue with unruffled forehead and unfaltering voice from one end of a dinner table to the other, who on all occasions have something to say, and can speak with fluency on what they know nothing about, collapsing the instant they find themselves upon their feet with the Speaker and the reporters before them; and on the other hand, fellows whom the women have long deplored, and the men long pitied, as having "no manner," who blush when you speak to them and blunder when they speak to you, suddenly jumping up in the House, with a self-confidence which is only equalled by their consummate ability: and in this fact lies all our hope of the future.

OUR BIRTHDAYS.

BY MRS. G. LINNÆUS BANKS.

AS seasons come and seasons go
We mark their passage thus,—
First buds, then leafage, fruitage, snow;
And so the cycles round and grow,
And mark their sum on us.

Ay, all the ages that have flown
Since Adam saw the sun
Have laid their impress on our own,
And we when babes are fuller grown
Than he when life seemed done.

And,—born into an older world,
A philosophic race,
We have Time's coiled-up scroll uncurled,
Rent Earth's green veil, with tears impearled,
To scan her wrinkled face.

We say those wrinkles represent
Æans of ages gone;
And in our wisdom self-content,
Proclaim how strata reft and rent
Are birthdays stamped in stone.

And,—busied tracing back the growth
Of this terraqueous sphere—
Is it forgetfulness, or sloth,
That makes us yearly grow more loth
To count our birthdays here?

Ah, no! In youth we sprang to greet
Each birthday as it came,
Until,—maturity complete—
Years seemed to run with flying feet
And bear a cross of flame.

We feel not, while fresh seasons pass,
  Their footsteps on our brow,
Until some clear, unflattering glass
Reveals the wrinkles, which, alas!
  Are furrowed by their plough.

And as these furrows indicate
  The throes of strife or pain,
The heart that was in youth elate
In age bends 'neath too sad a weight
  Its birthdays to sustain.

What marvel we pass mournfully
  Remembrancers of care,
Epochs of mutability,
Of passion, strife, or agony,
  If such our birthdays were!

A PARALLEL AND A CONTRAST.*

BY THE REV. J. M. CAPES, M.A.

WHEN I was a young man, I used to be surprised to hear it said by those who were older and wiser than myself, that it is impossible to write a good life of any eminent person unless one sympathises with his opinions and admires his character. I imagined that the history of a human heart and understanding can be studied solely from without, like the wheels and cranks of a steam-engine; and that all that is necessary for its comprehension is an intelligent candour and a determination to be just and true. As I grew older, I came to see that such a view is, on the whole, or at least in nearly every case, untenable. I learnt to recognise the infinite complexities of emotion, thought, and habit, which go to make up the individuality of all but the most trivial and commonplace minds; and the impossibility of getting at the hidden secrets of a man's life without some measure of affection and respect. We cannot coolly take one another to pieces like an ingenious puzzle, and analyse each element in our brother's nature, with the impassive deliberation of a surgical anatomist, without doing grievous injustice to the truth. Every one who is good for anything is many sided in his external aspects, and these aspects can only be rightly interpreted by entering into that inner life of which they are the outer manifestation, and which is closed to all but those who to a considerable extent feel as he felt and think as he thought.

And this sincere agreement is all the more necessary when the subject of a biography or biographical sketch has played an important part in the course of the lives we are ourselves leading. When we write about one whom we have known personally, or who has been intimately concerned in the political or religious movement in which we have ourselves felt a keen interest, it is more than ever important to enter into the inner life of any mind of whose outward workings we wish to form an adequate estimate. Unless we substantially take the same views of things, and approach the solution of the problems of life from the same side, it is often hard to know what a great writer really means by what he says. To us his words may be dark or cloudy, when in reality to himself they are full of meaning. His theories may seem to be baseless fancies, when in truth, to his apprehension, they may have been resting upon some sure basis of truth or fact, if only we could see with his eyes and share his modes of thought. Every man who labours to classify his ideas and reduce his convictions to a system must necessarily have adopted some sort of metaphysical theory as to the laws of belief and knowledge. He may have done this unconsciously, just as a student may become a good mathematician without examining the mental steps by which we first attain to the abstract conceptions of space and number. But in the midst of the conflicts of argument and the agitations of doubt he must have practically adopted some final test or other as to the only possible sources of human certainty, to which he will again and again betake himself in the secrecy of his own reflections.

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* "Essays, Critical and Historical," by J. H. Newman, formerly Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. London: Pickering. "A Funeral Sermon for the late F. D. Maurice," by the Rev. S. A. Brooke. London: H. E. King and Co.

When, then, we criticise the writings of any profound or earnest thinker, with whom we seem to disagree on these very fundamental laws, we are conscious of a special difficulty in our endeavours to do full justice to his words. I say we seem to disagree, because, after all, in every such instance the disagreement may be more verbal than real, and the result of defective knowledge rather than of radical difference of idea. If it is hard to get at the secrets of one's own nature, how much harder it is to pierce through the shadows which shroud the depths of other minds. If in one's own case we are perpetually in peril of mistaking visions for realities, and the tricks of rhetorical legerdemain for the rigorous logic of the *siccum lumen*, with what caution and charity should we decide as to what are the ultimate laws of thinking which are adopted by others, of whom, with all our common humanity, we can at the best know so little.

It is with the fullest consciousness of these difficulties that I am attempting an outline of the parallel and the contrast presented by the two most influential theological teachers of the last half century in England. The moment seems opportune for such a sketch. The grave has but lately closed on all that is mortal of Professor Maurice; and in republishing his old Anglican Essays, Dr. Newman has completed that story of his own life which he gave to the world in his brilliant and touching "Apologia." Circumstances appear to have induced him to withdraw altogether from the urgent controversies of the day, and his career as a thinker and a religious leader may be considered as personally complete. He is also the last man to complain of any honest effort to paint him as he is and always has been; not, of course, morally, or with even the slightest invasion of the privacy of home life; but solely as a study of psychological interest to his contemporaries and to all who have come within the range of his influence. His "Apologia" was the work of one who longs for that human sympathy which depends upon a correct appreciation of one's personal history. As a piece of autobiography it stands alone among modern memoirs. His recent collection of "Verses on Religious Subjects," again, was a further proof of his inability to remain shut up in a cold isolation from his generation; while this last republication of his old reviews, chiefly from the *British Critic*, furnishes a final proof of his desire to be understood by all who retain him in their remembrance, their respect, or their affection. A man who thus hangs up his own portrait for all passers-by to examine will be the first to admit the right of the spectator to analyse as well as to study it.

On first thoughts it may be imagined that the characters of these two great leaders of a generation now passing away present merely points of contrast, and that they are like one another only in the consistency with which they have spent their lives in promoting, each according to his own view, the cause of true religion. And if their personal histories are to be estimated solely from the study of their detailed opinions, certainly it would be difficult to conceive anything more absolutely unlike than the natures of Professor Maurice and Dr. Newman. Yet, with all this divergence of tendency, there was always a singular identity in the modes in which they sought to explain the mystery of human life in harmony with a belief in the elementary ideas of Christianity. Both to Maurice and Newman Christian truth presented itself in immediate connection with a belief in the living presence of Christ in a vast organised institution, by virtue of which presence it became the divinely appointed instrument for the conveyance of spiritual life to the human soul. And it is only by recognising this elementary conception in their minds that we can find a key to the lifelong processes of their thoughts, or do justice to the singular uniformity of idea and conduct which has distinguished each of them alike.

And this characteristic of the two men is all the more remarkable because in this respect they were so unlike the rest of the world, as the world was when they began to write. Forty years ago the whole tendency of the prevailing religious thought was towards an absolute individualism. That same individualism which is the characteristic of our political and social theories had taken possession of our English theology also. The traditional High Church school preserved indeed a semblance of the older living Church theory; but in their hands it had become a dry and lifeless hypothesis upon paper, and was as different from those ideas which captivated Newman and Maurice alike, as a marble statue is different from the warm and breathing reality of a living man. With the old fashioned High Churchmen, the Christian Church was nothing more than the historical depository of a body of traditional doctrine, ruled by a body of bishops who were genealogically descended from the Apostles. It combined in itself the functions of the Record Office and the Herald's College in social and literary life. The notion of the Church as the spiritual body of Christ, living her mystic life from act to act through the presence of Christ Himself within her, had vanished from the English Church. She had got rid of sacerdotalism altogether, except that she retained its ancient intolerance, and repeated a few fragments of its characteristic phrases.

To the Evangelical party, whose ecclesiastical theory was based upon the purest individualism, this form of High Church doctrine was utterly repulsive. In their eyes, the Christian Church as a corporate body and as the channel of grace and knowledge had no existence at all. It was made up of a multitude of single believers, and was, in fact, invisible. The Church, according to their idea, had no real function at all to fulfil in the regeneration of the world. Historically speaking, it had vanished altogether out of sight. When individual believers were fortunate enough to know one another and to be able to associate together, they could unite for the purposes of preaching and devotion, and call themselves a Church; and in the sight of God the only real Church consisted of the multitude of these unknown believers in all parts of the world.

Now and then, indeed, some new or revised theory was put forth which seemed to substitute a practical reality for the visions of the Evangelical and the lifeless formalism of the High Church party; but such schemes were totally unlike the great spiritual conceptions of Maurice and Newman. In those days Arnold was a living power in the Church. How far the practical revival of religious life which we now witness is really due to his work and his writings, it is not easy to say. His influence as a school reformer is not easy to overestimate. In this respect he was emphatically the one great man of his age; and he was sustained by that gift of moral courage which upheld Dr. Newman in his earlier struggles with Ultra-Protestantism, and which was even more strikingly manifest in Mr. Maurice's whole life. As a religious reformer, Arnold's power was far less. He disliked evangelicalism with a genuine aversion; but as to the sacerdotal theory of the Church, it is not too much to say that he bitterly detested it. For anything approaching to mysticism he had not the faintest sympathy; and the imaginative faculty, so far as it existed in his nature, was rather the growth of academic culture than any well-spring of theological and spiritual suggestions as to the interpretation of the mystery of life. He touched the momentous Biblical and doctrinal questions which have since agitated the Church with a tentative hand, and in a certain spirit of eclecticism which has nothing in common with the intense "personality" which is characteristic of Newman and of Maurice.

So far as I can judge, the one happy change in English Church life to which Arnold specially contributed is the abolition of cant in conversation and writing on religious topics. And this change is really wonderful. When Arnold first began his work at Rugby it was the rarest thing in the world to hear religious subjects discussed with serious earnestness, unaccompanied with some artificial solemnity of manner and technicality of language. The freedom, the simplicity, and the directness with which all kinds of theological matters are now talked about in all kinds of company, with no sense of incongruity and without any Pharisaical assumption of superior piety, were unknown two generations ago. The entire character of periodical literature is in this respect radically altered. Religion was a thing that was tabooed in good society, and the parliamentary and newspaper discussions on theology and the Christian view of morals, which are now thought perfectly natural and right, would have been simply impossible. Towards the introduction of these new habits no man contributed so much as Arnold. In fact, for a time he stood almost alone. Certainly he was at first quite alone among the prominent men of his day. If religion, he argued, is a thing which enters into the whole course of our daily lives, why should religion alone be banished from ordinary conversation, or only made a subject, both in the pulpit and out of it, for ridiculous conventionalities of phrase and a half-hypocritical gravity of manner and unctuousness of voice?

When, however, he betook himself to the framing of some definite theory as to the organic action of the Christian Church, as opposed to the individualism of the Evangelicals and the nascent sacerdotalism of Oxford, Arnold was not in advance of his time, nor was he capable of those aspirations which led Newman and Maurice to their several conclusions. Ecclesiastically, he was essentially a politician. When he identified the Church with the State, it was on a conception totally different from that theory of comprehensiveness which is now gaining ground in the Church, and which is being put forward as the only basis upon which the Anglican Establishment can be logically upheld. That view which would, on principle, retain the Ritualists, the Liberals, and Evangelicals within the ample fold of the national Church, does not appear to have entered Arnold's imagination. So far as the then living Oxford school was concerned, he by implication fiercely denounced the comprehensive principle. He was, as nearly as is now possible, an Erastian of the seventeenth century pattern.

One other past attempt to form a theory of the Church deserves a passing notice, on account of its utter unattractiveness to minds like those of Maurice and Newman. This invention was first put into shape, or rather into epigrammatic words, by Bishop Daniel Wilson of Calcutta, at that time Rector of Islington, and the recognised chief of the Evangelical party in London, if not in all England. He claimed to be the upholder of what he called "Evangelical truth and Apostolical order," and the phrase became the watchword of large numbers of his school, and the laughing stock of those who saw into its pretentious shallowness. There was something verging on the ludicrous in this notion of dividing Christian doctrine from the institution of bishops, calling the one Evangelical and the other Apostolical, as if Gospel truth required to be shut up, as it were, in a box, to prevent the vagaries to which it would inevitably lead those who embraced it, unless held in check by some force external to itself. The scheme was, in truth, nothing but a device for making a good case against the Dissenters of the time. In what way were Evangelicals within the Church better than the Evangelicals of nonconformity, unless there could be set up some sort of Scriptural authority for episcopal orders? "Evangelical truth" was, therefore, to be preserved intact, apart from all taint of High Church superstitions on sacrament and on the priesthood, and it was to be guarded by this "Apostolical" institution of bishops. Thus the Gospel was to be kept in order by a species of afterthought of the Apostles, when their Divine Master had left them to arrange for the preaching of the truths which he had given into their charge. Henceforth, "the Bible and the Bible only" was to continue to be the religion of Protestants, *i.e.*, of all real Christians, but it was to be placed in the keeping of a succession of bishops, under whom alone it was possible that its preaching might not degenerate into extravagances and irregularities. The idea was at least new; but in the eyes of men who valued the Church as the divinely ordained organ for the salvation of a miserable humanity, it did not rise even to the dignity of a caricature.

In some respects, on the other hand, the condition of English society was propitious for a revival of religious life. Mr. Stopford Brooke has sketched this condition with much truth and force in the sermon whose title I have placed at the head of this paper. The whole sermon, indeed, deserves to be studied, as a careful and well written account of Maurice's general character, from the point of view of one who derived no little help from his teaching, without absolutely adopting it in all respects. To a certain extent, I think that Mr. Brooke regards the dogmatic identity between Maurice and Newman as having been more real than I conceive to have been the case. But, on the whole, the sermon is one of his happiest and most timely.

Surrounded, then, by phantom theologies, Newman and Maurice began the labour of their days. Newman, being the elder of the two by a few years, had already settled the foundations of his faith, and had begun the formal propagation of that faith, while Maurice was still clearing up his own doubts, and ascertaining whether he could honestly enter the ministry of the Church of England. For it is very noticeable that neither the one nor the other was brought up in those views of Christianity to the development of which he finally devoted the toils of his life. Though from his earliest years Newman held the strictly orthodox ideas on vicarious atonement, on eternal punishment, and other kindred doctrines, yet, as he tells us in his "Apologia," he was in no sense of the word an Anglican Churchman, accepting the Evangelical framework of orthodoxy, with all its positive individualism. It was after his ordination that he learnt to believe in the Christian Church as a Church, chiefly through the influence of Keble and Hurrell Froude. Maurice was brought up as a Unitarian, and it was mainly, I imagine, through the influence of Coleridge that he adopted the doctrines of the Church in the peculiar forms which they assumed in his mind. And it seems to me undeniable that the influence of his early training never left Maurice. Rather it was through his profound conviction of that eternal relationship between God and man, in which Unitarianism differs from orthodoxy, that he was led to put forward a belief in the universal fatherhood of God as the basis of his theological system. He engrafted this idea upon the existing phraseology, the creeds, and the sacramental beliefs of the past. But "orthodox," in any exact sense, he never was.

From the moment, however, that he began .to teach as a clergyman, his whole mind was filled with the conception of that great institution which Newman called the Church Catholic, and he himself the kingdom of Christ. And in both cases this conception differed from all existing popular English notions, in that it looked upon the living presence of Christ in this body as the one source of its reality, as a spiritual institution, all other ideas of the Church being hypocrisies or barren mockeries. From the first, this recognition of the essential nature of the Church seems to have been grasped by Newman in its full significance. Except in its application to the Roman development of the Church idea, there is no substantial difference between the opinions which he now holds and those with which he at once aroused, agitated, and charmed his followers in the first period of his work. His early writings abound with passages of scorn and sarcastic dissection alike of the old dry Anglican theory and of the Low Church and the current establishmentarianism of the time. The Church, he exclaims in his review of Palmer's once well known treatise, is, in the judgment of the day, not "the Catholic Church," but the mere "Church of England," or "the National Religion," or "the religion of the majority;" not Apostolic, but "by law established;" while, in place of unity and sanctity, even orthodox divines have been full of "our venerable establishment," "part and parcel of the law of the land," "the Episcopal Church," "Protestantism," "the glorious memory," "Martin Luther," and "civil and religious liberty all over the world." In short, he winds up in one of his most cutting epigrams, the age "has taken tavern toasts for the notes of the Church." From another essay, written not long afterwards, I am tempted to quote some singularly forcible passages, in which he paints the vitalising effects of the supernatural indwelling of Christ in the Church, in words which are identical with Roman theory, but want of space forbids it. It is enough, however, to refer to them, as exhibiting the clearness with which from the first he mastered the great fundamental idea upon which his imagination has fed itself in unbroken repose up to his latest years.

With Maurice the form of the conception was radically distinct. With Newman, the Church Catholic stood alone in the midst of a world lying in wickedness; and whatever might be said of good men outside its pale, it could have no existence as the Church beyond the limits of a transmitted Apostolical succession of bishops. Maurice, so far as I can understand him, identified, organically, the Church with the whole human race. All humanity, in his view, constituted the kingdom of Christ; and from Christ, as its king, are perpetually flowing out streams of grace and truth, often through dogmatic creeds, sacraments, and other ordinances, but not exclusively confined to them. "The Church," he says, in his "Theological Essays," "is human society in its normal state; the world, that same society irregular and abnormal. The world is the Church without God; the Church is the world restored to its relation with God, taken back by Him into the state for which He created it."

In this view there is, of course, hardly anything that is new or peculiar, regarded as a doctrinal theory. Maurice's peculiarity lay in the application of the term "Church" to the world, whether as transformed into a multitude of good Christians, or as a mixture of the bad and the good together. Even the most rigid of Roman Catholics would hold that Christ is by divine right king of all the world, and that the wicked, whether within or without the Roman Church, are simply subjects rebelling against their lawful master. Indeed, this is the very essence of extreme Ultramontanism. As to the framework which Rome holds to have been ordained by Christ for the organisation of his kingdom, including the perpetual presence of his Vicegerent, it not only is absent from the system of Maurice, but it does not seem ever to have exerted that charm upon his imagination by which so many devout minds have been fascinated. Whether this was from a deficiency in the true historic and poetic elements in his nature, or from the influence of his early creed, or from a distinct theological rejection of the Roman and the Anglo-Catholic ideas, I cannot pretend to determine. Certainly it is surprising that with his strong conviction of the essential organic unity of Christendom in Christ, he never seems to have been attracted, even in fancy, by the Roman claim.

Like Newman, again, Maurice lived in an ideal world. It could not be otherwise in every attempt to bring his theory into harmony with existing facts. But there is this difference between the two, that Newman has always lived in an ideal world of the past, and Maurice in an ideal world of the future. Newman never felt any hearty sympathy with the characteristic life of his own day, except under its more refined literary aspects. In his estimate, the world is not moving onward by any of its own native forces towards a gradual absorption into the Church of Christ. He has always looked upon its politics, its economies, its physical science, its engineering triumphs, its manufacturing and commercial enterprise, with a cold and critical and almost unfriendly eye. To him it has always been "the king's daughter," and her alone, who "is all glorious within." Where Christ is recognised and obeyed, there is life and beauty; and all else bears on its face and in its heart the taint of original sin and of alienation from God. Hence the delight with which he always dwelt upon the patriotic period, when the imagination so easily transfigures the forms of ordinary bishops and divines into shapes of austere and saintly loveliness. Hence that union of picturesque truth and absolute unreality which characterises such works as his "Church of the Fathers." The living prelates of the England and of the Rome of to-day may be men of the most earthly mould, and only the most robust faith can detect anything in them and in their official proceedings which approaches the high Christian type. But it is easy to close one's eyes to these disturbing realities, to the intrigues and violence of a Vatican Council, and to let the fancy revel in pictures of those "ancient, holy, and happy times," as Newman called them in one of his earlier dedications; and so to find rest for the troubled soul.

Maurice, on the contrary, was a man keenly in sympathy with the movements of his own contemporaries, though he was often bitterly conscious of the far-off distance when his theory would become an actual truth of fact. It was not only as a natural conclusion from his view of the world as a sort of dormant Church, but was a necessity of his temperament, that he should watch the whole present course of human thought and action, as exhibiting the gradual, though dilatory and spasmodic, return of the world to its normal condition as the kingdom of Christ. Thence sprang his marked power over those who came within his personal circle, who were disgusted with the undisguised godlessness of the ordinary energies of these busy and self-satisfied times. He did not attempt to enlighten their understandings with definite theological doctrines, as indeed he set little value upon clear definiteness of doctrine in his own case. But he showed them the religious idea in practical action; and even those who were little able to enter into his intellectual characteristics were impressed with the grand conception that Christianity is a religion much more than a creed. They took up his peculiar phrases, and repeated them with much comfort to themselves, not caring very much whether these phrases represented any exact thoughts in their own minds, or whether such vague thoughts as they might suggest corresponded to the objective facts of human history, both past and present.

In one remarkable respect the personal careers of both Newman and Maurice have been strikingly alike. Each of them has led on his followers to a goal for which he was at first but little prepared, and from which he would probably have shrunk in terror had it at first presented itself in all its naked reality before his eyes. And their practical power in their generation was most materially increased by these conditions under which they worked. Unlike reformers in general, they had no preconceived, fully developed system of conclusions, which they might press in all its completeness upon those whom they wished to convert. When Newman wrote his "Arians of the Fourth Century," and joined in the publication of the "Tracts for the Times," the thought that these speculations would lead him to Rome and to an acceptance of the figment of Papal Infallibility, never crossed his mind, even as a suspicion. He made sure of his premises, and left the conclusions to take care of themselves. And thus they did take a most unexpected shape by slow degrees, while he himself ended by bringing a crowd of proselytes to the feet of the Pope. Maurice, in like manner, taught a modification of the orthodox language, from which, quite unwittingly, he had extracted all orthodox meaning, without the faintest forethought of a day when his followers would object to the language as well as the interpretation, or at least would insist upon a definiteness of interpretation from which his whole nature shrank with distaste and dread. In both cases English Churchmen would have vehemently rebelled against the teaching of their leaders, if those leaders themselves had prematurely placed before them the conclusions to which they were in reality, though unconsciously, prompting them.

When, then, in their advancing years, Newman was brought face to face with the dogma of Papal Infallibility, and Maurice with the advanced views on Biblical inspiration and criticism, how are we to account for the fact that, both alike, they seemed unable to appreciate the force of the teachings of their whole lives? Newman has submitted to the tyrannical imposition of an article of belief which destroys the very foundation of that historical Church in which he has hitherto recognised the perpetual indwelling presence of Jesus Christ. Maurice familiarised himself with the latest researches of the critical spirit into the old territory of orthodoxy, with the argument of those who altogether deny the truth of the old views of Scripture inspiration, and yet he never felt the force of their conclusions, or seemed to suspect that his own system must either lead logically to their recognition, or must be set aside as a mere play upon words and a formless vision.

The answer to the difficulty appears to me to be found in the essentially subjective character of the ultimate processes of thought by which both Newman and Maurice attained their personal convictions on spiritual things. Maurice is nearly always subjective in his treatment of the difficulties which he set himself to solve. It is the correspondence of one particular interpretation of theological or Biblical teaching with his own moral nature, which seems to him to be decisive as to its truth. His tests are within himself and within other men's breasts also, as he reads the humanity common to himself and the rest of mankind. Whatever, therefore, be the formidable nature of the hard, logical arguments of the modern school, they do not affect his belief, because they do not reach down to that inner spiritual life of which his own past teaching was the outward expression. Newman has been far less subjective in his expositions of the superstructure of his beliefs. Yet even in them it is not difficult to detect an occasional reference to his personal history, as that of a human soul, living under the immediate Providential action of Divine power, and as furnishing him with tests of truth with which no logical or philosophical difficulties can interfere. In his "Grammar of Assent" he has formulated his theory of certainty with careful elaboration and with an exquisite fertility of illustration. Yet, unless his words have a meaning entirely beyond my comprehension, he seems to rest his sole ultimate certainty upon pure emotion, and to be as subjective as Maurice ever was. And thus he has brought himself to acquiesce in the Vatican violation of historical truth, and to submit to the scandalous intrigues and despotism by which it has been forced upon the Roman Catholic world. He abhors, but he submits, because after all he has ever been in the habit of testing outward truths by inward feelings, and of accepting what have seemed to him to be Providential whisperings in place of the unyielding phenomena of actual fact. If, both in his case and that of Maurice, I look upon the conclusions of their lives with surprise I at least rejoice to believe that their thorough sincerity has been preserved untarnished to the end.

FISHING AND FISHERS.

BY PROFESSOR LEEBODY.

WE are well aware that we venture on a somewhat hazardous undertaking when we attempt to write a few pages on fishing and fishers. Can anything new possibly be said about angling? is a question which may fairly be asked. Has not Izaak Walton, of immortal memory, dilated on its poetry and sentiment in a manner which leaves nothing to be desired; and have not dozens of writers of a more practical turn told us *how*, *when*, and *where* to fish with praiseworthy minuteness? Has not, in fact, everything been said on the subject which can be said, and everything been explained of which an explanation is possible. We admit that no writer can hope to follow old Izaak, even *longo intervallo*, in his own special department, and that Stoddart, Francis, Stewart, and Pennell have given us practical treatises which are all but exhaustive. But angling has become a branch of scientific art, and like all branches of modern scientific art is now rapidly progressive. There ought, then, to be always something new to be said on the subject at the commencement of a new angling season.

We have designated modern angling a branch of scientific art, and some people may be disposed to smile at our enthusiasm. Our language, however, is not misapplied. A scientific art is one that gains the majority of its improvements from scientific investigation of the principles on which its methods are founded. It is almost needless for us to give illustrations. Electric telegraphy is a scientific art. Its greatest improvements of late years have not arisen from the operators in the telegraph offices stumbling accidentally on better methods of doing their work than those actually employed. They have been arrived at by a careful study of the scientific principles applied in the construction of an electric telegraph. And of late years the higher class of anglers have shown themselves no longer content to note the fact that trout will take one fly and reject another—will be captured by one kind of tackle and be only scared by a different kind—and thus, by slow degrees, to arrive at a knowledge of what to use and what to avoid. A careful study of *the reason why* has been made in regard to the phenomena which perplex the angler, and valuable improvements in the fisher's art have resulted.

Recent advances in the art of angling are almost exclusively confined to one special branch of it—trout-fishing. Salmon rods are better made now than formerly, and salmon gut is superior to twisted horse hair. Yet we think it likely, if the competition were possible, that the salmon-fisher of the last generation would kill fish for fish with the salmon-fisher of to-day. But were the great Izaak Walton, and his pupil Cotton, the father of fly-fishing, to betake themselves to one of our much-fished trouting streams they would soon find that the march of intellect in modern days was not confined to *terra firma.* The angler who would use, for clear water worm-fishing in a river inhabited by educated trout, old Izaak's casting-line would be equally successful if he substituted for it a portion of the Atlantic cable.

Of the two leading branches of trout-fishing—fly-fishing and worm-fishing—the latter is that which of late years has been most improved. Indeed fishing with the worm is a branch of the angler's art which has only recently been properly cultivated, and which by many good sportsmen is, as yet, but imperfectly understood. It is no uncommon thing, even at present, to meet with veteran fishers who, forming their ideas from bait-fishing in flooded streams, sneer at worm-fishing as utterly beneath the notice of the practised angler. To each one of our angling brethren who is a proficient in this art, and who therefore knows its difficulty, we say, "Never argue with any mere fly-fisher who despises the worm-fisher's craft. Ask him to accompany you to a well-fished stream for a day's fishing on a warm and sunny day. He will request you to lend him a few worms before you have been an hour at the river, when he sees your basket beginning to fill. Give them to him, and leave him to his own devices—the trout will be in little danger. Do not press the contrast between your well-filled creel and his empty one on your homeward route, for human nature is human nature, and he will be in no humour for joking for that evening at least. You may, however, recur to the subject when you meet him a few days after, and you will find him prepared to admit that clear water worm-fishing is a worthy branch of the angler's art."

For the general introduction of a scientific method of worm-fishing we are mainly indebted to Mr. Stoddart and Mr. Stewart. Cotton, in the second part of the "Complete Angler," published in 1675, shows that he understood and practised the art, but it never seems to have become popular. Until comparatively recent years, worm-fishing was only practised when the rivers were swollen, and any novice could make as good a basket by means of it as the skilled angler. The sportsman (?) used a short thick rod and a casting-line of extra coarse gut, and walked down the bank of the river, hauling out by main force every unfortunate fish that might gorge his bait. Mr. Stoddart and Mr. Stewart have taught us that the proper time to use the worm is when the water is clear, and that the finest tackle and the most skilful hand are required to employ it successfully. The worm-fisher now uses a long light rod and a casting-line of the finest gut. He walks, or if possible wades, up stream, throwing his bait lightly before him into every spot which is the likely haunt of a trout. The art is most successfully practised in the clear warm weather of June, July, and August, when fly-fishing is very uncertain sport.

To Mr. Stewart belongs the credit of the invention of the worm tackle, which consists of more than one hook. Mr. Stewart uses three or four small hooks tied one above the other on the same thread of gut. Mr. Pennell advises the use of only two. Excellent sport may be had with either contrivance, and each has advantages which the other does not possess. Mr. Pennell's tackle exposes fewer hooks than Mr. Stewart's, but does not hold the worm so neatly. Mr. Stewart's holds the worm in a very natural position, but the large number of hooks exposed not unfrequently frightens wary trout. We believe that with shy fish better sport may be had with a single hook than with either contrivance. We venture with diffidence to recommend to the notice of anglers a method which we have for a long time most successfully employed. It differs but slightly from methods in general use, but slight differences in method often make the difference between a full basket and an empty one. We employ a casting-line of the very finest gut—so long that no part of the winch line can come in contact with the water—say twelve feet long for a fourteen feet rod. We employ a moderately small single hook baited with two worms, a small brandling and a small red worm. The brandling we put on first, as it is apt to slide down on the bend of the hook. The reel used is light, and runs out so freely that a trout disposed to carry the bait to its lurking place can do so almost without feeling resistance. We use no sinker, or at most one small shot, so that the worms come rolling down at the same rate as the stream. The two worms cover the hook so perfectly that almost any trout which runs out the line will, partially at least, swallow the bait without detecting its deceptive character. A little experience teaches the proper time to give a gentle stroke, and the trout rarely fails to be well hooked. This method of fishing we have found deadly for white trout, as well as brown, and we may remark in passing that the value of the worm as a bait for sea-trout has by many of our best anglers been rather underrated. Mr. Pennell, in his "Modern Practical Angler," speaking of the white trout, says:—"Both this fish and the bull trout will occasionally take the worm, but it is at best but an uncertain bait." This remark does not hold true for all localities, as in many Irish rivers we have found the worm a killing bait for sea trout in all states of the water. The best sport will be had when the water is slightly brown after a flood, but even when it was at the clearest we have made good baskets by using the tackle we have referred to. Considerable time must be allowed to a white trout to gorge the bait before striking, and the directions given in most treatises on salmon-fishing with the worm should in this respect be attended to. Clear water worm-fishing for white trout is about the most exciting branch of the angler's art. To play successfully with fine trouting gut a two pound white trout, that for a minute or two runs as hard as a good sized salmon, and that alternates "sulks," "somersaults," and "rushes," in a manner that no other fish will attempt, requires considerable coolness and skill.

In regard to fly-fishing we have to chronicle what some consider only *change*, but what we regard as *improvement.* We are apparently on the brink of a revolution in the art. The opinion seems to be gaining ground that although the trout undoubtedly is one of the cleverest fish that swims, still it has been hitherto credited with far too great a knowledge of entomological science: The old theory that every lake and river required a different fly, and that some special imitation was specially suited to each day in the year, is being rapidly exploded. Mr. Stewart was the first distinguished angler who manfully proclaimed the utter worthlessness of nineteen-twentieths of the contrivances of our fishing-tackle manufacturers. Mr. Pennell, who is a veritable red republican in this respect, recommends the use of only three flies for trout all the year round—a green, a yellow, and a brown, the size of the fly alone being varied. We are inclined to believe that if Mr. Pennell would add two more flies to his list, a black and a dun, his view would be substantially correct. For the angler to imitate any particular natural fly is in general useless. If trout be observed feeding they will not be seen to evince a special taste for any particular insect. Of course there are times when the great majority of the flies which the trout see for several days are of one species, with marked characteristics, and an imitation of this may for a time be specially killing. At a particular period of the year more trout can be killed with the green-drake than with any other fly. But taking an average of all the days of the angling season, we are convinced from experience that more fish may be killed by adopting the general principles of Mr. Stewart and Mr. Pennell, and employing only five or six different flies, than by using all the ingenious combinations of furs, silks, and feathers to which some anglers of the old school still pin their faith. Whatever differences of opinion there may be with regard to the ideas which salmon have formed about the angler's lure, there can be no doubt that trout mistake the artificial fly for a natural one. It is the angler's interest to keep up this delusion. Anything which goes to keep it up is useful, anything which does not is the reverse. The true theory of trout fly-fishing seems to us to depend on simple principles. The first requisite for an orator is audibility, and the first requisite for a trout fly is visibility. If the trout fails to see the fly it manifestly cannot be caught by means of it. Hence the size and brilliancy of colour of flies must be increased for deep waters, dark waters, and dark days, to such an extent as will ensure their being seen by the fish. In the second place, the trout should not be able to see the fly distinctly enough to detect its artificial nature. Its size and colour must, then, be so selected as to make it *just* visible. Thirdly, the fly should be as fly-like as possible. It should therefore be dressed on fine transparent gut. No natural fly has a long white appendage resembling the thread of gut by which some would-be anglers attach their flies to the casting-line. For much-fished rivers flies tied on coarse gut are useless, and worse. The man who employs them will catch nothing himself, and will largely spoil the sport of those who use proper tackle. Fourthly, the body of the fly should be small; the great majority of insects are of slender, graceful make. Finally, the number of hackles should not be too great, and they should be so soft as to move readily with the motion of the water. The trout doubtless supposes the angler's imitation to be a drowning insect, and the hackles should, by their number and movements, resemble, as far as possible, the quivering legs and wings of a drowning fly. Attention to minutiæ of form and colour, and attempted imitations of particular insects, are perfectly useless. If you can persuade a trout to rise at your fly at all, it will be before it has got more than an indistinct glance of it. The trout that scrutinises your fly so closely as to perceive clearly your tasteful combinations of dyed feathers and tinsel, in their finer effects, may admire your ingenuity, but will not help to fill your basket.

But although Mr. Pennell and those who agree with him may soon, we believe, count on numerous converts to the general principles of his theory of trout flies, we fear that it will be a considerable time before they muster many adherents to his salmon-fly theory, from the ranks of salmon-fishers. Mr. Pennell proposes to substitute for the great variety of flies now in use three flies for all seasons, weathers, and waters. There is, as every salmon-fisher knows, an element of eccentricity about the character of the salmon which militates against the adoption of this plan. Every angler walking for the first time down a strange river can tell the best casts for trout, but no angler, however experienced, can choose the best casts for salmon. And, as far as our experience goes, *what* to fish with in an unknown river is as indeterminate as *where* to fish. You may throw three or four flies over a salmon, any one of which would kill in another river, without his deigning to notice them, and yet, as soon as the fly which you receive from a local angler is brought over him, up he comes at it as if he were shot from a catapult.

We have only referred to trout and salmon-fishing in the preceding remarks, as the most worthy branches of the angler's art, and those to which the majority of anglers are devoted. In fact, the man who has enjoyed a favourable opportunity for prosecuting these is incapacitated for enjoying any other. Pike-fishing is, no doubt, good sport, and a large pike makes as hard a fight as a salmon. But then the salmon is far more lightly hooked than the pike, his chances of escape are far greater, and the excitement of playing him is more intense. And who would compare the silvery-sided, gracefully-shaped salmon, when glistening on the bank, with the villainous-looking pike—ugly when living, and uglier still when dead? However, there are many people who can get as much pleasure from watching a bobbing float, suggestive of the impending capture of gudgeon, roach, or perch, as the salmon-fisher can get from the rise of a twenty pounder, and we can sympathise with their enjoyment, although unable to share it.

Hitherto we have been mainly addressing those of piscatorial proclivities on subjects in which they alone are interested. But the inhabitants of the British Islands are divided into two sections—those who fish, and those who do not. We freely admit that the latter are, numerically at least, the most important, and that it would be improper to write even a short paper on angling without introducing some remarks for their special benefit.

Although anglers and liberal opinions have largely increased of late years, there is too often, even yet, a sort of half contemptuous pity expressed for the man who is seen leaving town by an early train with a cast of flies round his hat. Shooting and hunting are popularly considered manly and sensible sports, and it is generally admitted that the man who pursues them may possess *mens sana in sano corpore.* But the angler is by many people considered a sort of harmless, silly fellow, who has neither the brains nor the physical energy to enable him to hunt or shoot. Now, with all due deference to public opinion, and with all due appreciation of the sports in question, we must assert that we do not see the use of brains to a man either in hunting or shooting. To be sure, if he has got a considerable quantity of them they may help to bring his centre of gravity nearer to the centre of percussion in the event of his taking a "header" from his horse's back, and aid him in breaking his neck with mathematical certainty. Or by blowing them out with a bursting breech-loader he may astonish his friends by his potential intellectual capacities. But, after all, these are secondary uses of the organs of thought. The angler requires brains to prosecute his sport successfully, and he will never be a good angler without them. A simpleton, or a man of deficient physical energy, may learn to catch fish, but he will never attain to eminence in the angler's art. To study the peculiar relations of wind, water, and wary trout requires some reasoning capacity, and to toil for several miles along a rocky river, handling a salmon rod, requires a well-knit frame. The extraordinary enthusiasm which an angler feels for his favourite pastime seems, we know, to the superficial observer a proof of an unevenly balanced mind. Most people can understand that it is not unpleasant to spend four or five hours on a lovely day in May wandering along the banks of a beautiful stream, amidst the sounds, sights, and odours which render the country so delightful in the spring. But when a man is seen exposed to the whistling wind and pelting hail of February, immersed to the waist in ice-cold water, wielding a weighty rod and whirling a circle of gut round his head as if his life depended on each cast, keeping at this praiseworthy undertaking for two or three hours without stirring a fin, and calling his occupation *sport*, grave doubts as to his sanity suggest themselves to the uninitiated. We do not intend to give the detailed proofs of the reasonableness of the conduct of the February salmon-fisher; anglers do not require them, and by non-anglers they would not be understood. But we may refer to a few facts which show that a February fly-fisher is not necessarily a fool. Enthusiasm in angling, instead of indicating that a man has no brains, proves rather that he possesses superior mental gifts. We have never known an instance of a man of high ability beginning to fish who did not become passionately fond of the sport. Sir H. Davy was one of the best anglers of his day. Dr. Wollaston, whose gifts and labours are more fully appreciated as science advances, was above fifty before he ever threw a line, yet when he became an angler he thought the craft worthy of the exercise of his highest intellectual powers, and before he had been fishing a week he devised some improvements in gut casting-lines. As might have been expected, he soon took a high rank in the angling fraternity. Paley, when pressed by an English bishop to hurry forward the publication of one of his books, replied that he would work steadily at it as soon as the fly-fishing season was over. And amongst our present leaders in science Professor Owen, whom no one can accuse of brainlessness, may be referred to as one of the best carp-fishers in the kingdom. But it is unnecessary to quote further names to show that a man may be in the highest ranks of the aristocracy of intellect, and yet one of the most enthusiastic of anglers.

An interesting essay might be written on the social effects of the art of angling. "Next to death," says a recent writer, "angling is the great leveller of caste." All fishers meet on equal terms at the river's side. The duke's son will exchange a fly with a weaver-lad, and this will be done without superciliousness on the one side, or cringing on the other. Sports in which the different ranks of society can meet together, and feel that they are one flesh and blood, without any violence being done to those social distinctions which are a necessity in every civilised and orderly community, are of real national value. Cricket is such an amusement. A farmer's son will cry "Butter-fingers" at the young lord who misses a "catch" as freely as at one of his own brothers; but he would be one of the last men in the country to join in any communistic conspiracy for all that, or to "speak evil of dignities." And the young lord will be no true-born Briton if he feels offended at the rebuke of the farmer-lad. The free association of patrician and plebeian is in the highest degree beneficial to both parties, when that association takes place under such conditions as obtain at the river's brink or in the cricket-field.

It is needless to dilate on the enjoyments of angling to those who love the sport. But to a certain class of the community angling is not only enjoyable, but also highly beneficial. It is a real blessing to the hard-wrought professional man to have a taste for fishing and an occasional opportunity of indulging in the pastime. You are, we shall suppose, a clergyman, and you are wearied with the incessant round of preaching, visiting, and committee-work, and sick at heart from the utter depravity of some of the poorer members of your flock, and the thorough sham of some of the respectable "goody-goodies." Or you are a lawyer with a sensitive conscience—a rare, but not unknown, phenomenon—and you are worried with work and disgusted with deceit. Or you are a physician in a laborious practice, and your energies have for a month or two been subjected to an extra strain. Or you are a professor, or teacher, trouble-tried with vain endeavours to make bricks without straw, *i.e.*, to supply information and brains to stupid students. But you are a keen salmon-fisher; you have got a week's holiday; you have hurried from town by the earliest Monday morning train; you have reached the banks of a salmon river, and have put up your rod. Wind and water are both all that could be desired, and as you walk down the stream to take a cast over a favourite pool you feel that the cobwebs are already being cleared away from your brain. A careful cast over the likely spot—no rise. Another and another, and still nothing stirring. Another—ha! a silvery gleam in the water, and a plunge as, either from your nervous haste or his own excess of eagerness, the salmon missed your fly. Where are your troubles and oppressive feeling of jaded mental powers now? Utterly passed into oblivion. The sole object now before your mind is to land that fish. Back from the river bank and out with your fly-book, to select a fly of the same make as that at which he rose, only a size smaller. Ten minutes' time passed by your watch, and now for a throw over him again. A cast—no rise; a second—splash, whir-r-r; he has it; and he is a "bouncer!" One rush to the bottom; a dash to the opposite bank; another to the bank next you. Back quick! or he will slack your line. Another rush to the opposite bank, and up into the air, a somersault of five feet high. Hold him gently, or you are done for. Steady, and perhaps the hook, if resting on a bone, will fix itself firmer. Splash, plunge, whir-r! down he goes to the bottom, and you may be sure he is now well hooked, and that he has only shortened his lease of life five minutes by his extra activity. Steady now, for he is gathering his strength for a rush. There he goes; give him line; up stream, down stream, across stream. He is tiring fast. There! he showed his side on the top of the water; reel on him gently, and show him the butt. Bring the gaff. Now you have him on the bank, a real beauty, and twelve pounds if he is an ounce. A half-hour's rest, and a health to all good friends at home, and then on to the next salmon cast, half a mile down the river. The day is young as yet, and with this glorious westerly breeze you are sure of another splendid fellow, if not two or three, before night. A week of this sport, and you go back to town on Saturday evening having the same features, standing the same number of inches high, and weighing about the same number of pounds, as the man who left town by the Monday morning train. But you have no real resemblance, physical or mental, to that poor worn-out, spiritless creature. You could dispose of three such men as he in a pugilistic encounter, and you could do an amount of mental work in one hour that would have occupied him six, and do it better into the bargain. There is a springiness in your step and a cheeriness in your voice which you have not been able to command for the last six months. It was really your mind that needed rest, or rather utter change of intellectual posture, and you now return to work which is thoroughly enjoyable, as useful work ever is to a true man in the full possession of bodily and mental vigour.

"But where can a man get good fishing now?" is a question put by every potential angler or partial proficient. "Fish are unquestionably becoming scarcer every year and anglers more plentiful, and 'takes' have now to be counted by the brace from rivers where they were formerly counted by the dozen." It is very true that the difficulty of making a good basket has greatly increased of late years, but to the master in the "gentle craft" this is little matter for regret. Trout are still plentiful, and although far harder to catch than their ancestors, still they can be caught. And the increased difficulty of the sport only adds greater zest to the pleasure of the skilful angler. Those, however, who only fish indifferently, or moderately well, have no reason to feel despondent. There are still in the British Islands lakes and streams on which the shadow of the angler's rod rarely falls. In the Scotch highlands a fishing saturnalia may yet be enjoyed; and in the north-west of Ireland, in the highlands of Donegal, there are trout lakes and salmon rivers that for beauty of scenery and abundance of fish are unsurpassed. Some of these are difficult of access, but others are not. The angler who makes Gweedore (where there is an admirable and not too expensive hotel) his head-quarters in good fishing weather had better abjure angling if he cannot kill almost his own weight of trout in a week. First-class salmon and sea trout-fishing may also be had in the same locality.

The trout in most of the Donegal lakes are too numerous to be large (averaging from half a pound to a pound), but they are game fish on the line, beautiful fish in the basket, and most appetising on the table. We used formerly, in our ignorance of the Irish character, to be half afraid to wander about the Donegal hills, as they were, in some districts, frequented by sportsmen who would think nothing of bagging a bailiff or two and a landlord of a morning. "Rory of the Hills" has, however, almost disappeared in the north-west of Ireland; even were he "to the fore," to use an Irish expression, he would be found by the sportsman a rollicking, jovial fellow, with an intense hatred of rent-office officials and an enthusiastic admiration of "potheen." In no part of the kingdom will the votary of rod or gun meet with a more polite and kindly greeting from the peasantry than in Northern Donegal. We look back with pleasure to many a splendid day's sport amid the grandly beautiful scenery of the Irish highlands. One such day we shall long remember (and doubtless so also will each of the three or four anglers who enjoyed it) for the excellence of the fishing, the wild beauty of the mountain-lake, and the wicked joke which, quite undesignedly in the first instance, we perpetrated at the expense of a small party of that most estimable force the Royal Irish Constabulary. The time was nearly midsummer, the weather was somewhat sultry, and of course the trout were rising languidly in the middle of the day. All our party had collected, with well-filled baskets for luncheon, and an hour or two's rest in a lovely heather-shaded nook in a rocky glen. One of our number, who was an adept in culinary science, had established his laboratory at a short distance, and the smoke from a fire, by means of which he was developing the edible qualities of lake-trout, was floating gracefully up the mountain side. Our attention was accidentally attracted to some dark object visible through the clear air on an opposite mountain at a distance of two or three miles. A few minutes' scrutiny with a field-glass convinced us that our curling column of smoke was an object of intense interest to a party of the "Royal Irish" on a "still-hunting" expedition. (Illicit distillation, in spite of all preventive measures, is, even yet, vigorously carried on in Donegal.) Our green-coated friends were manifestly impressed with the idea that their patience was about to be rewarded by the capture of a still in full working order. Smoke in a lonely mountain glen far away from human habitation meant something. Visions of promotion, or at least honourable mention, were doubtless floating before the mind of the sly old sergeant who, rifle in hand, was slipping from rock to rock and teaching his followers how to get along unobserved. Journeying over heather, gorse, and stones on a rough mountain's side is no joke at the best; and a half-creeping, half-crouching mode of progression does not make it any easier. We had an idea that our would-be captors were getting a good deal of exercise, and I am afraid we rather enjoyed it. We kept close in our concealment, and could see the old sergeant halt from time to time, and direct his men so as to surround our lurking place. It required all our powers to refrain from exploding with laughter as they neared the scene of their expected triumph. When at last they arrived within about fifty yards of us, at a signal from the leader there was a rapid rush, and the potheen makers and their "plant" were captured. Our pent-up merriment found vent in a roar. The old sergeant took in the situation at a glance. There was no use in charging us with attempting to play off a lark on the police and obstruct them in the execution of their duty, for we obviously had a right to boil a kettle if we chose, and there was no evidence that we had boiled it for his special benefit. For a moment he glared at us like a tiger, and something which was *not* an ejaculatory prayer escaped from his lips. But his Irish love of fun conquered. He burst into a laugh, in which his followers heartily joined, and exclaiming "Begorra, boys, we'll head back to the barracks; the captain would niver expect us to make two saizures in the same day," he marched off his party, wiping the perspiration from their brows. We resumed our fishing, but our demeanour for the next half hour would have been unseemly at a funeral.

PLAYERS OF OUR DAY.

XVI.—MR. COMPTON.

MR. COMPTON would have honourably filled an important place in Garrick or Sheridan's company at Drury Lane. We can fancy him, with his range of stock characters, appearing say twice in the week, figuring in the comedies of Colman the elder, Hoadley, Arthur Murphy, Garrick, Sheridan, and Mrs. Cowley; with the Baddeleys, Abingtons, Palmers, Westons, Yateses, and others, his powers would have developed—his style and dry humour have ripened. We should have now noble mezzotints of him by McArdle and Smith, "Mr. Compton and Miss Pope in 'The Clandestine Marriage.'" Look at his photograph in the shop windows—the exceeding dryness, the true "crabbed" character, the walnutty indentations, the lurking slyness, the olive flavour in reserve—the sort of face we find in the ranks of the first-class French comedians—had it belonged to a physician or clerk in an office, or to a private gentleman with means of his own, it would have shown a mere tranquil intelligence and nothing more; but the constant expression of humorous things has literally "whetted" it into sharpness and angles, and denuded it of all that is pointless or superfluous. Mr. Phelps possesses one of these valuable physiognomies; so does Mr. Buckstone, though of another kind. With them it is the comedian's innate power that has told on the intelligent eye and facial muscle. But they stand almost alone; were we to call a review of most of our "funny" men, a spectacle of faces singularly vacant in character would be presented. Sometimes our eminent burlesque characters are encountered in the street, and we are not impressed by their dull and ordinary expression. The truth is where there is merely exercise of the facial muscles the light of intellect withdraws more and more inward, as though not condescending to work with an ally that wishes to be unintelligent. All mimics and clowns who use their faces and limbs after purely mechanical principles exhibit this absence of light and intellect. But the portraits of the old actors and actresses are delightful to look on; their faces beam with the highest expression and intelligence; they seem a company of the finest and most elegant ladies and gentlemen.

Mr. Compton during the best years of his career belonged to the Haymarket company. Almost every part that he filled there he contrived to adorn. He possessed the gift of the old regulated humour, held in control, measured out by rule, culminating at the proper time; spontaneous, yet duly ordered. His voice was like an instrument, whose notes he could produce after the proper tone and tune. Hence there was a quiet weight and breadth in all he did and said. Hence that humour in inflection—attitude, air even. *He was the character*, as he stood, just as an eccentric in real life reveals his oddity even as he sits or stands. He thus brought a charm or value to those "old Haymarket comedies," which no one else at present on the English stage could. In certain characters he was without a rival. Even to that farcical creation of Dr. Ollapod in "The Poor Gentleman" he imparted a breadth and dignity which lifted it into the domain of pure comedy. The spectator felt there was a *reserve* of humour behind his most extravagant flights, a feeling that always increases the sense of enjoyment. With an eccentric in real life there is the same: we do not know what surprise may be in store for us. A wealthy man who is fond of displaying his treasures—exhibiting rings and jewellery on his person, in proof of his riches—does not impress us nearly so much as the sober and unostentatious personage who, we know, can fill in his cheque for a substantial amount. No better illustration of different schools of humour could be given than the "rendering" of Dr. Ollapod by both Mr. Clarke and Mr. Compton. The former made it a rollicking, exuberant character; one complete in itself, and independent of the drama, its characters and situations; and highly laughter moving. But Mr. Compton's rendering was of another order altogether—he relied on a certain gravity and solemnity, always great elements in comedy. There was a Malvolio air about him, and one could not help thinking of Lamb's description of Bensley; which, indeed, comes next only to seeing the play itself acted. Again, mark the impression left by these two different modes of reading a character. Where there is this rollicking fun and overrunning humour of glance and gesture it will be found that there is a sameness in the player's characters, and that in some new part he is compelled to empty his wallet of precisely the same moves. Not so with the player who keeps his external arts under regulation, and trusts to a more intellectual reading. For, as the intellect is the most inexhaustible and varied thing in the world, the player who trusts to it can never be accused of sameness, and has always a handsome balance at his bank.

For some cause, not known to the public, Mr. Compton deserted the Haymarket Theatre a year or so ago. This unfortunate step has not been without profit in another direction, for it proves the direct influence on individual acting by the atmosphere of a legitimate theatre and trained comedians. Any one who has seen Mr. Compton under these new conditions will mourn the change. The pieces and characters now allotted to him are wholly unworthy of his powers; and, having praised him so heartily, we may be entitled to say that his acting in "Partners for Life" was wholly inartistic, overdone to a degree, and false to human nature. How he could have condescended to exhibit such a piece of sheer farce is a marvel. His Gardener in a more recent piece was something of a far higher order. It may, however, be truly affirmed that an actor of his strength brings no aid to such pieces beyond the prestige of his name, and that an inferior actor would make more of the business. In vain may these things be complacently styled "comedy dramas" —that will not lift either the language or the actors into the regions of comedy. It is remarkable, too, that by the conditions of the case the characters allotted to Mr. Compton are of the most trifling and insignificant kind—quite unsuited to the dignity of the leading comedian of a theatre. Want of practice and a series of inferior parts will bring a deterioration in his playing. He should never have quitted the Haymarket, where in the last two pieces of Mr. Gilbert, "The Palace of Truth" and "Pygmalion," a humorous character would have been found for him that would have added to his reputation.

It may be added that this actor has some oddities of manner which, we may presume, it is too late for him to think of getting rid of. One of these is a certain "gulping" of his words, attended by a mechanical closing of his mouth—hard to describe, but certainly familiar to all playgoers. Another is a kind of "dipping" motion of his figure. Both add a decidedly grotesque effect to what he says—they are natural and genuine, and not tricks of the trade which many a comedian learns by heart and calls to his assistance regularly. In Mr. Compton's case these oddities betoken an interior oddity of mind; but he is now too much under their dominion.

XVII.—MRS. SCOTT-SIDDONS.

Some years ago the usual periodical rumour was sent round of the coming actress—a young creature of extraordinary beauty, who was a descendant of the great Mrs. Siddons, and had inherited much of her talent. In a short time Mrs. Scott-Siddons was "travelling round the provinces," appearing chiefly in "As You Like It." The performance was not very remarkable, being more like an elaborate elocutionary exercise, every inflection having been laboriously studied and the "business" carefully prepared. Still her graceful and refined appearance, combined with a face of singular intelligence and beauty, was no mean recommendation, and possibly on the faith of this it was prophesied, in the favourite language of stage critiques, that "a *high* future was before her." Yet the present writer recalls one chief defect—a failure to excite sympathy or interest in her audience. This was manifested in a most remarkable degree. On her side there was an earnestness that was almost painful—a never-flagging laboriousness, an eagerness to make the most of every "point;" yet somehow the audience remained respectfully cold from beginning to end. This is a fatal defect in actor or actress, because it is generally constitutional. With the greatest gifts, and this one absent, success can never be attained; for success means touching the sympathies of an audience, who return to have their feelings again operated on, and who, again, impart their sensations to others. The absence of this valuable quality is owing to a certain consciousness, and this again to a certain vanity. The player is thinking too much of him or her self. True genius always encourages a sort of *abandon*, and trains itself to at least a partial inspiration and forgetfulness of self. Nature, simplicity, and truth are the most precious qualities on the stage, as in every other situation, no matter how stiff and artificial society may grow. Once, when one of our famous queens of tragedy was playing the suffering Mrs. Haller, exhibiting the depressing sorrows of that erring but repentant lady to a large audience in the Dublin Theatre Royal, the moment arrived when the ballad "I have a silent sorrow here" was to be delivered. Singing was out of the great actress's walk, and the duty was ingeniously delegated to some attendant villager. A poor shred, a timid, half-frightened creature, some scene-shifter's daughter on probation, came forward as the orchestra struck up the symphony. An ancient muslin dress from the property-room, set off with some tawdry pink bows, pinned on, no doubt, by trembling fingers, an old flower in her hair—these were her meagre decorations, while her mother, holding a shawl, could be seen at the wings. This did not promise well. But when, after commencing in trembling tones, she gathered courage, she sang the whole so simply and even tenderly, with such a simple purpose of doing the task set down for her, without hope of favour, or at best more than toleration, that such a burst of honest applause burst forth as had not rung through the old theatre that night. She shrank back in a sort of delighted alarm, but had to repeat her song to a tumultuous house. The audience, with its never-failing instinct, understood the contrast with the artificial agonies it had been listening to. Here was something simple, and unpretending, and natural. Somehow the great lady did not seem pleased.

In the case of Mrs. Scott-Siddons, acute dramatic judges ventured to prophesy that this defect was in most cases incurable, rather that it would grow more intense with practice; it was part of character. In due time the lady came to the Haymarket, with every advantage, but after a round of performances the same impression seemed to be left —that of a laboured and conscientious performance. The beauty, the refinement was praised, as it deserved to be, but the electric spark had not flashed from stage to audience; people came away cold and untouched, much as they would do from an intelligent "reading" at a lecture hall. In a short time she had passed from the London boards and entered on the safer pastures of the provinces.

Conscientiousness always tells, and always extorts respect. In all that she did there was an air of study and careful preparation. The great name which she bore was in itself an introduction. Hence she always presented herself under conditions that commanded respect. She went to America, "read" a vast deal, and, we believe, went through much practice and industrious training. Knowing of this really honest labour and diligence, the public was glad to hear of her return to London, and it was concluded that a marked improvement would be the result.

A new play, called "Ordeal by Touch," by an unpractised writer, was chosen for this *début.* The rapturous nature of the reception accorded to every scene in this piece was in itself a phenomenon, and the "friends" no less rapturously greeted every speech of the actress. It must be said that this play was of a poor, weak kind, showing little knowledge of the stage. Plays of this pattern have been presented so frequently that the fact would not seem to deserve notice here, but for its exhibiting the capacity of our critics; a writer in the *Saturday Review* seeing in it "a work of great and varied power," and that "the prospects of the English stage brighten by such a comedy." But, whatever were its merits, it did not show the returned actress to advantage. The severe country training had indeed produced a change, and it could not be called an improvement. The rather rustic grace had passed away; the nervous anxiety to please was gone, and had been replaced by a hard, assured manner. There was before us the bustling, brisk matron of low comedy, whose voice and motions recalled Mrs. Chippendale or Mrs. Billington.

There was a perpetual restlessness, an eternal motion of head and hands, with that favourite action of inexperienced players, a rapid setting off across the stage after some speech supposed to contain "point" has been delivered. The conscious air had increased alarmingly; the voice wanted music and melody. The hodman's work in the provinces had rubbed away all the fine surfaces. Often a single little trifle in acting proves as logically as a whole play that the actor's conception of dramatic effect is astray. Here two persons in a garden were pursuing a ridiculous *malentendu*, while Mrs. Scott-Siddons, partially concealed behind a garden vase, overhears the conversation. The *malentendu* took a long time to develop, and its successful stages produced laughter and sufficiently interpreted themselves. But, with a laborious pantomine that became almost painful, the listener must interpret all afresh to the audience by a series of "nods and becks and wreathed smiles"—now hiding, now revealing herself; now turning to the speaker on the right with an air of invitation, now to him on the left with nodding approbation; then showing the most overpowering relish of the situation and the keenest enjoyment. Now all this was false, and actually had the effect of impairing whatever effect was in the situation, which was doing very well of itself. To a really great actress such an idea would never have occurred. The truth is the lady is not a comedian. She has no true gaiety. It was the same with her great relative, of whom several attempts at comedy are recorded, all of the most depressing kind.

Possibly tragedy may be her "line," though she seems too fragile and *petite* for the solemn burden. Her best friends—and she has many—should offer no well-meaning flatteries to induce her to affect piquancy or smartness, save, of course, in downright farce. In a good murderous tragedy she would be infinitely more at home. There her refined and cultivated declamations and powers of elocution would in some degree "stand" to her.

XVIII.—MR. BOUCICAULT.

Thackeray, in one of his most agreeable passages, expresses his gratitude to those who introduced him to certain characters of fiction, protesting that Squire Western and Amelia, the good Dr. Primrose, and others, were to all intents as real for him as any historical characters. A person with a real dramatic instinct has the same impression with regard to a genuinely dramatic play at which he has assisted. It makes part of the treasury of his recollections; the story, the figures, become as real for him as incidents in his own life. This is the view we would take of the fresh, simple, natural, and powerful drama of "The Colleen Bawn," as presented by Mr. and Mrs. Dion Boucicault. The whole, indeed, must be taken as an *ensemble:* and it is very rarely that a piece is put before us in which the play and the actors are inspired by the one single influence. The effect thus produced has a strength that cannot again be looked for.

About this play there is an indescribable grace and tenderness, simply because the author has gone to work with a true knowledge of human nature and a true knowledge of national character. It is not too high a compliment to say that the impression left is akin to that produced by "The Vicar of Wakefield." We must view it, of course, by the light of our first impression, for the characters have been since repeated and copied by the heavy-handed journeymen of the stage, until those types have become tedious and offensive. But there was in the original performance itself a bloom of true romance (the true charm that inspires interest and sympathy), and a delicate humour, which makes it the most remarkable English play of its generation. As for the share of Gerald Griffin in the matter it is scarcely appreciable, and the true source of the play is the local history which Gerald Griffin used for his novel, and which the author worked up into "The Colleen Bawn." Superficial critics talked of the water cave and the "header" as bits of "sensation," but the most rigid purist would have to admit that the scene followed legitimately from the course of the incidents, and that with the *locale* chosen, on the banks of the lake, with boatmen passing to and fro, it was the most natural and picturesque mode of bringing about the attempted murder of Eily.

It is easy to see what is the secret of Mr. Boucicault's admirable acting in Miles Na Coppaleen. It is the power of sinking his own individuality, and putting himself in the place of the character that he is playing. In this, of course, he is materially assisted by being the author of the part, and also by his thorough knowledge of the inherent principles of the national character. Any one who has seen this part in other hands will have been struck by the want of spontaneousness, and the artificial and almost unmeaning air of buffoonery which it assumes. Our actor is thoroughly racy, simple, natural, and with a face beaming with sly humour can combine a vast deal of pathos and tenderness.

Lately he has been appearing in a little piece called "Night and Morning," the chief situation in which—the breaking of the news to a supposed widow of her husband being alive—is founded on Madame de Girardin's exquisite "La Joie fait Peur." This, indeed, is one of those contributions to the stage which become the common property of nations, and are the best proof of the vast dignity and importance of true dramatic art. Such a situation, once set off with art and genius, becomes crystallised, as it were—passes from stage to stage, and from country to country, in a hundred shapes. It is a part of the history of human nature, and a person who had "assisted" at such a scene in real life would never to the day of his death be able to forget it. It may be fairly said that there is no more original and natural piece of acting of its kind to be seen on the English stage at present than the old servant's emotion on seeing the master whom he thought to be dead. We know the hackneyed start and accompanying roar, "My old master returned!" with which, according to the conventional rules of the stage, this surprise would have been attended. Here, the idea of a shock upon the nerves of an old man was conveyed in the most natural way—a blow; a fright; a mixture of joy, alarm, and tenderness. There is no logic in such situations, and those who in real life have witnessed situations of concentrated emotion, discover that the phenomena are most unconventional and irregular, the deepest grief not being manifested by cries and tears; terror and joy being manifested by anything but the ordinary symptoms of terror and joy. The querulous "crooning" and whimpering, the stunned look, the cramped attitude of his arms and fingers, the air of suffering as he sits in the chair and asks for a glass of brandy—all this shows art of the highest sort, and finish of the most legitimate kind. This little bit of acting alone would show the true artist.

A PEDESTRIAN TOUR IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL COPINGER.

Of the different bathing places and summer resorts sometimes called "watering places" in England, there is one remark that I think applies nearly to all: they want the rocks or the scaffolding which swimmers most especially prize, and, indeed, without which a bathe loses more than half its charm and refreshment. Thus, in that very much frequented and deservedly prized summer resort, the Isle of Wight, the only places that give you an opportunity for jumping at once into deep water are Ventnor and Sea View. In most other seaports, delightful as the sea air is, and charming as the scenes are in the summer, you are obliged to use a bathing machine; and in place of the exhilarating plunge into the deep blue sea, and the enjoyment of the purest exercise, you are forced to walk into comparatively shallow water. But if you want the real enjoyment of a swimmer you must hire a boat, and unless it be a tolerably large one, the nuisance of climbing up its side when you have finished your swim is as much against a pleasant exit as is the want of a dressing room, however humble. Yet, setting aside the attraction of bathing, how delightful is an excursion to such a locality as the Isle of Wight! To walk round it, to see the varied phases of scenery, to enter thoroughly into a traveller's mode of becoming acquainted with the objects of interest, to note down on your tablets your own views of the several spots which charm you—to do all this, the pedestrian has an advantage over every other traveller. Contrast the freedom and ease which mark a visit of this description with the wearisome languor of a railway journey; or, to take an extreme case, compare it with the shouts of clamour which meet a prince, or even a nobleman in his excursions *en prince*. The pressing of admiring crowds, the lassitude of *ennui* that hangs over the revelry of a popular reception, the breathing of fulsome adulation so oft reiterated might well make him envy the condition of those who travel *incognito*. I set out on my pedestrian excursion from Sandown to Shanklin. From the former town a perpendicular line of cliffs, encircling the whole space for a distance of two miles, as far as Shanklin, forms a vast amphitheatre. The sand, when the tide is out, is firm and elastic; there can be no more agreeable footing than this, except it be the turf of a well-kept park. The bay at all times during the day is crowded with groups—ladies in loose tresses and negligent but becoming attire; the young ones either bathing or about to bathe, or seated with their books or needlework; young gentlemen who have just come out of the water, and gentlemen of every age to whom the completely *dolce far niente* style of the scene is a change that makes them feel, and indeed look, like fish out of water; children of all ages, from five to fifteen, the busiest of the busy, digging in the sand with wooden spades—(the spade is an article which brings in a small fortune to toy sellers here, from the ubiquitous demand for it)—wading in the water, or building little fabrics of sand, such as children even in the days of Homer were famed for building. Just before reaching Shanklin is a huge partition in the cliff with a road running through it; but, getting up the cliff on the other side, you pass inland a series of very handsomely built villas, superior to any that you see at Sandown, situated on the high ground. Below, on the beach, are only two or three cottages. But another grand gap serves as a thoroughfare for those who go from the villas to bathe; and passing this, following the high path on the cliff, you soon arrive at the entrance to the Chine —a chasm which extends for about half a mile inland. It seems like a glen torn from the mountain's side by a convulsion of nature—dark, craggy, comparatively narrow, planted on each side most luxuriantly with ferns, lichens, brushwood, and also very thickly with forest trees. There is a line of road, broad and well formed, cut in the southern side of the glen, whose sides are fully 200 feet high. The road is steep, and parted by steps. Below, almost out of sight, is a stream which has its source in a cascade at the crest of the Chine. The chasm is crossed by some narrow wooden bridges, and at intervals there are seats situated under a delightful shade during the time of summer heats. Shortly before reaching the inland entrance your path is cut out of the solid rock, and at the last of the bridges you have a fine view of the cascade. After leaving the Chine I had to walk by the margin of the cliff for about two miles, and reaching a farm-house I crossed a field, where I was shown a narrow causeway, which I went through, and came then suddenly upon the very steep flight of steps leading to the base of Luccombe Chine. All here is open and, except at its crest, unplanted; but there is a sort of wild grandeur in the glen which is eminently picturesque. Leaving this and passing by a gentleman's residence, which is kept strictly private, you come to a lane leading by a circuitous way to the Landslip. Here, again, happy is the visitor who can walk, for as this long winding lane is wholly impracticable for riding, much less driving, to none but a pedestrian is it possible to enter into the enjoyment of the passage through the Landslip, which is a scene wholly unique: a wood more thickly planted than any other to be met with in this island, or indeed than is elsewhere to be met with, extending for a distance of about four miles from north to south, and two from east to west, the outer margin of which overhangs the sea, the whole intersected with pathways, and at several parts springs and fountains of water; the paths throughout are dark, narrow, intricate, and rocky; the wood almost wholly hazel and brushwood, oak and ferns. The principal wonder about it is the vegetation and vigour of the trees, being so luxuriant when close to the sea. In the summer heat, so very refreshing is the shade and comparative coolness of this scene, that I was not surprised in my walk through it to come upon numerous parties of pleasure.

The phenomenon of this Landslip is related in all the guide books, so I need not comment upon it. On the southern side, when you get near Bonchurch, the scene becomes open and you lose the woods, but are presented with the immense concave of rugged mountain from which this mass of land had been formerly torn. By a steep path you reach the road leading to Bonchurch. There are spots in this island which might be selected as pictures of perfect rural scenery, but adjacent to almost all of them you are forcibly reminded that the railroads and the steamers have brought throngs of visitors. Thus, when I got on the high road which led straight down to Bonchurch, I came to an eminence which reminded me of such a scene as you would see introduced in a painting by Salvator Rosa, but on turning a few yards to the right I saw a palatial hotel, which, with its numerous occupants and accessories, showed me that London and its plutocracy had sent plenty of representatives here. After all, it could not be otherwise; though I was told by travellers whom I met on this excursion that Jersey is, for beauty of scenery, as far superior to the Isle of Wight as the latter is to the Isle of Man. Still very many indeed have fixed on the Isle of Wight as a summer residence. A precipitous descent from the eminence leads to Bonchurch, but I took a private road towards the cliff, and on my way passed what is duly described in all the guide books as being the oldest Norman church in Great Britain, having been built in the time of the Conqueror. It is the smallest one I have ever seen. From this to the cliff is not far, and here the sea is particularly lovely. On the low beach are some rocks which made me envy the inhabitants of Bonchurch and Ventnor, who have during summer this primitive bathing place. The approach to it is sheltered by the high precipitous cliff. I went then by the high-road to Ventnor. This is called the rocky Ventnor. As to the locality, it is, from the air and its vicinity to the sea, of course a desirable residence; yet there is a sad want of trees. The houses are all built of the grey granite that abounds here; and so large are they, and so spacious are the streets, that though the descent of the highest towards the sea, and the intermediate ones also, forms a grand panorama as viewed from a vessel, still the exposure to the sun must render the town extremely hot. I have omitted to speak of the sights at Bonchurch, the cross on the Pulpit Rock, and the Under Lake or Pond, because these things are all noted at length in the guide books. It may be said to be part of Ventnor; but at the entrance to Bonchurch commences that remarkable part of the island called the Undercliff, which varies from 60 ft. to 100 ft. high, so well planted, so extremely well sheltered from any harsh winds, as to render it a most eligible locality for consumptive patients; in fact, it is called by some the British Madeira. The whole way from Bonchurch to Roches End, a distance of about twelve miles, is traversed by an excellent road, which on the right has St. Boniface Cliff, and at about three quarters of a mile distance the sea. The place which struck me as the finest that I passed was Steep Cliff Castle. On the right side the larch plantations, the fountains here and there, and on the left the bright view of the sea, are continued till you get to St. Lawrence. Shortly afterwards there is an absence of trees till you arrive at the road leading to Blackgang Chine; nearly opposite to this is St. Catherine's Mount, whose summit is the highest point in the island, 600 ft. above the level of the sea. It is by a gradual descent over grassy hillocks smooth as a lawn that you reach this point, on which is a granite lighthouse, whose history is very interesting. When I had satisfied myself with seeing one of the finest prospects which one can have in England, including Portland, the Needles, the whole coast of Dorsetshire, and Hampshire, I found it comparatively easy to get down to the road leading to Blackgang Chine. By a narrow way, passing some cottages—which are, as usual here, built with a view of accommodating summer residents—you arrive after a walk of two miles at a very stupendous cliff, at the extremity of which is what may be called a huge yawning fissure in the mountain side—gloomy, bleak, precipitous—descended by a steep flight of steps. It has every feature of sublimity about it. But the sea below, with its pebbly shore, contrasts with this in its tranquil clearness. Shortly after I left the descent dark clouds, which had been impending over the Mount, burst upon the earth in an almost terrific shower of hail, and covered the ground for a depth of two feet with hailstones.

I had just time to reach a small village called Chale, near the entrance of the Chine road, and get housed in a very good hotel, where I was glad to have a little rest after the day's walk. It was, notwithstanding its size and grand appearance, and the season of the year, quite a primitive one, and except one or two other men who, like myself, had sought refuge from the pelting of the pitiless storm, there were no occupants of the large room, though some dressmakers on their holiday trip had taken up their abode in the kitchen offices. I accounted for its emptiness by the circumstance of there being no facilities for bathing near it. I was determined to take the morning for proceeding to Freshwater and Allum Bay, but before going away I went over to see the very ancient church which is opposite the hotel. It is said to be of the time of the Normans, and is a massive stone structure. The thickness of the walls and the stability of the mullions, the antiquity of the painted glass windows, make me class it along with two others which I saw on this island, one at Newport and the other at Carisbrooke. As the road was now my only means of travelling, there being no railway, in place of walking from this place to Freshwater Bay, for the most part through an open country and inland, I thought it better to take my seat on the omnibus, which left at ten in the morning, and I for my part consider it, although an humble conveyance, a much more pleasant one than the luxurious railway carriage on a fine summer's day, as it gives you more opportunity of seeing the country, and is wholly different from the vehicle which bears the same name in London.

The country which we passed through to Brixtone was hilly but open, and for the most part lay in pasturage and orchards, in which apple-trees were most abundant. We saw at the distance of about five miles from Chale the large column which was raised on the occasion of the peace of 1814; it is a very prominent object. We did not reach the hotel at Freshwater until late in the afternoon, and found there the grandeur of a London hotel and its concomitant charges, but soon after a hasty luncheon I went out on the down which leads from this to the Needles, and from the side of which one has an ample view of Allum Bay. The vast cliff which surrounds the whole of Allum Bay is one half of it composed of chalk, with minute particles of flint showing through; and the opposite segment most strangely variegated with clay and stones of varied colours, and partly planted. The chalk is of a pure bluish white. The down terminates abruptly, and you go by a bye-path towards the sea, where is a small fort. On the left of this fort are five chalk rocks, on the nearest of which is a lighthouse; the others stand out in the sea. Whether it is that the constant beating of the sea has reduced the height of these rocks and filed down their symmetry, I cannot say, but they do not now resemble what they are called—the Needles. On my way back, across the down, which was composed of the sort of velvety turf that one can never tire of walking over, I was shown the entrance to Tennyson's house, which, as all know, he has left some time, though he yet holds the property. I fancy the tide of excursionists must have been much too strong for his taste, and all say here that he was a man of the most retired habits. In the evening I went to Freshwater Bay, and saw the huge rock like a large cromlech that is on the north side of the bay, and which looms like a grand archway. It is a favourite subject for painters and photographers.

But I regret I did not see the cave itself—it can only be entered at low water, and the tide on this occasion did not serve; it is 120 ft. inland. The water is exceedingly clear. The entry to the cave is through a small archway. The highest chalk cliffs in the world, 600 ft. high, are said to be those from Freshwater to Scratchell's Bay. In the interior, Freshwater consists of a straggling line of streets—separated by spaces at long intervals—containing for the most part houses for lodging summer visitors, and a few shops; but I suppose that soon the intervals will be filled up, and it will compose one prodigious town. I stayed here at a small inn, and finding no choice between walking through Calbourne to Carisbrooke, and taking the van in the morning thither, I preferred the latter. The van started at nine, and we went through a pleasantly wooded country, till we arrived opposite the fort which was constructed by Henry VIII., and is now tenanted by a small body of artillery. I was struck with an instance of the primitive simplicity which marks the habits of the inhabitants here: when we arrived at a narrow lane which branched out of the road, the van driver took up into his vehicle a trunk which had been lying about five yards from the road in the lane, and went on with it. He said it was quite enough to see the direction on it, and he would take charge of it. The confiding nature of the owner and the freedom from any apprehension of robbery showed me that we were remote from cities and their villainy. We soon reached Yarmouth, which is by no means an attractive town, and when the tide is out the slime in place of sand which covers its beach must, should think, make it very unhealthy. The streets are narrow, and we crossed the small river with its marshy banks by a wooden bridge, and soon afterwards got into a pleasant wooded country. The pasturage grounds abound very much in the Isle of Wight, and we had these all the way to Shalstone, where is a large stone church, which the coachman told me there were verses written about. It has no bells, but a very high steeple—

Shalstone Church, silly people
Sold their bell and built a steeple.

From this, all the way to Carisbrooke, the road was very narrow, but it was like driving through a beautiful estate; the cornfields were not many, but there were numerous gleaners going through them. The orchards were richly laden with apples. The country was open but undulating. I do not know any aspect of rural life more pleasing than that which meets the view throughout the Isle of Wight. I halted at Carisbrooke, which is simply one long street, and in its centre is the large cathedral. This, similar to several other churches in the island, is very old, and dates from the times of the Normans. My first object was to see the castle at Carisbrooke. This stands on a hill about a mile from the town, and all around it is well wooded. A path through the wood leads to the entrance, with its massive Norman archway, great gate, and adjacent chambers, all of the baronial style, which is shown also in the thickness of the stone walls, a walk round which is levelled at the top; the spacious court within having in its centre the house at present inhabited by the keeper, and near it the enclosure of the famous well. I stayed some time looking at these, and saw the keep in the back part of the building, which is now being newly constructed, I think with questionable taste. I saw the well, and drank of the water, which is brought up in a bucket from a depth of, I think, 260 ft. The patient donkey that goes inside the large wheel which winds up the bucket rope seemed, notwithstanding the heat of the day, to be none the worse for his Sisyphus-like labour, although the poor brute's energies must be very greatly taxed by the number of visitors who come here during a long summer's day. For a specimen of an old baronial castle, this one is certainly worthy of a visit. Visitors are shown the window from which the unhappy Charles endeavoured to escape, and see the chamber where he lingered out some few wretched months in this, his half-way house between the throne and the scaffold. It is, perhaps, from its strength and almost perfect condition as well calculated to bring the mode of life in feudal times home to the mind as any building in the United Kingdom, and I very much doubt if, with all the appliances and aids of these enlightened times to help them, the builders who are now engaged in newly constructing the keep at the rear of the building will ever cement a structure which, like this, will be able to stand, as though it were a rock, the wear and tear of centuries. Of course there are very many photographs and models of the castle and of all the points of interest, and numerous are the itinerant vendors of these. I understood that it is to Her Majesty we are indebted for the arrangement that a very small charge, I think fourpence, is all that the visitor is taxed with on going over the castle. The walk round the walls on a clear day gives you a fine view of the whole island—Cowes, Ryde, Parkhurst, and, I think, most prominent and interesting of all, Osborne Castle. There is still, however, near Carisbrooke Castle another relic of antiquity which must have been built some centuries before it, and yet is not spoken of in any of the guide books: I mean the Roman Villa, the approach to which is entered by a narrow road nearly opposite Carisbrooke Church. This was discovered by the workmen of the present incumbent, who were digging deep to make the foundation for some outhouses, and came to that portion of the villa that had been used for a bath. When the owner of the ground was informed of this, he caused them to make further excavations, and the result was the exhuming a large hall, whose walls were standing to half their original height. To make the truth of the discovery undeniable, the tessellated marble floor, which was uncovered with due care, showed that the workmen of ancient Rome had here constructed their beautiful mosaic work, which is now, both as to the colour of the stones and preservation of their setting, in a perfect state. They are laid in the usual form of mosaics, being of varied colours: white, yellow, black, and purple. A glass framework has been fixed over the hall similar to those seen in a greenhouse to protect it, and the whole is well worthy of an antiquary's study. I walked from this place to Newport, which is quite a city; but we are told that Carisbrooke was originally the capital of the island. So far as fashionable houses and general resort go, Ryde and Cowes might vie with Newport, but, indeed, it is the yachting that has contributed to their grandeur. The principal sight which in Newport is worthy of a visit is the cathedral, where is a marble monument erected by Her Majesty to the memory of Princess Elizabeth, the daughter of Charles I. She is sculptured as lying with a book under her head, and history tells us that this Princess died with her head lying on a Bible. This took place in Carisbrooke

Castle. I went for the first time in my life in England to an ordinary, where the gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood about Newport sat down to dinner, in the afternoon.

The conversation was agreeable, and the fare was very good, and I know not if I ever sat down to a dinner of soup, veal, ham, apple-pie, and plenty of very good ale, for so small a charge as two-and-threepence; not in Great Britain, certainly, where living is perhaps the best, but the price of living requires a fortune to defray it. Nevertheless, in every respect life in England, whether in the cities or in the country, is preferable to life abroad, in any country, that I have visited. I have lived much abroad, and most especially do I notice the self-control and sensible bearing of the English in all ranks of life, as ensuring the respect of those who meet them in travelling. Amongst the inhabitants of many other countries may be found more agreeable and lively and even more intelligent companions, but in the calm self-possession of the men who assert their opinions without excitement, and who are neither subject to apprehension from the menace of espionage, nor buoyed up by the vanity of charlatanism, you recognise the inhabitants of a free country, and the citizens most civilised amongst the sons of men. In the evening I took the coach which leaves Newport for Sandown, and noticed, with regard to this conveyance, how much preferable the seats at the top were to those in the inside. From them you can see the fields and hedgerows, and breathe the pure air of a most genial summer; even some of the ladies had taken seats on the roof. But just as we were about to start, quite a throng of ladies came to take their seats inside. Two, who might have sat as pictures representing Sophia Western and her companion, came last; and one, having taken her seat, proposed to her companion that she should sit on her lap, as there was not room inside, and they must travel onwards. Upon this, one of the gentlemen inside gave up his seat there, and went on the roof. We drove on past Parkhurst, where there is an excellent barrack, and through an open country, slightly hilly, to Arreton, a small village. Here is the churchyard in which is the tomb of the "Dairyman's Daughter." It is only a short distance from where the coach stopped to the church on the hill, so I went to see the tomb. No more interesting character amongst the devoted and earnest clergymen who have laboured in the cause of religion is recorded than the author of "The Dairyman's Daughter," and his tracts were, I believe, the very first that appeared in England, where now, happily, there are millions of such publications in circulation, as well as Leigh Richmond's

"Little Jane" and "The Dairyman's Daughter." All the way from Newport I was seated on the roof with a traveller who kindly imparted a good deal of his experience in different excursions to the country parts of England. I, for one, quite agree with Sir Walter Scott, when he advises persons travelling to enter into conversation freely with those whom they meet; his reason for doing so being that you are certain to elicit some novel piece of information from every one you meet with in this way, even from those who are apparently the dullest. We reached Sandown about two hours after leaving Arreton. Sandown is one of the places that have sprung into existence quite lately, and when you consider its delightful bay and sea air, you are not surprised at so many flocking to it in summer. The railway makes it, as it were, close to Ryde, which last place is the grand resort of visitors from England. I have often gone to Cowes in a yacht from Portsmouth, but in this visit I avoided both places, as reminding one of a segment of mighty London brought beside the sea. I know that Brighton, of all places, eminently deserves the name of "London-super-Mare," but these other two also bear a strong affinity to it. I thought, however, that there would be much of interest in a visit to Culver Cliff, Yaverland, and Brading. The Village Lake, nearly opposite to Sandown, on the other side of the railway from it, is a very agreeable walk also. In proceeding to Culver Cliff, after leaving the hotel situated at the northern extremity of Sandown, the first object you meet, at about half a mile distance, is the coastguard barracks on the other side of the raised road; opposite to which, along the sea-beach, a large number of rafters, fifteen feet deep, are fixed, for the purpose of protecting the margin of the road from the violence of the surge; and about a mile on, north of these, a more permanent barrier in the way of a stone revetment is raised. As the lower beach, all the way to a wide gap that leads near to the cliff adjoining Culver Cliff, is so completely covered with pebbles as to render it difficult to walk, the best way to Culver Cliff is by the high path on the upper cliff. Taking this way, you arrive at a large new stone fort, with enormous embrasures, calculated for mounting the gigantic pieces of ordnance at present in use; this is in an unfinished state. You then ascend a high cliff, till you reach another large fort of brickwork, much more ancient, which certainly has a complete command of the sea; but the crumbling nature of the cliff leads you to conclude that this fort will in time, situated so close as it is to the margin, have to succumb to the inevitable undermining which all the high cliffs on this side of the island have been subject to. Going round the fort, the path which leads to the culminating point on this side of the island is quite precipitous, skirting cornfields, and so close to the edge of the precipice, overlooking the sea, as to make it likely to terrify nervous people. At the end of the cornfields you come to downs completely covered with chalk, and go for a quarter of a mile through them, it being very steep the whole way, till you come to a stile which separates you from the grassy down called Culver Cliff, an elevation which you find is the terminating boundary of this part of the island. In the centre of this down is a large granite monument to the memory of Lord Yarborough. The view from this point of the Channel—Sea View, Helen's Bay, White's Bay, and Brading Harbour—is certainly very fine. After this a path, by a gentle descent, leads you to Bembridge Fort, which is, I think, the best specimen of fortification in the island. I particularly noticed the way in which the ditch is commanded, so as to make it fatal for any force to attempt escalading it by passing across. Over the long downs again, after a mile and a half, you come to the turn which leads to Yaverland. This is a regular specimen of a hamlet of bygone days. The very old small church, manor house, and shady elm trees in front of them, are all very interesting. I do not feel at all sure that this place will long retain the curious quaint appearance which it now presents, but such as it is, it is one of the few spots in the nooks and corners of England unchanged by time. After this, my visit was to another old-world locality, the town of Brading, a long street of rather dilapidated houses. The bull ring in its centre leads you back to former times, and the stocks adjacent to the massive stone church at the foot of the hill which terminates the town are another remnant of antique usages. I fancy that these are preserved as curiosities. In the churchyard I saw the monument and copied the epitaph over the tomb of little Jane. When I went inside the spacious Norman church I thought I should have seen, amongst the monuments to the memory of many of the Oglanders, one commemorating General Oglander, as gallant and as good a soldier as ever bore rank in the service; who had passed the whole of his life in the army, lost an arm at St. Sebastian, and been wounded severely elsewhere. He died on active service in China, and, certainly, in passing the tombs of those whom heraldry professes to hold in estimation, I could not but think of the words of the poet:—

> Count me those only who are good and great—

as the man I speak of was not only a good and gallant soldier, but a very zealous and pious Christian, and I do not think that any of the soldiers or officers who served under him, especially those who had been in his regiment, ever mentioned his name except with esteem and regard. The circumstance of much of the land in this part of the country having been planted with oaks at the time of the Conquest gave rise to his ancestors (who were given a large estate by the Norman Conqueror) getting the name of Oaklander, or Oglander, as it became afterwards. Forests of oak even now compose most part of the family estate, and the railway from Brading to Ryde runs through them. Nunwell is the name of this family place, and the avenue up to it, though much neglected, leads you through many fine woodland scenes. At the end you see the house, a large brick mansion, standing on a high knoll, with gardens in its rear which extend to the level. I returned after my trip to Sandown.

The approach to Sea View is by an exceedingly pretty drive from the Ryde Road. But you are, besides being stopped by turnpikes, forcibly reminded of the inconvenience attending a residence in a place which has no public conveyance plying between it and any other town. The road, though picturesque, is very hilly, and it took me nearly two hours to go over the six miles from Ryde railway station. As for the facilities of bathing, the sandy beach and the rocks adjacent are so much in its favour that I was not surprised to find that all the lodging-houses, though very scanty in accommodation, had been taken for the summer.

CHARLES LEVER.

IT was the desire of Charles Lever's heart to base his literary reputation on his later novels; but the world in its perversity will, perhaps, insist upon remembering him rather upon the strength of "The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer" and "Charles O'Malley."

There are moods of criticism unfavourable to the class of novels whereof "The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer" is a type. The adventures of the practical joker and the comic miseries of his numerous victims are not, it must be admitted, the materials of the highest forms of art. The funny side of scenes in which the chief performers habitually drink a great deal too much, the amusing aspect of getting into debt on small means, thriftlessness from a merry point of view, the comedy of disregarding at any cost the feelings of all the characters who are not boiling over with animal spirits, including the respectable father and the anxious mother—these are not delights in literature altogether without alloy; but, before they are condemned, the question arises whether the author has presented a faithful picture of certain phases of the life of the time. Perhaps it is too soon yet to apply this test to the earlier works of Charles Lever; but it must be confessed that long ago a suspicion arose, and was shared in apparently by the author himself, that "Charles O'Malley," "Jack Hinton, the Guardsman," and the rest of them were not works of art in the high sense of the term. To study life in any aspect and to present it conscientiously in fiction is a laborious task; but to take up certain manners and habits of particular classes of men, and from that point to abandon observation and rely upon ingenuity for the construction of an entertaining story, is much easier. The elements of which the "Harry Lorrequer" series of novels are composed are true enough to life. The guardsman, the dragoon, the priest, the hard-drinker, the young lady, as they may be seen in Ireland, are immediately recognised; but the dramatic movement of the novel is pure invention. It is the fond dream of the practical joker, and not his actual experience. If the Harry Lorrequer of real life could shape a few years of his young time in accordance with his fancy, he would go through just such scenes as those related in the novel; but, as a matter of fact, he does not enjoy himself to any great extent in that fashion. The story, in spite of its seeming realism, is as much a romance as the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." It is not quite thus with "Gil Blas," "Tom Jones," and "Barry Lyndon." In these, construction and movement, as well as character and manner, are typical and, so to speak, pictorial. They are sections cut out of the real action of the time. We remember them as representations by the hand of an artist; we look back upon the doings of Con Cregan and Charles O'Malley as clever contrivances of the author to afford us so many hours' amusement. But in this class they are of very superior workmanship, and taken alone they would be enough to indicate the high intelligence and culture of the author.

It was the half-artificial character of his work in this line which led, no doubt, to that remarkable change in Lever's career as a novelist begun by the publication of "The Fortunes of Glencore." "Harry Lorrequer," his first venture, was not a serious literary effort. He did not put his heart into it. It was the mere effluence of animal spirits. Had it failed he would most likely have attempted something higher at once; for he was a born writer, and was certain to grow into literary work. The success of his first novel was not wholly a fortunate thing for him. The world has, upon the whole, not much reason to regret it; for when the worst is said it would be hard to spare the library of rollicking stories on which he was employed during the next eighteen years; but the author might perhaps have won nobler laurels if he had not been tempted to remain in the current into which he drifted in the production of his first tale. He was fifty years old when he began to write seriously. His best working days were past when he set himself the task of doing himself justice.

There is nothing in the history of literature exactly to correspond with the sudden and complete change in Lever's novels introduced by "The Fortunes of Glencore." Most authors change as time moves on, and many have at certain periods of their lives chosen new fields of labour; but Lever, half a century old, deliberately set himself to begin a fresh career. During twenty years of brilliant success he had been working a vein discovered almost by accident; but in his heart all the time was an ideal of literary labour to which he had given no practical heed. He had won his laurels, as it were, by sleight-of-hand, but his native ambition had never been satisfied. While he had been amusing the public with farce, he had been studying life and character with a profound longing for a higher order of art, and when once he listened to the inward voice and followed it, he never turned back into his old courses. His career as a novelist is in two wholly distinct chapters; the first begins with "Harry Lorrequer," and ends with "The Martins of Cro'Martin;" the last opens with "The Fortunes of Glencore," and concludes with "Lord Kilgobbin." There is little relationship between the two series. They appeal to a different class of readers, and to another tribunal of judgment. There are ardent admirers of "Harry Lorrequer" who read the book again and again and keep it with them as a constant companion. To these "Glencore" was a disappointment, and all the subsequent novels in some sort a calamity; while those who know how to enjoy "Sir Brook Fosbroke" find "Charles O'Malley" profitless and almost dreary reading.

The preface to "Glencore" is a confession that the author did not wish to stake his name on the novels which had employed him for eighteen years. "If I have never disguised from myself," he says, "the grounds of any humble success I have attained to as a writer of fiction; if I have always had before me the fact that to movement and action, the stir of incident, and a certain light-heartedness and gaiety of temperament, more easy to impart to others than to repress in oneself, I have owed much if not all of whatever popularity I have enjoyed, I have yet felt, or fancied that I felt, that it would be in the delineation of very different scenes and the portraiture of very different emotions that I should reap what I would reckon as a real success. . . . . Years have imparted, and time has but confirmed me in, the notion, that any skill I possess lies in the detection of character and the unravelment of that tangled skein which makes up human motives." In that faith he began a new literary life, and though the critics told him he had made a mistake, he persevered, and has been a highly successful novel-writer in the sense of that preface for fifteen years.

There was never much self-deception about Mr. Lever. He was a man of the world, a scholar, and a thinker, as well as a fiction-writer, and was not apt to be the sport of delusions. Beyond question the novels of his later style are marked by great skill in the detection of character and in the unravelment of human motives. But his skill is that of a keen observer and an accurate thinker; he perceives character, but he has not the instinctive feeling for character which is to be seen in the works of many great novelists—Anthony Trollope for instance. The two men are examples of the two schools. Trollope is so little successful as a mere *observer* of character that when he introduces people of a class of society in which he does not move they are puppets. His bagmen and his shopkeepers have no real vitality, but his archdeacons, his bishops, his fine gentlemen, his ladies, move and speak with a perfection of naturalness and ease never wholly reached by Mr. Lever's best-drawn personages—good and life-like as they often are; but Mr. Lever, on the other hand, is as successful with one class as with another. It matters not whether he has lived among them, be they beggars or peers; if he has had an opportunity of watching them he can delineate them all with about equal success. This was not, however, enough for a high success in fiction, and Mr. Lever brought other and not less important qualifications to his work. He had great knowledge of life in aspects not revealed to many writers, and he had wit and rare intellectual gifts, and a fine manly turn of character. With all this he was by nature a story-teller. In any age and at any stage in the development of literature he would have made his mark in the narrative form of invention. In incident and anecdote he was inexhaustible. Looked at closely his fictions are a succession of anecdotes, incidents, and scenes. His constructive powers were not remarkable. There is no profound, spontaneous, comprehensive movement of the whole story, each passage and paragraph performing its part. The plot is loose, with a tendency to fall to pieces towards the end. "The Fortunes of Glencore," on which he asked his readers to determine that he was capable of the higher class of fiction, was in this respect particularly defective. The personages and events are but indifferently wrought into the body of the story, and they shuffle off the stage towards the close in a very unsatisfactory fashion.

As an essayist Charles Lever has laid no foundation for an enduring fame, mainly because he has been content to treat of passing events. His "O'Dowd" papers are clever, witty, and thoughtful. The range of subjects on which he touched during so many years are the finest proofs he has left of his rare versatility. Not since the death of Professor Wilson has so great a loss befallen the old Edinburgh magazine. In fiction of the order of his later style he has left no man of mark behind him except the veteran author of "Pelham."

RICHARD GOWING.

THE BALLAD OF ZEPHADEE.

THE baron sat among his guests—
They drank the ruby wine,
While ember light showed faces bright,
And made the goblets shine.

Witch-cries rode rampant on the wind,
Down came the drenching rain;
The guests drank on, and every one
Filled full his cup again.

The baron had his daughter there—
She sat at his right hand,
And bosoms swelled when eyes beheld
The love of all the land.

Her face was as a lady-smock,
Red fainting in the white;
Ay, she was fair and debonnair—
Thrice worthy any knight.

No lips had ever won her heart,
Though lips had often said,
"Sweet Angeline, wilt thou be mine?"
And she had turned her head.

Now while loud laughter drowned the jest,
And brown beer drowned despight,
A minstrel came in Jesus' name
For shelter from the night.

"What is thy name?" the baron said;
"A minstrel seemest thou;
An' thou dost bring a song to sing,
Thou shalt be served, I trow."

"Good master of the festal throng,
I come from Paynim strand,
And I will sing of our brave king
Who fights in Holyland."

"What is thy name?" the baron cried.
"I come from far-off strand."
"Now, fire and flame, what is thy name?"
"I come from Fairyland."

Fierce anger lit the baron's brow;
He shouted, sword in hand,
With scoffing breath, "Take him to death!
He comes from Fairyland."

The minstrel moved nor eye nor limb,
But said as he did stand,
"Drop down thy sword upon the board:
I come from Fairyland."

"Take him to death!" the baron cried.
The minstrel one word spake:
Down dropped the sword upon the board,
And all but one did quake.

Then joy was in the minstrel's eye;
"Come hither, Angeline;
My name to thee is Zephadee;
I would that thou wert mine.

"Dear maid, I've searched through Fairyland
For one as fair as thee,
And none but thou, and this I vow,
Hath charmëd Zephadee."

She looked into his face and saw
The lover of her dreams:
"Yea, I am thine, thy Angeline,
Thou lover of my dreams.

"I knew that thou would'st come for me
In sweet love-land to roam,
Where fairies play by night and day
About thy palace home."

The guests were bounden by a spell;
They could not laugh nor frown
If one held up a brimming cup
He could not lay it down.

The minstrel turned him to the guests,
And took away the charm:
"I came not here to bring ye fear,
Or work ye any harm.

"I came to seek a maiden's smile,
And find my wonder joy—
Fair Angeline for aye is mine,
And our love may not cloy.

"Now let the wine go round again,
And to this festal band
I straight will tell what thing befel
That won me Fairyland.

"I journeyed long from Palestine,
And came to Britain's shore.
(Sit, love, by me, thy Zephadee,
And I will tell thee more.)

"I sang of deeds in Holyland—
I sang of Richard's fame,
And by the sea there came to me
A grey man, old and lame.

"That old grey-bearded man came close,
And took me by the hand:
'Wilt sing again to me that strain,
And win thee Fairyland?'

"I laughed because his words seemed strange,
And laughing loosed his hand:
I sang again to him that strain,
And won me Fairyland.

"Give me thy child, and I will give
Whate'er thou mayst demand;
At dawn of day we'll sail away
Unto the Summer land.

"There all that is, is surely best,
There love is love indeed,
And care is not in that fair spot,
And sorrows do not bleed.

"All that are in the isle of bliss,
Delight in every day.
Ah ! ye who tread in daily dread
Know not how blest are they."

The baron his young daughter gave
Unto that stranger guest,
"And now," said he, "give thou to me
The thing that is the best."

"When shines the full moon on the earth,
Shall be what is the best :
Sweet Angeline, now thou art mine,
And joy is with my quest."

Proud Zephadee and Angeline
Watched for the lagging day ;
The morning came with sun aflame,
And gold was on the bay.

A rosy bark with silken sails
Danced lightly in the wind ;
The lovers two went o'er the blue,
And left the land behind.

Upon the castle's battlements
The baron's guests did stand,
And watched them glide upon the tide
Away to Fairyland.

Away ! away ! in the golden morn !
Toward the west away !
The bark swept on and they were gone
For ever and for aye !

The baron waited for the moon,
The full moon in the sky ;
The sun set thrice, and then his eyes
Beheld the moon on high.

He looked thereon with anxious face,
Now ! now he would be blest !
He fell away from dark and day,
For death it is the best.

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLANTS OF BARTON," "THE VALLEY OF POPPIES," &c.

CHAPTER IX.

JACOB GETS UP EARLY AND MAKES THE ACQUAINTANCE OF SPENZONIAN WHIFFLER.

EARLY the next morning Jacob was awakened by a noise of thumping, and plunging, and knocking, and scrubbing, and scouring. When he had dressed, and was descending the stairs, he was saluted with a rough push from a side door, and an exclamation of: "Now, you sir, can't you keep to the right when you see that the other side's wet?" On turning round he met the gaze of Dorothy Cantrill, wrapped up to the neck in a coarse apron, and with her arms black and bare. She glared at him furiously for a moment, and then went on rubbing the brass round a bedroom key-hole with an energy quite unnecessary upon such a trifle of metal. A boy, coming upstairs, in corduroy clothes (ornamented with brass buttons, and made something after the fashion of Harlequin's suit), almost exploded, in apparently desperate efforts to keep down a strong exercise of his risible faculties; and looking at Jacob several times, over his shoulder, blew out his cheeks, held his sides, and stooped, as if with great effort, to intimate that he was very much tickled and delighted at Dorothy's conduct.

"Now then, you Spen, have you brought that brush?" cried Dorothy, dashing out upon Whiffler, when he had reached the landing, and seizing the brush in question; "now fetch me a pail:" whereupon Whiffler, leaping down six stairs at a time and turning a somersault at the bottom, disappeared at the back of the house.

Below stairs Jacob found his new abode in extraordinary disorder. It was just as though the whole of the furniture, having had a midnight revel with Hans Christian Andersen, had been transfixed in their unlawful positions by some angry magician. Chairs were locked in fond embraces, or standing carelessly upside down. Tables were making love to arm-chairs. Ornaments of every description had been romping on the sofa. A little jaunty card table was perched upon a sideboard, petrified no doubt in the very act of shouting "hurrah!" and crowing over the rest of its less nimble companions. There was a great patch of black on the hearth, and the poker and tongs had turned white with rage (or whitening) at the conduct of a tea kettle which was quietly emptying itself upon them, having tipped forward in consequence of the fall of a few red cinders, which, in the water beneath, hissed an additional insult to the fire-irons.

Jacob had hardly time to note all this, ere Dorothy, with a female lieutenant, entered the room. Her first inquiry was, had Jacob any eyes. Jacob said he had, and so he thought had somebody else, for Whiffler was peeping round the door at him with an unmistakable pair, which twinkled and flashed like stars.

"Well, and couldn't you see that kettle, young sir?" said Dorothy, seizing the offending vessel and thrusting it deep down among the cinders. "It's well lads should come to school to learn something; it's precious little sense or manners they are born with; getting up at five o'clock on a cleaning morning, without why or wherefore, or by your leave or warning. Here, Whiffler, take this young gentleman out into the fields till I've done, and don't stand grinning there, or I'll polish your buttons till the brass shames your brazen face."

"Now, Master Jacob, this serves you right," said a still small voice emanating from Jacob's conscience. "It was only yesterday that you kissed Susan Harley, and promised never to forget her, and it was only last evening that you did something worse than forgetting her: you only remembered her to think how lucky you were in having so soon partially replaced her by another kind-hearted woman, who would, you felt sure, be a second Susan to you. Now be warned, Jacob; make new friends if you like, and as many as you can, but prize the old and tried ones, and never let the new ones thrust them from their places in the deepest recesses of your heart."

"Here, don't stand staring there," said Whiffler, handing Jacob his cap, "ain't you a-goin' in for a run? I'll bet a stoney fox-eye and a lumbo to thirty commonies that I beat you at a hop, skip, and jump;" and away went Whiffler from the back door, up the garden path, and over the railings at the end, into the open meadows. But Jacob was too much surprised and bewildered at the events of the preceding ten minutes to run after him; so Whiffler came back again.

"Don't get a minding her, bless you; she'll be as good as pie after the first round of toast, and better than duck and green peas when the school bell rings: now, ain't you in for a lark?—up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up," went on this volatile youth, and every time he said "up" he leapt over his own head, concluding by striking a circus attitude and kissing the tips of his fingers first to Jacob, and then to a couple of poplar trees and to six gooseberry bushes; after which dramatic demonstration he assumed a quieter manner and conducted himself with a sort of rational consideration.

"And are you one of the boarders?" inquired Jacob.

"Am I? ain't I? that's all," answered Whiffler.

"But are you really?" said Jacob, doubtingly.

"You're another," was all the somersault-thrower said, but he looked up into Jacob's face with such a thoroughly good-natured smile that Jacob could not feel offended.

"A boarder, Mister—I beg your pardon, who have I the honour of addressing—what name, sir?" said the nimble youth, throwing his head aside, sticking his arms akimbo, and looking excessively funny.

"Jacob Martyn," said Jacob laughing.

"Well, Mister Martyn, now I'll tell you the sort of boarding this cheild would like. I should like, this ere werry moment, to be a-boarding of a pirate ship with two broadswords—a phantom bark at the back, and five-and-twenty bally gals in buck musling, luminated with blue fire—that's your time of day," said Whiffler, with suitable pantomime; concluding his brief sketch of the height to which his ambitious hopes soared by conducting an imaginary sword encounter with an imaginary foe, and exclaiming, when the said foe was supposed to have fallen, weltering in his blood, "Death to the traitors—Old England for ever!" which patriotic and loyal sentiment he followed up by whistling "God save the Queen" in the highest key ever attempted by whistler, or Whiffler, before or since. Then, as if he had done and said nothing at all unusual, he became something like a natural specimen of juvenile human nature again, and commented thus upon the outline of fame and glory which he had drawn: "But there ain't no such luck at present, mister. I must be content to learn my verbs and adjectives—English grammar is the art of speaking and writing the English language with propriety. But never mind, wait a wee, as Scotchy Farlane, the Athenian Hercules, used to say when Scotch Jessie, the Zephyr of the Arena, was a-fetching of him home from the 'Arena's Retreat—licensed to be drunk on the premises'—wait a wee!"

"You're a very queer fellow," said Jacob; "I can't make you out. But since you have asked me my name, tell me yours."

"Spenzonian Whiffler—they used to call me Spen Whiff for short, and Spen for shorter," replied the boy.

"Why, your name is as funny as yourself," said Jacob.

"Well, it belonged to a funny fellow, you see. I was christened after my great grandfather, who turned five-and-forty somersaults at a stretch and died at Drewry Lane, through a-swallowing of a red-hot poker when a-playing Pantaloon, which he was obliged to take up with in his old age," replied Whiffler.

"Why, he must have been mad to have done such a thing."

"What, as play Pantaloon?" inquired the descendant of the unfortunate pantomimist.

"No, no—mad to put a red-hot poker into his mouth," said Jacob.

"Nonsense; it wasn't real, of course. Don't you know?—poker wooden property, painted red at the end, sometimes used in conjuring trick, made like a telescope."

"How long have you been here, then?" inquired Jacob.

"Well, I'm a-going in sixteen now," said Whiffler, knitting his brows and losing himself for a moment apparently in deep thought—"and I made my first pot-hook when I was about fourteen."

"Where did you make it?" asked Jacob.

"In the last desk but one."

"What, here, at Cartown?"

"Rather," said Whiffler; "I never made any nowhere else."

"Where does your father live?" asked Jacob.

"I don't think I have one—at least Petroski said I hadn't, nor a mother neither."

"And who's Petroski?"

"Ah, Pet; he was the Indiarubber Wonder, and a wonder and a wonner he was too; he could do everything—the dagger trick, the globes, the stilts, the tight-rope, the bottle feat; but he left the circus and came here as clown in the 'Fairy Diamonds, or the Demons of Domingoe,' a comic Christmas pantomime performed at Cartown for a whole week, two Christmases ago; he's dead—poor Pet, poor old fellow!" said Spen Whiffler, with emotion; but he was too full of mother wit and good humour for sadness to leave more than a momentary impression upon his features—sorrow glided over his face like a cloud flitting across a sunny landscape, leaving no trace behind it.

"How did he die? What was the matter with him?" inquired Jacob, beginning to feel very much interested in his new and strange companion.

"He died chiefly through want of breath, after playing for a week and getting no salary, the treasury being done up. Being unable to get either beef or brandy, poor Pet soon lost his breath. It didn't matter so much about me, he used to say, I should live to be the pride of the profession; and here I am a-learning of nouns, as if it made any difference to me whether a chair is a noun or a pronoun, or anythin' else, for the matter of that. But I'll try, I'll try; for poor old Pet cried with delight when Mr. Spawling said he would take me and teach me—Pet didn't like the idea of me a-coming to grief as he had done. So at last he said I wasn't to be the pride of the profession as a sprite or nothing of that sort, but as an ornament to society. Poor old Pet!—a pretty ornament I shall be."

"Then you have no friends," said Jacob, with much sympathy in the tone of his voice.

"No; that's it, you see, only Mister Spawling; and I can't find it in my heart to run away when he is so kind to me. And there's something else—do you believe in ghosts, Mister Jacob?"

"Call me Jacob—not Mister, and I'll call you Spen," said Jacob.

"Well, then, Jacob, do you believe in ghosts?"

"No! I never saw one," Jacob replied.

"Well, I have," went on Whiffler. "I'll tell you; but it is a secret, you know. I started to run away one night—I couldn't help it—I dropped a little bundle of clothes out of the window, and then dropped myself after them. The moon was a-shining bright, and when I got to the churchyard, yonder, I saw Petroski's ghost."

"No!" said Jacob, looking round as if he expected to see the indiarubber man bounding along behind him.

"I did, right over his grave, a-signifying with its hands that I was to go back, and not be an ungrateful rascal. I thought it was a sort of moonbeam at first; but no—it was poor old Pet; and I went back, and got into the house again without disturbing anybody."

For more than two hours the two boys walked and talked, Spen brimming over with fun and frolic, and taking an especial delight in telling the wondering boy from Middleton all the incidents of his life.

"You must know the governor, Mr. Spawling, is a bit of an actor himself—he calls it helocution," said Spen; "he was a reg'lar patron of the drama when we came down here afore poor Pet died."

"Tell me all about it," said Jacob.

"Well, you see, we wos a-playing in the country—a thief of a manager made up a sort of scratch company—half dramatic, half circus—a reg'lar mixture. When we come here he bolted; the ghost hadn't walked, as they say, for a long time. Mr. Spawling was our principal patron; he used to bring the boys and give bespeaks, and he assisted the treasury in other ways. The parson took on about Mr. S. a-doing of this, but, however, there was no time for a row. Poor old Pet was took awfully ill. Mr. S., the governor, he soon heard this, and he come to see him; Pet used to sing a song about a friend coming at last, but ah! 'twas too late, and so when Mr. S., the governor, you know, comes, the poor old boy he whispers—

A friend came at last,
Who had heard of Pet's fate;
He approached his straw pallet,
But ah! 'twas too late.

And it was, poor dear old boy, and Mr. S., the governor, he fairly broke down, and he reg'lar cried, and leaned his head on his hand a-sobbing; but Pet he was as cheerful as could be, and he says, 'Oh! sir, if you would but put Spen in the way of getting his living away from the saw-dust, and out of the glare of the footlights!' And Mr. S., he says, 'I will, Petroski, I will;' and then old Pet he sings in his dry way, as if he were a-whispering, he sings that a friend come at last, and he wasn't too late, and then by'm-by he puts out his hand to thank Mr. S., and then he goes off to sleep, and he was dead; leaving me a worse orphan than ever, and a blubbering orphan as was nigh a broken hearted."

"What a sad story!" said Jacob through his tears; "how good Mr. Spawling must be!"

"Should think he was," said Spen. "Now, no blubbering—it ain't no good—here you go up—up—up—up—up—."

Spen would have astonished the little arab tumblers of the London streets; he bounded along the roads as if he were in a well saw-dusted circus. At the very edge of Cartown Dale he pulled up to tell Jacob that this valley reminded him of nothing so much as a scene in a London pantomime, in which he had played a sprite for so many nights running that he could not tell how many.

But never in any theatre, except in Nature's play-house, had there been such a scene as that valley of Cartown which opened up at the feet of Jacob and Whiffler; a valley studded with alabaster rocks jutting out from clumps of green foliage, with a rippling river running down the centre, and a white road that went winding away by the side of the brook till both were lost in a wood.

"This is what I like," said Jacob; "is it not grand? Don't you feel as if you could leap with joy and fly over to the other side, or roll down into the brook below?"

"Ah, that would be a trick! You would make a fortune in a twelvemonth if you could do that. Mr. Spawling should ride in his carriage, and I'd build a monument to Pet as high as the church, and I'd pay for no end of people to go into no end of circuses and theatres," was Spen's reply.

Jacob thereupon felt a vague sort of conscious superiority to Spen, who did not appreciate his enthusiastic admiration of the gorgeous scene before them. While Jacob was up in the sky of wonder, Whiffler was in the ring among the saw-dust. At least some such thought passed through Jacob's mind; and yet the two boys mutually felt, as only boys could feel, on so short an acquaintance, a deep sympathy with each other. Before they reached home again they were fast friends.

And when they did reach home again, as they now called Spawling's School? Well, everything was in astonishing order. The wrathful magician had released the chairs and tables, and brought down the bumptious little card table from the sideboard; and in fact everything was the pink of neatness. Cups and saucers shone on a large quantity of white table cloth; Mr. Spawling was sitting in his arm-chair reading a book; and Dorothy was cutting a pile of white bread and butter, and watching at the same time an hour-glass, from the top to the bottom of which the sand was running in a little golden stream.

Whiffler (after changing his Harlequin jacket for a loose blouse) took his seat meekly at the bottom of the table. Dorothy requested Jacob to sit on the other side, at the corner near Mr. Spawling, who looked up and said he hoped Spenny had shown Master Martyn the beauties of the country, and that he had not been guilty of any absurd tricks. Jacob said his companion had been very kind. Accompanied by some other common-place remarks, breakfast was finished; shortly after which Whiffler quietly disappeared, and almost immediately the school-bell began to ring, so furiously at first that it was quite startling; but gradually it became slower and slower, and softer and softer, until at last it died out in a quiet murmur; whereupon Mr. Spawling put down his book, and the master and the new pupil went to school.

CHAPTER X.

MR. GREGORY SPAWLING AS AN EDUCATOR.

In the days of the first public school at Cartown education was generally regarded as a privilege only intended for those who could afford the time and money necessary to be expended upon it. The Education Act had been dreamed of by a few maniacs, who contended that every child was the rightful heir to knowledge; but these dangerous persons had little or no influence, though they were getting the thin end of the wedge into the constitution by means of British and National Schools, which provided cheap learning in some of the large manufacturing towns. The Cartown school, started by Mr. Spawling, with the aid of a local committee, was a wonderful advance for the northern division of the Midland mining county, though many of the people of Cartown regarded Mr. Spawling as a mild kind of lunatic, who could do little harm or good, and who was at the same time a kind-hearted man and loved the poor.

As many other persons, matters, and things are crowding into my canvas, and presenting themselves for recognition, I must leave the reader to imagine the character and capacity of the public school at Cartown, premising by the way that Jacob was Mr. Spawling's only boarder, and that the advertisement which the schoolmaster sent to Middleton was the first announcement Mr. Spawling had made of his intention to receive boarders.

The pupils were a happy family. Mr. Spawling tried to teach them to think as well as to read and write and work out elaborate arithmetical problems. He made himself the personal friend of every individual boy; he was an excellent judge of character; he gauged the capacities of his scholars separately; and in his way was a model schoolmaster.

Spen Whiffler was the low comedy boy, the merriman, the Touchstone of the school. He could draw as many funny things on his slate as he could cut queer capers in the play-ground. Once he had had a fight with the tall boy who came from a long distance every day to school, in company with a bag of books and a particularly plain luncheon; during the encounter the tall boy had not once been able to hit Spen, while Spen, on the other hand, contrived to knock his man down; and when his man was down, Spen turned a somersault over his prostrate form, and then posing himself dramatically with one foot upon the tall boy's body, crowed loudly like a cock, upon which the tall boy from the country could not restrain his laughter, and a lasting friendship was thereupon cemented. Jacob had this story from the tall boy's cousin.

One day at school was very much like another. All the year round the reading, and writing, and ciphering, and spelling, and dictation went on with little variety, save now and then when the master delivered a short lecture from his desk, or the "mapping day" came round, as it did every first and last Friday in every month.

One of the most agreeable things for the pupils on mapping day was a general permission to go into the yard to mix Indian ink at the pump.

There was a mysterious charm attending these brief moments of leisure outside the school just before the bell rang for departure. The hum of the school coming through the windows increased the sense of quiet without, and seemed to enhance the freedom of the time. Mapping was a branch of education in which only a few of the elder boys were instructed, and it was carried on in a special little room behind the master's desk.

This room communicated with the yard, in which there was a pump with a leaden spout. The water was always turned on. It made a continual pleasant pattering music as it fell into a trough. When Jacob and Spen were here together, the Indian ink, used for making the mountains and rivers in "The Land of Palestine" and "The British Islands," and the Prussian blue for colouring the sea to the extent of half an inch all round these said countries, required more mixing than usual, the operation being varied by Spen's tricks and witty sayings. But if Spen began these ten minutes as merriman or Touchstone, he frequently became more like Jacques than the wearer of the cap and bells before the ink was considered sufficiently black for the little wavy rivers, and the blue became sufficiently blue for the half-inch sea. More than once he sat on the edge of the trough, and wondered where everybody would be in ten years, and especially whether, after such a lapse of time, he would be mixing ink to map the Nile on a sheet of cartridge paper, or whether he would be mixing colour to blacken his own eyebrows and to redden his own cheeks.

After school hours, Mr. Gregory Spawling frequently made long excursions with Jacob into the country. He would stimulate the boy's natural love of the beautiful by explanations of form and colour, and remarks upon the picturesque in nature and in art. The schoolmaster's own views were often supported with apt quotations from Shakespeare and the old dramatists. The incomparable bard always found a clever, ingenious, and loving interpreter in Mr. Spawling, who evidently knew him almost by heart.

The schoolmaster, very early during the friendship which was established between himself and Jacob, gave his pupil a glimpse into his history, a cue to the reflective character of his mind, and his comparatively humble position in Cartown.

"How is it now," said the schoolmaster, "that smoke, which is usually offensive (you will have noted it at Middleton), should be accounted a picturesque and beautiful addition to a landscape as we see it now?"

"It has a beautiful appearance here, sir," said Jacob.

"With what a grace it mounts upwards, and spreads like an ethereal mist over the foliage!"

"And the colour, sir, is almost like the sky yonder—smoke is very different at Middleton."

"It not only pleases the eye, Jacob; it induces a sensation of quiet, satisfied pleasure, which the landscape would not alone invoke. Do you perceive that, Jacob?"

"I think I do, sir; I hardly know why. I like to see the smoke among the trees."

"Is it not because you connect it in your mind with the cottage below?"

"I do not know, sir."

"Nor I, Jacob; but I think we are on the right track in that thought at least; and I want you to remember this little incident as an example for the future to inquire into the reasons why any particular thing gives you pleasure. Look below the surface; it will accustom you to analyse your feelings, and give you as much pleasure as profit. Now, my opinion about this wreath of smoke on the tree tops is that there is more of the practical than the poetical about it—more of the physical than the spiritual. There is an inherent love of home among us English; and I think that, in addition to the picturesque bit of colour which it waves above the trees, we associate the smoke with the comfortable hearth at the foot of the chimney whence it rises; we link with it, if I may so speak, that traditional idea of the purest love, the most complete happiness, being found in a cottage, where there is no ambition beyond the possession of the common necessaries of life and an honest name. Beware of ambition, Jacob; beware of building your hopes on one object, be that object what it may; and remember that the blessings of contentment—the greatest blessings in this world—are more frequently found in a humble cottage such as that among the trees below us than in the mansions of the great and wealthy. This is not mere book philosophy, Jacob. I have seen the world; I know every trick of it. Most of us have our troubles, Jacob, sooner or later. I have had mine; some day we may talk of them for your own benefit."

From these evening walks Spen was for some time excluded. Whether it was out of deference to Jacob, who was to be looked upon with more consideration than Spen, or whether Dorothy wanted Spen to run errands, I cannot say; but when Jacob asked that Spen might accompany them the schoolmaster seemed pleased at the request and complied with it immediately. And so these three had long happy walks together in the evenings, and upon these occasions Spen conducted himself with great propriety, never doing anything in the tumbling way, beyond *thinking* of the ring, the sawdust, and the theatre.

One evening, instead of a ramble, Mr. Spawling invited the two boys into his own room, a mark of the very greatest consideration. The schoolmaster's sanctum adjoined Mr. Spawling's bedroom, and was regarded by Dorothy as all but sacred. The schoolmaster dusted his own books, and arranged his own papers; so that Dorothy should have no excuse for touching anything beyond the ordinary furniture when she engaged in her periodical house-cleaning. The room looked orderly and comfortable, nevertheless. The furniture consisted, in chief, of a table, on which lay several books and manuscripts; a well-filled set of book-shelves; a small stand sacred to a bust of Shakespeare; a fat arm-chair; two other chairs from the bedroom—one for Jacob and one for Spen; and an old-fashioned sofa. Several water-colour drawings and engravings adorned the walls. There were portraits of three several gentlemen in the three several characters of Hamlet, Coriolanus, and Romeo. Near these hung the pictures of two ladies, one as Desdemona and the other as Rosalind. Jacob did not know who these persons were, and indeed did not know whether the last mentioned was intended for a boy or a young lady, and he did not ask. Mr. Gregory Spawling knew, and Spenzonian Whiffler knew—had not Spen seen many ladies dressed as boys, both in the circus and in the theatre? But even Spen Whiffler, who was so learned in these matters, did not know that the water-colour drawing was a portrait of Mr. Gregory Spawling, and that when he played Romeo he was to have been married to the young lady who played Juliet, and that she died two days before the one fixed for the wedding. Indeed, nobody in Cartown, or Middleton, or all through the Midland Counties, north and south, knew this. Even the school committee knew nothing of it, because Mr. Gregory Spawling had been recommended to them by a lord, a real live lord, who had said nothing about Mr. Spawling having been an actor, but had spoken of him in the highest terms in which one man could speak of another, especially when the one speaking is a lord and the other an ordinary mortal. But it is hardly right to call Mr. Spawling (there was a different name under the portrait of the actor as Romeo) an ordinary mortal. He had been a leader in his profession. Admired, flattered, followed, he had filled a large space in the world's esteem. He had been the observed of all observers. It was no ordinary mortal that could step down from this pedestal and under a new name settle down in the capacity of a country schoolmaster at Cartown.

Jacob and Spen had a delightful evening with their master, who read to them from his choicest books. The gems of some prose works having been discussed, the schoolmaster took up the Bible, and read from the Psalms, but with a touching pathos and a perfect grace of elocution which made the Song of Solomon a very different thing to what Jacob had been accustomed to consider it; while "Proverbs" in the mouth of Mr. Spawling was poetry indeed. Spen afterwards asked if Mr. Spawling would be kind enough to read from Shakespeare, whereupon the schoolmaster brought forth a thick volume, the pages of which were marked with many notes. He read from "As You Like It," calling Jacob's attention to the perfect beauty of its descriptions of scenery, and instancing how the poet had often said more in one line than they had said in all their conversations. To Spen he pointed out the real humour of Touchstone, showing him that fun did not consist in standing upside-down or in making queer grimaces. And then he read the famous soliloquy of Jacques, and the song of Amiens in the same act, whereupon Spen remembered Petroski, and Jacob thought of Susan, a traveller on the broad ocean.

> Though thou the waters warp,
> Thy sting is not so sharp,
> As friend remembered not.

"There is another friend whom I have not remembered," said Jacob when he was taking off his boots in the kitchen.

"Oh, indeed, and who may that be?" inquired Dorothy, accompanying her interrogation with the music of two knitting needles.

"Who may who be?" asked Jacob.

"The other friend you have forgotten."

"Did I say I had forgotten one?"

"Of course you did."

"I did not intend to say so," said Jacob.

"Only a-rehearsing of your own thoughts, Jacob, eh?" said Spen.

"That was all," Jacob replied.

"Well, good night; the best of friends must sever—I cannot always be with you—ajoo! ajoo!" said Spen, his left hand theatrically covering his eyes, and his right grasping a long candlestick with a short six in it. "Good night—exit Whiffler."

"You're a strange boy, Master Jacob," said Dorothy as Spen disappeared, "to be talking about somebody and not to know you was."

"But I did know," said Jacob, "and yet I do not know the friend

—is not that odd? I have seen her many times, and yet I do not know her."

"Her, *her*—oh, that's it, is it, Master Jacob?" Dorothy elevated the first finger of her right hand and laughed.

"Yes, her, *her*, Dorothy—oh, if you only knew her!—

"Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp,
As friend remembered not;"

and away Jacob marched to the staircase.

"Why, I declare you will soon be as bad as Whiffler. Well, I told master he'd contaminate any boarders as come here, with his nonsense. But talking of friends, Jacob, and *hers*, I am going, or hope to go, to see some on Saturday and stay till Monday. And if I might make so bold as to ask you home with me for two days"——

"What, among the trees yonder, Dorothy?"

"Yes, where Will Tunster took me up."

"I should like it amazingly," said Jacob.

"I have took the liberty to ask master already, and you see I can go better with taking you than if you stayed behind, because of the work. You won't mind leaving Spen for two days, eh? I promise you a nice companion."

"I do not care for a companion," said Jacob.

"Oh! of course not," said Dorothy. "You aren't old enough to be in love, or I should think you was."

"Love!" said Jacob, laughing; "good-night, Dorothy;" and the image of a beautiful face looking out of a factory window floated a second time into Jacob's memory with the song of Amiens.

CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH JACOB MAKES A BLISSFUL DISCOVERY.

WHEN Saturday morning arrived Spen volunteered to walk a little way with Jacob and Mr. Spawling's housekeeper, "just to see them on their way," as he said. Dorothy's home was only a few miles on the road. Jacob remembered it well. Nothing in that first memorable journey from Middleton can ever be blotted from his memory.

It was a grey autumn morning. The first dead leaves had fallen. They were lying on the road, with big drops of dew upon them, like tears. There was a settled calm in the air, a death-like stillness. The year was beginning to die. You could not help getting this thought into your mind on such a morning.

"Why, what a solemn lot we are," said Spen; "we might be a-going to a funeral; we should just be the sort to come on with the coffin in 'Richard the Third.'"

"We do seem dull," said Dorothy, "as if something was going to happen."

"Something is," said Jacob.

"What?" asked Dorothy, stopping in the middle of the road.

"The year is going to die," said Jacob.

"Lor' bless me! how you do startle one!" said Dorothy.

"It's the sort of morning that gives you the shivers, like the slow dithering music before the villain enters, or when he's groping about the stage with a dark lantern and a dagger," said Spen.

The merriman of the Cartown school illustrated his remarks. He bent his head, and felt his way about the road in imaginary darkness.

Jacob was amused at Spen's acting, but he pulled him up soon afterwards by telling him that it was on an autumn day when his mother died.

"Oh, just like to-day, was it?" said Spen. "Tell us about it; I never had a mother except old Petroski the clown, and he was father and mother and a whole family to me."

"No; let us talk of something else," said Jacob. "I thought all the world was dead when my mother died; the sun set early in the day, and there were no stars, and the next morning the leaves were lying in the road."

"Bravo!" said Spen, solemnly; "you would do for leading business —Hamlet, or the fellow who has run away from his wife, her name was Haller," said Spen.

"Well, you are a rum pair," said Dorothy, contemplating the two boys with wondering astonishment.

"Let us talk of something lively," said Jacob. "Give us a somersault or set us a back, Spen."

"I could'lt do it, as the gedleman in the stocks said, when they told him to blow his doze," replied Spen, suddenly suffering from a very severe cold in the head.

"Then give us a recitation," said Jacob.

Spen, pulling a lock of hair over his forehead, and assuming a serio-comic attitude, said his dabe was Dorbal on the Grambian hills, and that if 'twere done it were well it were done quickly; for there stood Eliza on the wood-crown'd height, and all the world was a stage, the men and women merely a weak device of the enemy; and after he had said many other similarly extraordinary things, making

Dorothy laugh until she was red in the face, he thought it was time he should return; whereupon he shook hands with Jacob and Dorothy. Taking out his handkerchief and wiping very dry tears from each eye, he begged them to remember that if cruel fortune should part them, it might be for years and it might be for never, his heart would still be breaking for the love of Betsy Jane, and his will would be found in Miss Dorothy's cheenie tea-pot, among that respectable housekeeper's curl-papers.

Then solemnly extending his arms towards his enthusiastic audience of two, Spen exclaimed, "Bless ye, my children; bless ye!" and disappeared through an adjacent hedge.

Dorothy and Jacob continued their walk past cornfields and through meadows, by woods and by rivers. On the highway they met parties of reapers, chiefly Irishmen, carrying reaping-hooks tied up in straw-bands; country people going on village errands; tramps who had footed it over nearly every turnpike road in England; and other members of the great army of strollers which is for ever journeying hither and thither on the highways and byeways of Britain.

In an obscure cross-road they passed a gipsy encampment, and Jacob thought of his smoke lesson as a white wreath ascended from one of the canvas tents and went sailing away over a sea of green and amber leaves. Jacob was destined to know something more than the mere picturesque side of gipsy life; but he recked not of his destiny as he passed on admiring the landscape. Near the gipsy tents the road was crossed by a shallow brook which came out of the wood and reflected the shaggy dogs and dark-eyed children who stood on the bank and watched Dorothy and Jacob cross the bridge.

A pleasant walk of half an hour brought the visitors in sight of Dorothy's cottage.

"I shouldn't be surprised if your memory was taxed just now," said Dorothy, referring to Jacob's mysterious reference to the song of Amiens, after his evening in Mr. Spawling's room.

"How?" asked Jacob.

"Didn't you say her hair was like the yellow silk at the factory?"

"Well?"

"And her face was round and laughing like a fairy's, though I never see a fairy myself."

"Well?"

"And when you first saw her she was like a hangel?"

"Well? Yes, yes," continued Jacob.

"And she looked out of the factory window?"

"Ah, but we are a long way from Middleton-in-the-Water," said Jacob.

"And mayn't somebody else be a long way from Middleton?" said Dorothy, with tantalising emphasis.

"I fear not," said Jacob. "What do you mean, Dorothy?"

"And you said she sang—oh, I don't know how beautifully you said she could sing."

"Well," said Jacob, "what are you going to say?"

"What am I going to say? Listen. Is *that* as good as the factory angel's singing?" As Dorothy opened the little gate at the entrance of the garden behind the house, the sounds of a sweet voice came through the open doorway.

"It is! it is!" exclaimed Jacob, seizing Dorothy by the arm.

"Lor', how you pinch; for goodness' sake, leave go."

Jacob, however, detained Mr. Spawling's housekeeper, as the music might have done had she not been anxious to see her cousin. But their voices had already been heard. The singing ceased and the factory angel came to the door. That moment Jacob felt as if all his dearest hopes were realised. All the longing sensations of that last morning in his father's garden came back to him. This boy of seventeen had for years been unwittingly drifting into love with somebody's voice, and here was the somebody before him far more beautiful than his own ideal creation.

"This is Master Martyn, Lucy," said Dorothy, whereupon the fairy put out her hand and Jacob floated into the house. He certainly did not walk in. It was all a dream. He should wake immediately and find himself at Cartown in bed, or lying on the bank of the river picturing the big towns on its banks, miles away from Middleton and Cartown.

"And how's father?" said Dorothy, sitting down opposite an old woman who was seated when they entered.

"Well, John baint ower well to-day—he's abed, and has been these two days," said Dorothy's mother, an old woman of seventy.

Dorothy must go up-stairs to see him, and Mrs. Cantrill, after telling Jacob to make himself at home, and saying how proud she was to see him, followed her daughter, leaving Jacob and Lucy together.

"Do you like Cartown, Master Martyn?" said Lucy, in a soft voice, after a rather awkward pause.

"I do, miss," said Jacob, his voice trembling.

"Better than Middleton?" inquired Lucy, as she busied herself about some household duties.

"In some respects," said Jacob, in a nervous whisper.

"You seem tired," said Lucy; "shall I get you a little ale?"

"Thank you," said Jacob, and Jacob's goddess, his dream, his ideal of all that was lovely, disappeared behind a pantry door, and presently came back with a foaming jug of brown ale. Jacob held his glass while the cottage beauty filled it.

"I am sure you are very tired," said Lucy, noticing Jacob's unsteady hand.

"Not very, thank you," said Jacob, his face all aglow.

"The beer will do you good," said the fairy, frothing the boy's glass, and showing off to perfection a white round arm that might have been modelled for a study of classic beauty.

Poor Jacob! his heart beat wildly. Lucy, on the contrary, was quite self-possessed. She did not know that Jacob was the little fellow she had noticed sometimes in the garden near the Middleton factory. She knew nothing of the selection he had made among the factory voices, ticketing it in his memory with a motto from her favourite hymn—

> There is a happy land,
> Far, far away.

"Will you excuse me?" said Lucy. "I am going into the garden to gather a few apples."

"Certainly," said Jacob.

He tried to say, "May I come with you?" but found himself altogether unequal to such a courageous flight of familiarity.

Jacob saw Lucy go out. His eyes never strayed away from her. He made up his mind more than once to rush out and assist her, but he still sat in the cottage sipping the foaming ale.

Just budding into womanhood, Lucy was indeed a model of healthy beauty. She might have sat for Hebe, or any other lovely creature. Fair round arms, with dimples at the elbows, and a slight dimple everywhere where there is generally a projection on the hand, it might have been the arm of our first mother that Jacob watched plucking the apples and dropping them into a small woollen apron. The pretty foot and ankle, in grey hose and rather thick shoes, peeping from beneath a white petticoat, were not to be disguised by homely worsted or leather. And the wealth of wavy hair that would come undone and fall in golden ripples over shoulders which, despite the dark print dress that covered them, you might be sure were white as lilies are; and the white and red, vying for the mastery in that sweet fair face, and the bright grey eyes, sparkling with health!—what would not grand city ladies have given to carry such rosy colour and such natural brightness into their ball-rooms? Why, Lucy Cantrill would have driven a whole city full of young fellows mad, let alone Jacob Martyn, who had heard her sing for years, and was in love with her before he saw her face.

"Ah, bless her, there she be!" said Mrs. Cantrill, her aunt, as she entered the room again with Dorothy, and observed Lucy in the garden. "She grows more beautiful every hour of the day. Lord ha' mercy on her!"

"You make too much of her, mother; you'll spoil her if you don't mind," said Dorothy; but Jacob thought otherwise, and when the apples were dished up at dinner in the shape of dumplings as round and hard as the clouds in some of the old masters, Jacob summoned courage enough to pay Lucy a compliment.

"I did not make the dumplings," said Lucy; "I cannot cook."

"You gathered the apples," said Jacob, at which, for the first time, Lucy blushed, while Dorothy and the old woman laughed heartily.

In the afternoon Jacob, and Lucy, and Dorothy walked in the wood, and Dorothy told Lucy about Jacob listening to her singing in the factory, and how she had learnt from him the particulars of his seeing Lucy on the morning when he left home. She even told Lucy how Jacob had described her; and although Lucy laughed and pretended to make fun of it, and although Jacob treated Dorothy's gossip lightly, and pretended that he wished her not to say any more, Jacob felt that Dorothy was placing him under an eternal obligation for telling Lucy how he had fallen in love with her; and Lucy was not displeased either. What pretty girl could have been displeased at such an ingenuous narration?

"How do you get on with Dorothy; don't you find her very cross sometimes?" said Lucy, changing the subject and putting her arm through her cousin's.

"We get on very well indeed," said Jacob.

"On cleaning days?" asked Lucy, laughing.

"Now none of your impudence, Pussy," said Dorothy; "everybody has their weakness, haven't they, Jacob?"

Jacob laughed, and said he supposed he had his, and the little rivulet that ran by his side seemed to say it also had its weakness which was to go on for ever chattering over stones and gliding over mosses. Then the path became too narrow for three to walk together; so Dorothy fell behind Jacob and Lucy, and thought "what a nice pair they would make!"

There was something noble in Jacob's appearance, boy as he was. Since his illness he had grown rapidly. He was slightly taller than

Lucy, though of slender build. There was a marked contrast between his dark, thoughtful features, and the fair, hopeful, and merry face of Lucy. She wore a straw hat, and a shawl hung carelessly over one shoulder. The conversation between her and Jacob was very limited, so much so that Dorothy said they seemed afraid of each other, and wished Spen had come all the way with them, whereupon Jacob turned his head and tried to be facetious upon Dorothy's weakness for cleaning and talking. By-and-by he felt more at home, and at length he told Lucy how he had lain in the sun listening to the factory music, and how he had often wished he had been compelled to work in the factory; for it seemed to him that there was such a glory in the rattling wheels, such a freedom about the place, such a pleasure in watching the silk grow into yards and yards of fleecy cloth.

"Ah, you are mistaken, Mr. Martyn," said Lucy; "you might like the factory on cold winter afternoons, when the snow is on the ground; but in the early morning, in the dark, before the stars are out!"

Lucy shrugged her pretty shoulders and looked at Jacob.

"And then," she continued, "in the summer, when the birds are singing, the heat and noise, the stifling, dreadful heat!—not that I was compelled to stay in it always, but I saw those who were."

"And yet you sang as if you were very happy," said Jacob.

"Larks sing in cages, but I don't think they are happy."

"You often made me happy," said Jacob; "but if I had thought you were not happy I should have been very miserable."

"I was not unhappy," said Lucy; "I did almost what I pleased; the proprietor of the factory was very kind; he is a sort of relation of ours."

"And have you left Middleton for good?" Jacob asked.

"I think so," said Lucy.

"You were glad to come away?"

"Yes, I think so; but sometimes I feel as if I were sorry."

"How strange that you should have left so soon after I left, and that I should come here!"

"Very," said Lucy.

Then Jacob looked back into the wood, and Dorothy was nowhere to be seen. The good-natured creature, muttering to herself that "two is company and three none," had quietly slipped home. Jacob made a great effort to use his opportunity bravely.

"It seems as if it had happened purposely," said Jacob.

"Do you think so?" said Lucy. "Why?"

"Because I feel as if I had known you ever since I was a little boy."

"You are not so bashful as you were an hour or two ago," said Lucy, smiling.

"You thought me very silly, I know," said Jacob; "and do so now, I dare say."

"I do not, I assure you," said Lucy, gathering her shawl round her, as they stepped forth into the open meadows.

"Should you be dreadfully offended if I were to call you Lucy?" said Jacob, taking her hand.

Lucy withdrew her hand.

"I knew you would; I am very sorry I asked you; pray forgive me if I have offended you," said Jacob.

"I am not offended," Lucy replied; "here is Cousin Dorothy coming to meet us."

It was twilight when they returned to the cottage among the trees. They chatted together until it was nearly dark. Mrs. Cantrill sat in her arm-chair near the fire. Dorothy occupied a seat near the open door, and Jacob sat near Lucy against the window. The firelight flickered on the white-washed walls. There was a wholesome smell of tar from the recently blackened fire-grate, which made the place seem very homely. A few bright pans hung over a white dresser, and an old-fashioned clock, in an oak case, ticked solemnly and peacefully in a corner behind Mrs. Cantrill. Outside the house the trees looked dim and shadowy. The cry of the landrail came in at the open doorway, almost keeping time with the clock. The ivy tapped at the diamond-shaped window-panes. A cat purred on the hearth. You could hear the drowsy hum of the beetle, and a robin sat singing on the garden wall.

Lucy knew that Jacob loved her. When she went into her little room that night, she looked into her glass with a smile of satisfaction, and gathered her hair up and tried the effect of wearing it in a band. Then she let it fall in a cluster down her back, brushed it off her face entirely, finally fastening it up with a comb; and, however she dressed those golden tresses, she looked like one of whom the poet could not choose but feel that she had reason to fear her own exceeding beauty.

> **Heaven shield thee for thine utter loveliness.**

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH SUNDRY STRAY THREADS OF THE STORY ARE GATHERED UP, AND SOME COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE.

WHEN Jacob returned to Cartown, he found a letter and a newspaper for him, which, by the way, was not an extraordinary circumstance, seeing that he had received many communications from his father containing words of parental kindness and solicitude, besides a *Middleton Star* every week. This morning both letter and newspaper were more noteworthy than usual. The letter informed Jacob that his father would call for him that day, on his way to Clumberside, which was the seat of Mr. Bonsall, M.P., who had been returned to the Commons House of Parliament for the borough of Middleton, through the instrumentality of Mr. Martyn, of the *Star*. In the newspaper there were several items of local news, interesting both to Jacob and to the readers of this history. Perhaps a brief description of the journal itself may not be out of place here.

It was a large folio paper, the front page chiefly occupied with advertisements. Several auctioneers monopolised the first two columns, with announcements of forthcoming sales of all manner of extraordinary things, from kitchen chairs to magnificently carved mahogany sideboards, from cottages to family mansions, and from collections of poultry to herds of fat stock. There was a slight error, called by printers "a literal," in the description of the poultry, "twenty-five turkeys" being printed "twenty-five turnkeys;" but this was a mistake that might occur in the best regulated printing-offices. In the third column several grocers, a couple of tailors, and seven or eight drapers struggled with each other for supremacy, and according to their announcements, teas, sugars, dress-coats, silks, ribbons, bonnets, shawls, and cloaks, at Middleton-in-the-Water, had reached the minimum of cheapness, combined with the very maximum of quality. In the fourth column a brace of enterprising druggists announced themselves as the sole agents for certain wonderful medicines; and, beneath these, Dr. Horatio Johnson, beginning with the quotation, "Throw physic to the dogs," and ending with "*Moniti meliora sequamur*," informed the afflicted of all ages that he visited certain towns on certain days, and that the Oriental remedy had proved its efficacy by the most convincing and extraordinary tests. In the fifth column several persons who wanted situations elbowed sundry others who had situations vacant; while half a dozen announcements headed "To be Sold" made desperate efforts to eclipse in attractiveness an equal number of others under the title of "To be Let;" and the page finished with a collection of miscellaneous intelligence. In the second page commenced the leading articles, in the preparation of which it was evident, even to Jacob, that Mr. Martyn had procured some literary assistance. The first article was a severe criticism of the *Middleton Guardian*, from which it appeared that the organ of the Red party had for several years devoted its special attention to a consideration of the errors of the British currency system, the heinous crime committed by those persons who clipped and mutilated the coin of the realm, and the condition of the savage tribes of Africa and America. The next article—a description of the mineral wealth of the country surrounding Middleton—concluded by welcoming the advent of a new company started to get lead at a short distance from the town; and the last was one, the brevity of which induces me to extract it as an example of the independent character of the journal and the susceptibility of the Middleton Corporation :—

> "Fearful Calamity : The 'Star' in Danger.—We can hardly find words to describe the calamity which has befallen us. The remarks we made last week respecting the careless and disgraceful management—or rather *mismanagement*—of the corporation property, and the culpable neglect of our corporate body in respect thereof, has brought down upon us the thundering anathemas of the Council. But this is not the worst. Our very existence is threatened. The fiat that is to annihilate us has gone forth. The writing is on the wall. Twelve Town Councillors have stopped our paper! Twelve representatives of the burgesses of the free town of Middleton have given us notice that we are no longer to count them as subscribers to this journal! Twelve fourpennies per week are banished from our exchequer!! If we can survive this expression of the opinion of Councildom for another week, our circulation may possibly be less next Saturday by five than it is at the present issue!!! Oppressed by this dreadful weight, this shadow of the Cyclops, this co-operated condemnation, we fear the *Star* will cease to shine and that we must hide our diminished head for ever. An aggregate of four shillings per week from twelve Town Councillors! It is a deadly blow, truly. . . . But (joking apart) we may inform our readers, in confidence, that the *Star* will be printed as usual next week notwithstanding, and that the profits of the extra sale, which will be created by the conspiracy we now chronicle, will be given to a fund which the editor suggests should be raised to pay the expenses of a public examination of the corporation accounts by a public accountant."

Following the leaders came the local news, beginning with short paragraphs, and ending with very long ones. Among those of medium size the following attracted Jacob's attention :—

> "The New Mayor.—It is now generally understood that Ephraim

Magar, Esq., will be chosen Chief Magistrate of Middleton at the next election. Though we are opposed to Mr. Magar on political grounds, we cannot withhold an expression of our approval of this election. So far as Mr. Magar's connection with the Council is concerned he is comparatively only a young member; but he has exhibited a desire to promote the welfare of the town, and he is among those of our enlightened townsmen who desire to reform altogether the present management of the corporate property. It is not on this account, however, that Mr. Magar is to be elected Mayor. But more in consideration of the spirited and liberal way in which he has fulfilled his duties as a Councillor, heading munificently every subscription raised for benevolent purposes, and showing, in a variety of ways, that having the means to be benevolent he has also the will. Mr. Magar is one of those men who is the founder of his own fortune, and as such it is highly creditable to his colleagues in office that they should select him for the high and honourable position of Chief Magistrate. We hear that Mr. Magar is a large shareholder in the new lead mining undertaking, that he is also a sleeping partner in several local works, and that he intends retiring from the business with which he has so many years been connected, and enjoying, for the remainder of his life, that repose which he has so well earned."

Another paragraph ran as follows:—

"GRATIFYING TESTIMONIAL.—We are glad to announce that Thomas Titsy, who our readers will remember was imprisoned on a charge of having intimidated certain voters during the last election for Middleton, has been presented with a purse of fifty sovereigns by several gentlemen who were instrumental in obtaining his release, as an expression of their sympathy, and in token of their confidence in his honesty and integrity. Mr. Thomas Titsy, who has served his apprenticeship in this office, desires us to express his sense of the kindness and sympathy exhibited towards him; and we may add our own testimonial to the substantial one he has received, with regard to his faithfulness and good conduct. The subscription was commenced shortly after Thomas Titsy's release: its presentation has been delayed, that it might in no way smack of anything like political partisanship. The testimonial has been presented on purely philanthropic grounds."

In the next page there was an account of an interesting discussion, at a meeting of the Commissioners of Lighting and Paving, respecting the width of one of the public streets, the respective merits of closed and open drains, as opposed to no drains at all, and the price of gas, which one speaker contended was higher than the cost of oil.

"'He for one would not say anything against the illuminating powers of gas; but he would say this, that when the good old oil lamps were in use, there was much less money to pay for them, and much less fuss about the quality of the light and the number of burning hours. He was one of the old school, and although he liked progress, he did not like humbug—(Hear, hear)—and what was more, he would not have humbug; and he proposed that they should have no more to do with this new-fangled light, but order forth the old oil lamps—(laughter)—and defy the ghastly innovation altogether. (Hear, and laughter.)' The motion was not agreed to."

Following this, came the foreign news of the week, and the "General Intelligence." The last page began with a short poem extracted from the work of a well-known poet, and then came numerous paragraphs under the title of "Varieties;" following which was a description of "A Tour Outside Middleton," and a condensed account of a lecture on minerals; the whole ending with the publisher's imprint, until they arrived at which, it is said, many readers never halted in the perusal of their favourite paper.

During that pleasant part of the day, the interval after dinner and before the commencement of school, Spen Whiffler, who had welcomed Jacob back again, early in the morning, with great manifestations of delight, invited his friend to join him in a short walk, that he might have an opportunity of telling him an important secret.

"If it is a very great secret, Spen, you had better not tell me," said Jacob, "because I really cannot promise that I can keep it."

"Oh, bother, but you must keep it. You ain't a woman. It's only women that can't keep secrets."

"Indeed?"

"Yes; a secret to a woman is such an awful sort of thing, that she is obliged to get the assistance of every other woman she knows to help her to keep it, and such a pack of feminines at last get hold of it that at last the secret is as common as saw-dust."

"You don't seem to have a very high opinion of women, Spen," said Jacob.

"Oh, haven't I though, neither? When lovely woman stoops to folly, uncertain, coy, and hard to please; kindness in woman, not their beauteous looks, shall win my love—Shakespeare, etc.," said Spen, raising aloft his right arm, and exclaiming, "Not a high opinion? Why, I loves 'em all."

"What a queer fellow you are, Spen."

"I think you have made the observation afore. But let us to business. Prompter, ring up. Now for the secret. Shall I begin?"

"Yes, go on—I will keep your secret."

"You swear?" said Spen. "Say, *I swear.*"

"I swear," said Jacob, laughing; whereupon Spen, in a sepulchral voice, repeated "*S-w-e-a-r*," and stalked solemnly in front of Jacob, in imitation of the ghost in "Hamlet."

"Come, Spen, no more nonsense; begin," said Jacob, who was becoming a little anxious, wondering if Spen had seen some pretty face through a window. Momentarily the thought crossed his mind that Spen had seen Lucy, and then the blood rushed into his face, and he repeated impatiently, "Now Spen, begin."

"Well then, I *am* to be the pride of the profession. I *am* to be a player. The drama is to be my game, and I am a-studying of Shakespeare with Mr. Spawling," exclaimed Spen, his eyes flashing with exultation. "I'll tell you all about it. The night you went away, Mr. Spawling asked me into his room, and read to me out of the big book; and when he saw that I liked it as well as Scotchy Farlane used to like his gin-and-water, he says, says he, 'Now, Spen Whiffler, I'm going to have a little talk to you.' 'Yes, sir,' says I. 'Well,' says he, 'you are fond of acting.' 'Very, sir,' says I. 'And you feel as though you cared about no other profession?' 'I am sorry to say I do, sir,' says I. 'Well,' says he, 'I have thought about all this for a long time, and I have come to the conclusion to instruct you in the art.' '*You*, sir?' says I. 'Me,' says he. 'We will read together,' says he, 'and if, within a reasonable time, you continue in the same mind, and I think you capable of sustaining a part with credit, I will get you an engagement.' 'Oh, sir,' says I, 'how shall I thank you, how shall I return your kindness?' 'By paying particular attention to all I tell you,' says he, 'and above all, Spen, by keeping this conversation and my intentions regarding you, a profound secret, by never mentioning them to a soul.'"

"And the first grateful thing you do is to tell a soul immediately," said Jacob.

"I could not help it," said Spen; "I was so delighted that I was obliged to tell you—I should have burst if I hadn't; but Jacob, you will never repeat it?"

"I will not; you may depend on me, Spen."

"Well, after he'd talked to me like that, he gave me my first lesson, Hamlet's advice to the players, and he explained it all to me just as if he were an actor himself; and I can say every line of it;" in illustration of which Spen recited the passage for Jacob's edification; after which they returned, and Jacob found his father waiting for him.

This was the fourth or fifth time that Mr. Martyn had called since his son had been at Cartown, now about two years. On the last occasion Mr. Martyn expressed himself as thoroughly satisfied with Jacob's progress, and arranged that his son should remain with Mr. Spawling for two years longer, still continuing at school during the holidays, as he was anxious that Jacob should lose no time in completing his studies. On the first visit Mr. Martyn was on his way to Clumberside; and Jacob having improved so much in his letter-writing, and having grown into a fine handsome lad, his father had decided that Mr. Bonsall should see him, secretly hoping that if such a misfortune should occur as that of Jacob being left an orphan, before the *Middleton Star* was a magnificent property, the member for the borough would do something for him. It would be easy enough, thought Mr. Martyn, for Mr. Bonsall to get Jacob an appointment in some of the Government offices, though he never for a moment feared that Jacob would require such assistance.

Jacob straightway introduced Spenzonian Whiffler to his father; but Mr. Martyn was too much engrossed in his son to take any particular notice of Spen, who conducted himself with perfect propriety, disappearing shortly after the introduction, and excusing himself by saying that it was time for school. Shortly afterwards Mr. Spawling also left on a similar plea, and Jacob and his father sat together, while Dorothy prepared luncheon for Mr. Martyn, and Tom Titsy took the horse to the "Blue Posts" for a refresher of meal and water.

At length, Tom returned with a handsome carriage drawn by two horses, and by this time Jacob and his father were ready to start. Jacob went up to Tom and shook him heartily by the hand, though at first Tom did not intend that there should be such a display of familiarity between them. Jacob looked so much more like a gentleman than when he left Middleton, and the dignity of the Martyns had also increased so greatly, that Tom was a little bashful (notwithstanding that he was now a journeyman) in approaching Jacob, his master's only son. Moreover, Tom had not been so light-hearted and outspoken a fellow since his imprisonment and the departure of Susan, as he was previously. Both these events had exercised a great influence upon him. At one time his mother had cause to fear that he was endeavouring to drown his troubles in drink, and but for the advice and companionship of Dr. Johnson, Tom would undoubtedly have fallen. It was the doctor who had projected the testimonial to his landlady's son, and this had done much to re-establish Tom's own estimation of himself and to restore an honest pride in his own good name. With regard to Susan, he kept all he felt to himself. Had the doctor known how much Tom really loved that woman he would have almost despaired of succeeding in any attempt to restore his peace of mind.

"Jacob has grown a fine boy, has he not, Tom?" said Mr. Martyn, taking the reins.

"He has, sir; I'm glad to see him looking so well."

"We must soon have him back again at Middleton; eh, Tom?"

"I should be glad if he were, sir. He's a fine young gentleman now. Cæsar 'll hardly know him."

"Oh, yes, he will," said Jacob, "we were always such good friends. He will not object to shake hands with me."

Tom said he hoped Cæsar would not be such an ill mannered dog as that.

Then Mr. Martyn engaged his son's attention by describing to him the changes he had made at home: how he had built a printing-office in the garden; how he had enlarged the shop and turned it into a counting-house; and how he had otherwise expended a large sum of money. He pointed out to Jacob the great advantages of a good education, and begged him to pay strict attention to his studies, and prepare himself for the day when Martyn & *Son* should be the principal publishing firm in Middleton—ay, and in the whole county.

Thus their time to a great extent was occupied until they arrived at Clumberside. The lodge gates flew open at Mr. Martyn's approach, and with an extra flourish of an exceedingly handsome whip, Mr. Martyn increased the speed of the horses along a broad and well-kept carriage drive, and at length pulled up in front of a noble country residence. Mr. Martyn was received by Mr. Bonsall himself, who came out at the same time as his servant, and conducted Jacob and his father into the library, while Tom Titsy drove round to the stables.

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Martyn," said Mr. Bonsall, "and you—Master Jacob, I presume."

"Thank you, sir," said Jacob, whose moderate amount of self-possession was a little shaken by the unaccustomed grandeur of the room in which he was desired to be seated.

By-and-by luncheon was announced, after which Jacob was allowed to go into the garden while the newspaper proprietor and the member of Parliament discussed local and imperial politics. Mr. Martyn's paper had been expressly started in the interest of the Yellow party, which had promised Mr. Martyn their substantial support. Mr. Bonsall's election was the first political fruit of the *Star*, which had absorbed the whole of Mr. Martyn's small fortune.

Jacob had not explored many acres of Mr. Bonsall's estate when he encountered Tom.

"Hurrah! I'm glad I have met you; now Tom, come under this tree and tell me the news."

"There's not much to tell," said Tom, who, yielding to Jacob's influence, sat down on a seat under an old elm.

"Well, how is Aunt Keziah?"

"Oh, crotchety, crotchety."

"And Mrs. Titsy?"

"Middling," said Tom; "not quite so fresh as she used to be."

"And Mr. Johnson?"

"He's lively enough: he smokes his pipe, and makes speeches, the same as ever."

"And the pigeons?"

"I don't do much in that way now; I've a few fantails and tipplers."

"Have you one in your pocket now, Tom?" Jacob asked, smiling, and laying his hand on Tom's broad shoulders.

"No," said Tom, quite seriously, "I had one a bit since, though; I let him go from the stables yonder; but I doubt if he'll get home; I've no luck with the birds now."

"Never mind, Tom, if the luck only comes in other more useful things."

"Ah, I've no luck at all," said Tom, shaking his head.

"No luck!—what was that I read about the fifty sovereigns?"

"Well, that was luck of a sort. I had to go to prison though, and I'd rather have given a hundred sovereigns, Jacob, not to have done that."

"How was it, Tom? It is strange I did not notice it in the paper."

"Yes, it was strange. Well, you see, your father, when first he started the *Star*, as you know, did it for the sake of his Yellow principles—liberty, and freedom, and all that."

"And to promote the return of his friend, Mr. Bonsall," Jacob rejoined. "At least that is what I understood."

"Well, our side lost the election, four years ago, as you know," continued Tom, pushing his hands deeply into his trousers pockets, "and Mr. Martyn had been working hard to get over that, and make it right for the next time; and, by gum! when that time came we'd a great fight. Talk about work, by gum! we were at it night and day. Of course I wanted the Yellows to win, and there was a row somehow or other, and the doctor knocked a Red drummer into his own drum for calling him 'Blue pills,' and you see somehow it was nearly four o'clock, and a cab full of Red voters came up at the time, and they were saucy, and my blood got up, and I suppose I said something as frightened them about the consequences of voting for the Reds. However, they screwed it into intimidating 'em, and the doctor was fined for assault; but my offence was a misdemeanour, I think they called it. But this was at the bottom of it. That thief Magar got me took up, because he wanted to make Susan Harley his mistress, and he was afraid I should be in the way."

"Poor Susan!" exclaimed Jacob. "What an ungrateful beggar I am not to have asked after her before! How is she? Have you heard from her? I often think about her."

"And so do I," said Tom, sighing. "Well, she's been away all this long time, and we've never heard from her not a word. Mother has expected letters over and over again; but all we have got is her love, and that's only second-hand—it comes through Jennings. He said as Mr. Collinson was a-coming over, but that's a year ago, and nothing has been heard of him since. It makes me very uneasy in my mind."

Tom felt in his pocket for a pigeon as some relief to his feelings, but the bird had gone.

"But I doubt if it will get home," he said.

"Oh, yes, it will, Tom; you are dispirited; the bird will soon be in the dovecote, and Susan is all right too, depend on it," said Jacob.

"May be, may be," said Tom reflectively; "you see we don't even know whether she's married or not; I'm sure Collinson would treat her well; I wish I could go over and see, and by gum! if he didn't——"

"Where did she sail from?" asked Jacob, interrupting Tom in the midst of an angry shake of the head.

"Liverpool," Tom replied; "I meant to have seen her safe off, but I was in quad, locked up by that infernal Magar. I wish that election had been a long way off Middleton. Magar was awful hard again me, swore my very life away, and lied, Mister Jacob—lied like a blackguard, though he is going to be a magistrate."

"It was very hard," said Jacob, "but it will all come right."

"Hope it will," said Tom.

"How do you get on with type-setting, Tom?"

"Pretty middling," said Tom, "but I don't do much in that way now. I'm a sort of head devil, you see, and I'm often out with the master as I am to-day, driving him to see some swell or other; but it's all one to me; I'm a reg'lar miserable beggar, sir."

At sunset Mr. Bonsall's visitors left Clumberside.

They would have started earlier, only Mr. Martyn had determined upon staying at Crossley all night, so that his horse should not be overworked. Mr. Bonsall, M.P., offered Mr. Martyn every accommodation for the night, but Jacob's father urged important business at Crossley early in the morning as a reason for not partaking further of Mr. Bonsall's hospitality.

Mr. Martyn made no remarks of importance on the way homewards. He smoked his cigar in evident enjoyment. The night being chilly, he drew a rug over Jacob's knees, and told Tom to wrap himself up. The horse's hoofs resounded along the hard road. Trees, and cottages, and stone walls, and fields, and brooks, and road-side inns seemed to race by them in the sunset. Now and then stray leaves deadened the sound of the carriage wheels, and the autumn wind moaned in the trees. The hips and haws were red on the hedges, and the plover uttered its "weak complaining note" to the sky. The wind rippled the bending corn in waves like summer seas.

The spirit of autumn, which had touched Dorothy and Jacob and Spen, influenced the thoughts of Jacob and his father and Tom. It softened and idealised Jacob's dreamy ideas of love. It led Mr. Martyn from money calculations into vague and shadowy thoughts, upon the vanity of human hopes and wishes, until he could not help feeling that, since autumn was but typical of the close of man's own existence, perhaps contentment and a pipe in the garden at Middleton would have brought him more real happiness than was to be got out of journalism and county influence. The waving corn, the setting sun, the yellow hedgerows, the evening chimes, and all the tender influences of the time also found their way into Tom's dull mind. As he cracked his whip he thought how happily he might have ended his days with Susan when the autumn of his life came if fortune had been kind to him.

At Cartown Tom lighted the carriage lamps. Jacob watched them until they glimmered faintly on the hill, and disappeared behind the wood which sheltered the cottage home of Lucy Cantrill.

(To be continued.)]

TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

Is the art of swearing, like the art of conversation, dying out in this country? I ask the question seriously; for till now we English have had the reputation of being the hardest swearers in Europe, and all the world knows how horribly our men swore in Flanders. But a friend of mine who is profoundly versed in the English dialects tells me that all the expletives and objurgations now in use within the four seas have been in use since the days of the French and American Wars, that many of the expletives that were in use then are now hardly ever heard except from very old men, and that not a single fresh form has been added since the return of the Peninsular heroes. Of course there is plenty of swearing still in all parts of the country, especially in the towns upon the banks of the Tyne; but it is dull, dead, commonplace, stereotyped swearing, without an atom of freshness, vivacity, or piquancy: the sort of swearing that makes your blood tingle and your face flush as it falls upon your ear from the lips of men, of women, and even of children, standing at the corners of the streets and playing in the gutters of the busy northern and midland towns. You may distinguish a Somerset ploughman from a Durham miner or a Yorkshire cotton hand, if you are versed in the art and mystery of swearing, as distinctly by his asseverations as you can by his dialect, and my friend's ear is trained to such a nicety that in the North he can distinguish the iron-workers and shipwrights of the north-east from their companions in industry in the south and west. This is to his ears their most characteristic mark of distinction. They have nearly all the rest of their peculiarities in common; but the only mark that distinguishes their swearing in common is its hideousness, and its hideousness is a sort of moral and mental pollution. There has been no artistic swearing in England since the days of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, and Sir Lucius O'Trigger is a poor artist in comparison with the heroes of Farquhar and Congreve and Wycherley. Most of the oaths in use then were vivid, picturesque, often as characteristic as accent and dress; but all this is gone, as well as the oaths of the Regency, and the sooner the rest go, too, the better. Suppose the police of our large towns were to take the matter in hand?

ARE the ladies in search of an epigram to set at the head of the Charter of Women's Rights? If they are, perhaps they will allow SYLVANUS URBAN to present them with a *bon mot* from one of the wittiest and most distinguished champions of their cause. "Mon mari," says a lady in one of Voltaire's plays, when setting up a claim to equality of rights in a delicate little matter of domestic life, "réplique qu'il est mon supérieur et mon chef, qu'il est plus haut que moi de plus d'un pouce ; qu'il est velu comme un ours ; que, par conséquent, je lui dois tout et qu'il ne me doit rien." Perhaps the author of "La Pucelle" is hardly the man whose arm Lady Amberley, Miss Ashworth, or Miss Sturge might like to take for a stroll through Hyde Park under the banner of Mr. Bright. But here are all their arguments upon the subjection of women in an epigram, and Vespasian's observation upon money—"Non olet"—applies quite as well to epigrams.

BIRMINGHAM is equal to most things, but it is not yet equal to metaphors. It can invent a fresh Constitution for us at ten minutes' notice with as much precision of detail as the Abbé Sieyès, lay down a system of education for all of us upon half a sheet of note paper, perhaps abolish the House of Lords, and yet prove how the Constitution is to work without its pendulum ; but there is a limitation to its powers, and at this moment perhaps the greatest difficulty that its M.P.'s have to face is a metaphor. Mr. Bright, with all his imagination and wit, hardly ever attempts a metaphor ; but his colleagues are always trying their hands at it, and the result, as far as my observation goes, is not quite as successful as it is meant to be. Here is an example of the sort of metaphors that Birmingham is apt to turn out :—"Gentlemen, the time has come when we must ground our arms and stand shoulder to shoulder to repel the attack that is being made upon us." (It is, I need hardly say, the peroration of a speech.) "Victory is within our grasp ; but if we are to carry the day we must act as one man. We have been labouring at the oar now for years, and our reward is at hand. But our enemies know our weakness, and they mean to test us in the fire. They have thrown the apple of discord into our ranks. Spurn it. Be men, and act as one man. Put your shoulders to the wheel one and all, stand firm, and I will answer for it that we will stem the rising tide of—" I need not say what, because I do not wish to recall the name of the speaker or the subject of the speech, for it is a subject which in itself deserves all the eloquence that Birmingham can conjure. "Tom," said Curran to Moore, "when I can't talk sense I always talk metaphor;" and unless the orators of Birmingham can learn to eschew metaphor I am afraid most of us will be apt to jump to the conclusion that they talk metaphor because this is the most brilliant form of talking nonsense.

I WISH some one with a taste for statistics would take the reports of our charities, of our religious and benevolent societies in hand, tabulate their accounts, and tell us what their income is to a penny year by year, how they spend it, what their working and office expenses are, and what proportion these expenses bear to the income. Perhaps the results may not be what many of us are suspicious enough to anticipate, and if these reports will bear criticism like that which Sir Charles Dilke recently brought to bear upon the Civil List, the secretaries of the societies will, I have no doubt, be the first to assist an actuary in his investigations; but the public has a right to know the best and the worst. The Editor of the *Nonconformist* presented us with one side of the account—the Cr. side—a few days ago, the amount rattling up, as Mr. Hume used to say, to close upon a million a year; but people will be inquisitive, and in this case the Dr. side of the account is, as it happens, the side in which people of a critical turn of mind take the keenest interest. How is this million a year spent? And what proportion of the amount adheres to the hands that it passes through? These are the questions that present themselves to me; and I hope Exeter Hall will not rise in revolt at my asking them.

PERHAPS as the *Gentleman's Magazine* is one of the muniments of English history, it may be worth while to put the income of the principal of these religious societies on record. The total amount is, as I said in a previous note, about a million a year, and two-thirds of this amount is appropriated by the Foreign and Colonial Missionary Societies. More than half the whole sum spent by these societies is spent under the auspices of the English Church; its exact amount is £440,810. But the Nonconformist or Free Churches, as they prefer to call themselves, are pressing close upon the heels of Mother Church, with a roll of subscriptions amounting to nearly £368,000. At present, however, the National Church stands first; and the income of the Church Missionary Society is this year on a par with the income of our wealthiest peers. It amounts to £153,697. The Wesleyans come next with a subscription roll of £148,581, and the London third with an income of £114,306. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has not yet an income of £100,000; but it is only about £2,400 short of this sum. The Baptist Missionary Society is the poorest. Its revenue is only about £27,000. The Colonial and Continental has £33,778. The income of the Bible Society, the great neutral society, the intermediate link between Church and Dissent, is £99,536. The incomes of the Home Missionary Societies look small in contrast with these—the Church Pastoral Aid, for instance, representing £50,015; London City Mission, £40,508; Church Scripture Readers, £11,238; Irish Church Missions, £23,410; Religious Tract Society, £13,137; Ragged School Union, £8,023; Home Mission, £6,590; and yet I believe these societies are doing more real work, and doing it more economically, than all the rest.

M. M. PERALTA has discovered a new land for emigrants. He has told the story of Costa Rica in the French *Globe, a Journal of Geography*. His description is full of a strange attraction. Of course everybody knows that Costa Rica is the name of a model republic situated in Central America; but it will be new to most of my readers that for more than half the year Costa Rica is a perfect paradise. The government is one of the most liberal under the sun; education is free;

the soil is rich beyond comparison; the plains of the interior grow corn, rice, maize, barley, potatoes, beans, bananas; the hot parts of the country yield cocoa, vanilla, sugar, cotton, tobacco, and indigo; the forests are filled with the grandest and choicest timber; the fruit-trees include the orange, citron, lemon, apple, peach, quince, pomegranate, and pineapple; the flora of the country is exquisitely beautiful and varied; and the coast is full of silver and gold. Here is a land for the emigrant! Here is an oasis in the general desert! When I first read M. Peralta's pamphlet, the thought occurred to me for a moment of turning my back on St. John's-gate, and seeking that glorious country where, "in the month of April, when the rains have re-invigorated the earth, the Haciendas present the most enchanting spectacle. The immense plantations discover regular rows of coffee plants, a metre distant from each other, sheltered from the wind and protected from the sun by banana trees, which rise over them; and the spectator, overcome by the delicious perfumes which escape from the flowers of snowy whiteness, recalling the blossom of the orange, allows his senses to wander with delight over this paradise of verdure embosomed in pearls." My French informant says it is certain that were European colonists to establish themselves in the country, their knowledge of scientific cultivation would lead to the most splendid results. "Let them go!" he exclaims; "Costa Rica has its doors wide open to receive them." The claims of my friends who look for the *Gentleman's* every month enable me to resist the tempting invitation; but I commend this land "flowing with milk and honey" to overcrowded London; to the agriculturist, the miner, the adventurer; but more especially to the tiller of the soil, who, in addition to unequalled opportunities of profitable labour, would find there those precious personal advantages which only Englishmen thoroughly understand and appreciate.

THERE are a few educational facts in M. Peralta's pamphlet which will interest educationists and School Boards. In Costa Rica, he says, primary instruction is gratuitous (obligatory from seven to fourteen), and paid for by the State. The next advance on the road to knowledge is also paid for by the State. The superior instruction is given at San José, the capital of the republic; the secondary instruction in the chief towns of the provinces; the primary instruction everywhere. Mrs. Crawshay, Miss Wallington, and many other lady friends of education will be glad to learn that every town and village has its school for girls, and the attendance of thirty pupils is sufficient for the district to claim the right of a resident teacher. There is a normal college for teachers at San José. The Costa Ricans are Catholics, but they have always resisted the admission of Jesuits. Full liberty is granted for the public exercise of all denominations. Among the city buildings are a Protestant church and two masonic halls. I advise Mr. Hepworth Dixon to go out and tell us the history of Costa Rica. The subject offers admirable points for his graphic pen. Meanwhile, let the London School Board take heart from this foreign example, and have no further hesitation about doing their duty by pauper children.

MR. ROBERT FAIRFIELD, a gentleman evidently much interested in the drama, in a letter the other day addressed to the *Birmingham Morning News*, complains of the inadequate manner in which plays and stage performances are frequently noticed in the newspapers. I am not going just now to throw myself into the controversy, but I would like to know whether Mr. Fairfield and those who think with him have thoroughly well considered the point when they contend that the great fault is that the critics have no "fixed canons of judgment." I have quoted his own expression, and I find him insisting upon the same idea when he deplores "the absolute want of any fixed principles in criticising dramatic productions." This view of current dramatic criticism and its defects will be recognised as that of a very large number of educated and intelligent people; but without plunging deeply into an inquiry which would be a better subject for a long and elaborate article than for an evanescent passage of "Table Talk," I am tempted to challenge that opinion. It has often occurred to me to suspect that in literature, in music, in art, and in the drama, canons of criticism have much mischief to answer for. Those who are most addicted to these fixed rules of judgment are usually guilty of the fatal fault of condemning all real novelty, of setting a veto upon originality, and of making thorny the path of genius. All rules are arbitrary, and they are liable to be unjust. I agree with those who are dissatisfied with the tenour of a great deal of current criticism and of much that is miscalled criticism; but I am inclined to think that we must look in quite another direction for the remedy. The province of the critic wants better defining. There are very few cases indeed in which a writer should presume to "pass judgment" on a work—taking these words in their strict meaning. A critique that does not overstep its legitimate purpose should be capable of being resolved into this formula:—"I like this work in this respect, and I dislike it in that, for the following reasons . . . . it pleases me here, and it offends me there, because my experience, my feelings, my instincts prompt me thus or thus . . . ." Such criticism furnishes the reader with the materials for becoming acquainted with the real qualities of the work, whether they are merits or defects. It enables one to take into account the competence, the culture, the sensibility and refinement—or the lack of these qualities—in the critic, and thus to estimate the value of what he says. These are but half considered suggestions on a great subject, which I will not pursue further here.

* * *

IS it the fact, can it be the fact, that the leaders of the Conservative party have taken another gentleman of the press into their service? It looks impossible. And yet the *Birmingham Gazette* announces in all the eloquence of "bourgeois" that it is publishing "a series of special letters, two or three times a week," upon the politics and club gossip of the day, and that these letters are "written by gentlemen resident in London, and closely connected with the leaders of the Conservative party, and contain special information relative to political movements."

Hitherto the leaders of the Conservative party, have done little or nothing but flout the press, and the late Lord Derby killed the *Press*, the cleverest paper ever set up in the interest of Conservatism, by a sneer. But perhaps the publication of these "Letters" marks a turn in the tide. When Edmund Kean was once railing against the press and its criticism to Mrs. Garrick, the old lady opened her eyes in astonishment. "The newspapers, my dear! why do you trouble yourself about the newspapers? Why don't you write your own criticisms? *David always did.*" And this apparently is what the leaders of the Conservative party mean to do in future. Is it an act of condescension or what? And who is the Minister of the Press Bureau of the Carlton?

If any one thinks that the influence of the press in matters of "high politics" is on the wane in this country, let him call to mind the part which the leading articles in the *Times* have played in the negotiations upon the Treaty of Washington. The nation has never quite known its own mind upon the difficult points as they have arisen, until it has digested the morning editorial. Public opinion has been led mainly by the leading journal. Of course we all knew from the first that we would not pay the Indirect Damages; but until the "Thunderer" spoke, the representative Englishman was satisfied with the assurance that those claims were excluded by the Treaty. Government and the English Commissioners were clear that those claims had no chance within the terms of the Treaty and the protocols. Lord Granville's arguments to that effect have been unanswered, unanswerable, and overwhelming. Therefore, but for the newspapers, and especially the *Times*, England would have been very well pleased if our Minister for Foreign Affairs had addressed Mr. Fish in some such terms as these: "Those Indirect Claims are not provided for in the Treaty; you may go to the arbitrators with them if you like, but we give you notice beforehand that if the Court award Indirect Damages we will not pay them." The onus of withdrawing from the Treaty would then have been thrown upon the American Government. I do not say that this is the course which ought to have been adopted; but I am satisfied that my fellow countrymen would have been content that such an ultimatum should go forth from Downing Street, were it not for the refinements of the gentlemen who write the leading articles.

THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE

AUGUST, 1872.

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLANTS OF BARTON," "THE VALLEY OF POPPIES," &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

A BOY'S WOOING.

IT is a good thing to give vent to your feelings in ink. The relief thus afforded to a heart overcharged either with love or rage is immense. But it is a mistake to post the result of your lucubrations. Write love letters, write angry letters—and burn them. This is worldly wisdom. It was not, however, for common reasons that Jacob tore up a dozen letters which he had written to Lucy Cantrill. He could not sufficiently express his feelings, his pen refused to interpret his thoughts, even the Muses failed to assist him; he copied Tom Moore's amorous lines, "I love but thee," and burnt them because he was too proud to send second-hand verses to the girl who had enslaved him. At last he made up his mind, like a man, to tell Lucy he loved her, and when he saw her he only blushed, like a woman. It was about a week after he had first spoken to Lucy that he stole away from Cartown to spend his half holiday in a pilgrimage to the shrine of the factory angel.

"This is a surprise," said Lucy, as she opened the cottage door in response to Jacob's knock.

The factory angel looked more charming than ever. She wore a lilac print dress and a black ribbon round her full fair neck. She was a blonde of the healthy kind. You could see the blood in her cheeks. She was not white, like some blondes, but red and white, the red a blushing rosy red that became vermilion when it reached her lips, which were pouting cherry lips. She stood firmly upon her feet and carried her head proudly after the manner of a race-horse.

Jacob thought there was a little sarcasm in her reception of him.

"We are glad to see you," said the old woman promptly, as if she thought so too.

"Thank you," said Jacob.

"Pray sit down," said the old woman; "how is Dorothy?"

"She is very well," said Jacob.

"That's right; it would be a sad job if somebody didn't keep well," the old woman replied.

"How is Mr. Cantrill?" asked Jacob.

"About the same—no worse, and no better," said the old woman, "and he's getting cross, particular as this is the season when he ought to be out; gamekeeping as a business is at its best when things have to be shot."

"Yes," said Jacob.

"Lucy, my child, draw Mr. Martyn some beer after his walk," said the old woman.

"No, thank you," said Jacob, feeling that it was a degradation for Lucy to wait upon him.

"Oh, yes," said Lucy, "certainly."

Lucy tripped into the pantry, and poured out the beer for Jacob with the grace of a goddess.

Then they talked about Cartown, about Middleton, about the weather, about Mr. Cantrill's illness, about the arduous duties of a gamekeeper, and about a hundred other subjects. Lucy said very little, but she looked her best, and in order that she might do this successfully, she left the room twice to examine herself in her little glass and see that her hair kept its becoming folds. A fashionable lady would have done the same, with the addition of a little fresh rouge upon her cheeks, a general powdering, and a touch or two of the eyebrows.

Jacob was very shy and nervous. Lucy, I fear, did not compassionate him just then. She was enjoying her triumph over him. Though he was only a schoolboy, he was not an unworthy conquest. He was a manly looking fellow, and a blonde generally likes a dark lover. Jacob was dark enough, goodness knows; he might have had gipsy blood in his veins for that matter.

"The wood is very pretty to-day," said Jacob, summoning to his aid all the courage he could command.

"Is it?" said Lucy. "I have not been out to-day."

"Are you going out?" said Jacob, mentally patting himself on the back for his boldness.

"I don't know," Lucy replied. "Perhaps I may by-and-by."

The sunshine was streaming into the cottage.

"It almost seems a pity to stay indoors on such a day as this," Jacob said.

"Perhaps you would like to go for another walk?" said Lucy, looking archly round at Jacob as she wound a worsted ball for the old woman, who was knitting.

"I should very much," said Jacob, "if Mrs. Cantrill could spare you."

"We were talking of you," said Lucy, a little surprised, "not of me."

"I can spare her," said Mrs. Cantrill. "Go, Lucy; it will do you good."

"Very well," said Lucy, and she went again to her glass, before which she arranged a pretty light shawl round her shoulders.

Half an hour afterwards Jacob and Lucy were in the wood, walking beneath elms, chestnuts, and beech trees, from which the leaves were falling; still there were many trees yet unshaken, the oaks making a magnificent show with their yellow leaves. As yet there was none of autumn's humidity in the air. The atmosphere was dry and clear. Lucy and Jacob walked long, and talked little. Jacob gathered blackberries for Lucy, and presented them to her in burdock leaves. Once she was frightened by a snake, which started at her very feet, and flashed over the path like a gleam of light. Jacob said he thought Lucy was used to the woods and fields. Lucy replied that she was not, and never should be. This little incident induced the boy to offer her his arm. She took it. There was a great deal of happiness in that—at any rate so far as Jacob was concerned. The leaves falling had no sad influence on his feelings upon this memorable occasion. While Lucy was with him, his thoughts were of her and her alone. Lucy certainly did not dislike his companionship, but whether it gave her the pleasure that Jacob wished to inspire it is impossible to say. Women are mysteries from their childhood.

Jacob entertained Lucy with an account of his visit to Clumberside. Then he related to her the respective histories of Tom and Susan, telling her how poor Tom was desperately in love with Susan, and how she had married somebody else, in which episode Lucy seemed very much interested.

"And now I am going to ask you a favour," said Jacob, as they passed into an unusually shady recess of the wood.

"Indeed; what is it?" Lucy inquired.

"Will you grant it?"

"Perhaps."

"Will you try to do so?"

"Yes," said Lucy, beginning to think that Jacob was not so schoolboyish as she had thought.

"Well then, I want you to call me Jacob."

"Is that all?" inquired Lucy, and Jacob felt a trifle less happy than he had done a few minutes before. He had asked what seemed to be the question of his life.

"I think it is a great deal," said Jacob.

"If you particularly wish it," said Lucy, "I will—Jacob——" and her voice softened as she spoke his name, to which Jacob responded by an almost imperceptible pressure of the arm he loved so dearly.

"And now another favour?" said Jacob, surprising himself not more than he surprised Lucy.

"You may ask too many favours; I thought you were very bashful," said Lucy.

"I am," said Jacob.

"I don't think so," said Lucy.

Jacob's bashfulness was giving way before the warmth of his feelings. Moreover, he had been rewarded for his previous act of courage. Lucy had said "yes" to his first question. He was determined to go on, though his cheeks were burning and his hands were on fire.

"I want to ask you to let me call you Lucy," said the intrepid youth.

Lucy did not speak.

"You are angry with me," said Jacob, his voice trembling.

"No," said Lucy, "it is time we returned."

"May I not call you Lucy?" said Jacob again, in sheer desperation.

He pressed her hand; she returned Cupid's familiar signal. Jacob's heart beat with joy. He could not speak.

At this moment a girl from the gipsy encampment crossed the path and curtseyed to Lucy. The vagrant was the beauty of her tribe. She was well dressed, though her feet were bare. After she passed them, they saw her watching them at the bend of the road, where they crossed the brook to go out of the wood. There was something in the girl's manner which Jacob did not like.

"Do the gipsies stay here all the year round?" he asked.

"I think so," said Lucy.

"Are you afraid of them?"

"No, I think not; I often meet that girl; I don't think I like her; she is considered very beautiful."

"She is following us," said Jacob, turning round on the bridge.

"She is always very civil when I meet her; never forgets to curtsey, as you saw her," said Lucy.

"Does she beg?" Jacob asked.

"Beg!" said Lucy; "she is as haughty as a queen; I think her mother is the Queen of the North."

"Then you are not frightened at gipsies," said Jacob, musing, as they continued their walk home.

"No; there is no reason why I should be frightened. They are not interfered with on this estate; my lord, I have always heard, is most kind to them."

"Your house is very lonely," said Jacob, and he thought of the cottage in the dark nights of winter.

"Yes; but the watchers are about all night," said Lucy.

"The watchers?" said Jacob.

"Yes; uncle's men, you know—the keepers—there are several of them."

"To protect the game?" said Jacob.

"Yes."

"I wish I were one of them," said Jacob.

"Why?"

"That I might be near to guard you," said the boy, drawing himself up to his full height.

When they reached the cottage, tea was on the table. It was sunset, and Jacob had several miles to walk. But he thought nothing of the journey, and would not have hurried to leave had not Lucy spoken of the distance. Mrs. Cantrill, too, said Master Martyn must just have one cup of tea, which would refresh him for his walk to Cartown. Jacob had one cup, and was still in no hurry to go; he had another, and still remained gossiping with old Mrs. Cantrill and gazing at Lucy. At length Lucy said it was growing late, and as she said so she looked at Jacob, saying, as plainly as possible with her eyes, "Don't you think you had better leave us? you have a long way to go." So Jacob rose from his seat, shook hands with Mrs. Cantrill, and said "Good night."

"Please to gie my love to Dorothy," said the old woman.

Lucy opened the door, and when Jacob shook hands with her, he said "Good night" in a lower voice than that in which he had previously spoken, and finding that Lucy's hand was not withdrawn from his when he detained it for a few moments more than was necessary, he said "dear Lucy," and hurried away down the garden and over the meadow into the wood.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF LUCY'S HISTORY.

It was dark when Jacob reached Cartown; so very dark that in passing the churchyard he began to whistle—as if whistling would have laid Petroski's ghost should it have had a mind to appear. It was late enough for Mr. Spawling to look for an explanation from Jacob, who gave it with tolerable fairness, under the circumstances. He had walked as far as Cantrill's cottage—it was a long way—but he had hoped to be home sooner.

"We were becoming alarmed on your account, Jacob," said Mr. Spawling. "There has been a grand sunset. I forgive you."

Dorothy, who passed through the room as Mr. Spawling was speaking, looked sundry meaning things at Jacob, as he replied to Mr. Spawling in some general terms relative to autumnal tints.

"Spenny has been wishing for you. We have been reading together, and he is now busily engaged with Shakespeare in my room, where I shall be glad to see you, Jacob, for a quarter of an hour after you have supped; it will soon be bedtime;" saying which, Mr. Spawling left the room.

"Autumnal tints!" said Dorothy, when the schoolmaster had gone. "Beautiful sunset! Oh, Jacob, Jacob! Did you forget to ask how my poor father was?"

"No, I did not, Dorothy. He continues about the same."

"Ah, poor soul! that's what I heard by the post this morning. Well, and how's Lucy? Did she like the autumn tints and the fine scenery?"

"Don't sneer, Dorothy."

"I'm not sneering, Jacob. I only asked a civil question," said Dorothy, laughing. "Was she *very* much delighted with the trees and the leaves falling? Did you say some poetry to her?"

"Dorothy, I shall be savage with you."

"Oh, you'll be savage, will you? Was Lucy savage then? Wouldn't she sing to you?"

"Dorothy, Dorothy," said Jacob, "don't."

"Well, I won't then. But, Jacob, mind what you are about; you mustn't go wandering off to mother's without telling me, and you are over young to be love-making, and so is Lucy."

"I was obliged to go, Dorothy. You will not tell, will you?"

"Tell who?"

"Mr. Spawling, or Spen, or anybody."

"Are you ashamed of Lucy then?" asked Dorothy sharply.

"Ashamed, Dorothy? No. But I don't want to be laughed at as you were laughing at me just now."

"Then I won't do it again. But how could anybody help laughing at you talking of autumn tints, as if Lucy was autumn tints?"

"Lucy is everything to me," said Jacob. "I wish you would tell her so, Dorothy."

"No, no, Jacob; do your own courting; I'll be no go-between. But what will your father say?"

"I don't care what anybody says. I would give a thousand pounds if I were two or three years older."

"You'll get over that, Jacob. You'll mend of that, lad, every day."

"Dorothy, I feel that you are my friend," said Jacob, rising from his seat and taking her hand; "will you assist me? will you find out if Lucy loves me? will you say something for me?"

"Well, you are nearly of an age, and I really think you would suit each other, and if you can't screw your courage up, lad, I'll tell her; but you'll do it. And do you think she doesn't know? lor bless you!"

"Thank you, Dorothy, thank you; and now let me tell you what I mean to do, Dorothy. I shall study harder than ever, and I will go into the world, and work, until I show her that I am not a boy. Oh, Dorothy, if you only knew what I feel, if you could but tell what I think about Lucy, I am sure you would help me. If I cared nothing about her I could talk to her by the hour, almost as fast as Spen, if I wanted. But she is different to everybody else; I can't talk to her. I love her so much that I am too happy to speak. I don't know what I am saying when she is there, and I want to say so much. I think of a thousand things to say to her, and never say one of them."

"That's it; oh yes, I know it; you're in love, lad; you're in love, sure enough," said Dorothy excitedly. "I can feel for you, I can feel for you! I declare I feel quite overcome."

Jacob was delighted at this manifestation of Dorothy's interest in his feelings.

"He didn't say it so well; but that is just how Jim used to feel when I knew him first."

"Why, Dorothy, then you have——"

"Don't ask me about it; don't say anything about it. He's dead and gone now, I know he is; six years at sea, and I've had no letter for nigh upon two."

"Oh, then, that is what the mail meant," said Jacob.

Dorothy could not restrain a few tears, and Jacob tried his art of soothing in a variety of gentle admonitions and snatches of advice, and a variety of hopeful *ifs*. "Don't fret, Dorothy. He will come back; I have heard of people being away a great deal longer."

"No, no, Jacob; he would have written: and I've seen shrouds in the candle, and coffins have popped out of the fire. Oh, no, no."

Dorothy rocked herself to and fro for a few moments, and then gradually recovered.

"You've never asked about Lucy's father and mother," she said at length, wiping her eyes.

"I understood they were dead," said Jacob.

"Her mother died an hour after she was born, and her father was ordered to India with his regiment a week afterwards."

"Tell me all about it, Dorothy," said Jacob.

"Her mother was my mother's youngest sister, and an ensign in the army fell in love with her. He was very young at the time: it was in this way. The regiment was in Middleton for a fortnight, and my grandfather was a farmer; mother's youngest sister was very pretty, and was staying on a visit at Middleton. The young officer followed her several times, and at last went into the house where she was stopping, and said right out he loved her, and asked for her father. After that he went and saw her father, and got his consent to go and see her, and they were regularly engaged. When the regiment went to other quarters the officer wrote to Lucy's mother every week, and a year afterwards married her; but his father disowned him for it."

"How hard-hearted!" said Jacob.

"Yes, hard-hearted it was. Well, she lived happily enough with him for about a year, and then came home for a little while, when Lucy was born, and her poor dear mother died, as I have told you. The father was nearly broken-hearted, and more so that he was ordered to India. I've heard mother tell the story many a time, and cried at it till my eyes have been swelled up. When he went, he left as much money as he could for the support of the child."

"Poor Lucy, *dear* Lucy!" said Jacob, deeply interested in Dorothy's unexpected and romantic narrative.

"But time wore on, and as he never came back, the money was spent; and grandfather getting old and infirm, things went wrong with him, and at last he followed grandmother to the grave. Soon there was nobody left but mother, who was married to father before the youngest sister was wed, of course; so Lucy went to live with them. When she was about ten the housekeeper of Mr. Bradforth, who owns the factory, took a fancy to her, and got Mr. Bradforth to let her come and live in the house with her, and be in the factory.

The gentleman being kind, and hearing a bit about Lucy's history, consented, and the housekeeper learnt her to read and write so well that Lucy got a prize for Scripture reading at the Sunday-school. About this time, father, who was groom for Squire Northcotes, got the situation as head keeper at Dunswood, and then when he took to be ill sometimes, and mother was not so nimble as she had been, they thought Lucy might come and keep house for them; and I thought so too, because Mr. Bradforth's housekeeper, the latter part of Lucy's time at the factory, used to let her work more than I thought was good for her; and what was more, she was getting to an age when she would be better away from such society as there is in a factory, though she is as good as she is beautiful. That's her history, as far as I know. I've told you all mother has told me, and I ought to know it, all the times I've heard it. So you see Lucy's got good blood in her veins, Master Jacob. Her father was an officer in the army, and her mother was the daughter of parents who were honest enough, if they were not so rich as they might have been."

"You amaze me!" said Jacob; "why it is quite a romance, the history of Lucy's life! but a very sorrowful one. Poor Lucy! What was her father's name, then?"

"Oh, I forgot to tell you that," Dorothy replied. "His name was Thornton."

"Then Lucy's proper name is Thornton!"

"Yes, it is; but we've always called her Cantrill."

"Well, you are a gossiping couple," said Spen, entering the room. "Mr. Spawling has been waiting for you this half hour, Jacob, and now he's gone to bed."

"I am sorry he waited, Spen, but Dorothy and I have been having a long chat, and the time has gone very quickly."

"Time travels in divers places with divers persons," said Spen. "I'll tell you who Time ambles withal, who Time trots withal, who Time gallops withal, and who he stands withal. But no, 'tis getting late. We must *to bed, to bed*, friend Jacob."

"Always lively, Spen, always funny," said Jacob.

"I'm brimful of Shakespeare to-night, Jacob; but it's not all fun. It's grand, Jacob. If learning Shakespeare was learning grammar, I should soon be a scholar."

"I don't think you could learn better grammar, Spen," said Jacob.

"I declare the boy's head's turned with Shakespeare—one hears about nothing else now—I shall go to bed;" whereupon, Dorothy put a bundle of sticks into the kitchen oven, removed the chairs a little distance from the fire, screwed down the window cotter, lighted candles for Jacob, Spen, and herself, and then the three bade each other "Good night."

CHAPTER XV.

A MAN'S TROUBLES.

A DULL February morning. Mr. Martyn had just breakfasted at a shining square table in the general room of the new Hummums Hotel, Covent Garden. He lighted a cigar, and stood at the door of the house to smoke. There was a cold, sombre cloud hanging over the garden; the atmosphere harmonised with Mr. Martyn's thoughts. The rime frost still clung to some waggon-loads of winter greens. Mr. Martyn presently strolled into the market. He looked vacantly at the fruits and flowers. He was thinking of the last effort he was about to make to save himself from bankruptcy. A tray of violets carried his mind back for a moment to early days, but he could not afford to indulge in a reverie on flowers. Over breakfast he had read a letter from Jacob, in which our hero had expressed a desire to go into the world and commence the battle of life. Jacob said he had worked hard for many months; that he had studied night and day, and that Mr. Spawling was more than satisfied with his progress; that he had made up in these latter days for any early neglect of his education. Jacob said nothing about Lucy, though he had thought of her all the time he was writing. What pretty secrets, what pleasant mysteries Love permits to his votaries.

Mr. Martyn walked and smoked and calculated his chances of success and failure, until he stood before the London chambers of Mr. Bonsall, M.P., in Piccadilly. It was eleven o'clock, and the servant said the hon. member had not yet breakfasted.

"There was a very late sitting of the House last night," said the man.

"I have particular business with Mr. Bonsall, and will wait," said Mr. Martyn.

"I will take up your card," said the man.

The provincial journalist followed the man into a handsome little room, where a bachelor's breakfast was waiting for the rising member for Middleton.

Presently Mr. Bonsall entered. He was a tall, square-built man, with hard features, though the mouth bespoke that peculiar power of talk which belongs to a certain class of men who come to the front at public meetings of all kinds. You could see at once that there was no sentiment in Mr. Bonsall's constitution. He was a business man, sir; looked at life from a practical point of view: he reduced feelings to figures, and balanced them up as he did his steward's book. He looked at his watch as he entered the room, and made up his mind to get rid of Mr. Martyn within half an hour.

"Ah, Mr. Martyn," he said, "I am glad to see you. Charles (calling to his servant), Mr. Martyn will have breakfast."

"No, thank you," said Mr. Martyn, "I have breakfasted."

"Mr. Martyn has breakfasted," said the member to Charles, who at once left the room with the additional plates which he was about to place on the table.

"I hope you are well," said Mr. Martyn. "You are compelled to keep later hours in town than are observed at Clumberside."

"Yes," said Mr. Bonsall. "These late sittings are not conducive to health; I am not so well as I was; you will take a cup of coffee at all events."

"Thank you, yes, I will," said Mr. Martyn.

"Charles, Mr. Martyn will take some coffee," said the member.

"How is Middleton getting on?" asked the member, chipping his morning egg. "I am told trade is bad there, and I suppose that was to be expected; the depression is perfectly natural; money is too cheap—trade requires the stimulus of a rising discount; the money market is the surest barometer of the commercial atmosphere."

"I suppose it is," said Mr. Martyn, "though I do not find money cheap in the common acceptation of the term at all events; the iron trade is in a miserable state, and we have two thousand colliers out on strike."

"That is bad, though I hold that the collier has a perfect right to strike; his labour represents capital, and it is for him to assess the value of that capital."

"There, Mr. Bonsall, you know we differ; but we will discuss the point at some other time; I dare say you have important business to attend to this morning, and I have come to town especially to talk over with you a matter that concerns you indirectly and myself in a very important degree."

"Yes," said Mr. Bonsall. "Take a little more coffee (refilling Mr. Martyn's cup). I should like to argue that question of the relation of capital to labour and vice versa; but we will reserve it, as you say, for a more convenient opportunity. What is our business together this morning?—nothing like seeing a man on business and doing business promptly."

"The newspaper," said Mr. Martyn, his voice faltering a little, "the *Middleton Star.*"

"Yes, I congratulate you upon it, Mr. Martyn. It is admirably conducted and well written, though I doubt whether you are not just a trifle too liberal in your treatment of our opponents. For my own part, I think uncompromising enmity the policy in politics. If an opponent were known privately to be an angel, I should insist on calling him a devil, sir," said Mr. Bonsall. "Give the other side credit for nothing, sir, but tyranny, selfishness, and knavery."

"I know your views upon that subject," said Mr. Martyn. "You remember when first you suggested that I should start this newspaper?"

"No, not exactly," said the hon. member, though he remembered the circumstance perfectly well. "Did I suggest it?"

"Most certainly," said Mr. Martyn. "I remember our talking about it, before the first election when you were defeated."

"Some years ago. It must be a very long time ago."

"The party wanted a paper, you wanted a paper, I was enthusiastic for a paper, we all wanted an organ," said Mr. Martyn.

"Yes, I remember something of it."

"Mr. Bonsall," said the journalist, rising, "why this pretended want of memory? Is it because you have heard that the paper is in difficulties?"

"No, my dear sir; I simply do not quite remember the circumstance; pray don't excite yourself."

"Then of course you quite forget the promises which you and your agent made to me when I consented to enter upon this enterprise?"

"Promises!" said Mr. Bonsall, looking up with an expression of great surprise. "Pray explain. I do not quite understand you."

"The *Middleton Star* was projected and started in the interest of the party," said Mr. Martyn. "I believed then, and I do now, that the party represented those principles which mean the national good and the national welfare; I felt that apart from its political views, a well conducted and independent journal would be successful; you and your agents promised me substantial aid if I required it. 'We are not particular to a couple of thousand pounds if you want it,' you said; my reply was that I should put all my own money into it before I asked for the party's assistance. I looked for a fair reward for my capital and energy. I have been disappointed. The chief success has been in electing you, and thus maintaining the supremacy of the party at Middleton after a struggle of many years. Not only have I spent all my own money, I have borrowed of others, and the present stagnation of trade compels me to remind you of your promise: that is the explanation of my visit this morning."

"And to be business-like and to the point, you have come to ask me for a large sum of money?" said Mr. Bonsall.

"Two thousand pounds," said Mr. Martyn. "I have already sunk in the paper four thousand of my own. I am now threatened in respect of a sum borrowed; threatened with almost immediate execution. I am more than solvent; I have more than twenty shillings in the pound if the property were available. A thousand pounds would put my affairs in a comparatively healthy position; two thousand would make the paper."

"Who is pressing you?"

"A member of our own party."

"That is strange."

"He is a gas shareholder to a large amount, and is interested in other schemes which I have not always supported."

"Ah, you should always stick to your party."

"I have done so, as a party."

"But you should also adhere to individual members of it. When a man goes in for politics he reduces the thing to a simple matter of figures; he——"

"I know your theory," said Mr. Martyn, interrupting the member; "you used to say that I returned you to Parliament; you said so on the hustings."

"That was unwise on my part; for once in my life my feelings overcame my judgment; it was not respectful to my constituents. But who is the person who is pressing you for this money?"

"Magar," said Mr. Martyn. "I must have been hard up indeed to have borrowed from him."

"A very rising man," said the member; "energetic, plain-spoken, a thorough party man. And how is Mr. Magar? He was a miller, I think?"

"He is a scoundrel," said the journalist; "a deep, designing, vulgar ruffian."

"Really, Mr. Martyn!" said the member, laying down his knife and fork and leaning back in his chair.

"Plain-speaking," said the journalist; "I thought you admired plain-speaking."

Mr. Bonsall rang the bell.

"Charles, if Lord Fazbale calls, detain him; I am very anxious to see him."

"Yes, sir," said Charles, leaving the room as softly as he had entered it.

"I am wasting your time, and my own I fear," said Mr. Martyn; "is my mission successful?"

"In respect of the money?" said the member, with tantalising coolness.

"Yes."

"Well, you see, Mr. Martyn," said the member, rising and planting his feet firmly upon the hearth-rug, and giving his back the full benefit of the fire; "the question is a very delicate one. Prior to my election I should have had no difficulty; then I was not pledged to the national work as it were; then I was not in the House, bound to its dictum of honour and independence; now, in my present position as a member of Parliament, as a legislator having taken certain oaths and entered upon certain duties, it would ill become me to advance money in the interest of party journalism. As a matter of inclination I should like to write you a cheque for two thousand pounds; as a question of duty I cannot."

"That is your answer. I don't understand the pretended philosophy of it, but it means No."

"I fear so."

"In spite of your own words, 'We shall not be particular to a couple of thousand if ever you require the money.'"

"I don't remember the words," said the honest, plain-spoken, liberal-minded, and eloquent member for Middleton.

"You remember being returned?"

"Yes," said Mr. Bonsall, "and I shall always acknowledge myself much indebted to you, Mr. Martyn, for that honour, and I regret that you and I in this present business cannot quite agree with each other's views."

"There is an old English proverb," said the journalist, "'I taught you to swim and you drown me.'"

"I don't believe in proverbs," said Mr. Bonsall. "If you reduce them to facts and figures you find the balance of experience against them; they are the aphorisms of disappointment."

"Good morning," said Mr. Martyn.

"Good morning, Mr. Martyn," said the member. "I hope we shall meet on a subject in which we mutually agree the next time I have the pleasure of seeing you."

Mr. Martyn had played his last card. When Don Quixote rescued the galley-slaves they rewarded him with stones and stole his squire's ass. The provincial journalist found London a desert. He never had felt so lonely as he felt while walking along Waterloo Place, for he selected to go in that direction when he left Piccadilly. He passed the fine club-house where he had once dined with Mr. Bonsall and half a dozen other members of the House of Commons. Arrived at Trafalgar Square, he walked round the fountains there—round and round, until he thought a policeman looked curiously at him; then he went into the National Gallery and sat down opposite a Turner, his mind, however, being far away from the sunny mists of the landscape before him. "Poor Jacob," he said to himself. "Poor Jacob."

Presently Mr. Martyn returned to his hotel.

"Let me have my bill," he said, sitting down at an empty table near the fire.

"Right, sir," was the quick response.

"Very cold morning," said a gruff voice at the opposite side of the room.

Mr. Martyn recognised a gentleman whom he had seen in the smoke-room on the previous night.

"It is," said Mr. Martyn.

"Excuse me, you look as if we were both in the same box," said the stranger.

"I don't understand," said the journalist.

"You look disappointed."

"I am," said Mr. Martyn.

"Committee business?" said the stranger.

"No," said Mr. Martyn.

"I have seen you before," said the stranger.

"I think I can say the same with regard to yourself," said Mr. Martyn.

"Yes," said the stranger. "I've been up now every session for six years; for five years I have opposed a railway coming through my estate, and for five years I have beaten the marauders in one way or another; this time they have beaten me."

"Indeed," said Mr. Martyn, wondering for a moment how much good money had been wasted in the litigation.

"Yes; this session I came up to oppose the line going in a fresh direction, instead of through my land; they actually, sir, had the audacity to make fresh plans and leave me out of their calculations altogether! and, by the Lord Harry! they have licked me, sir! and it has cost me, one way and another, not less than twenty thousand pounds."

The obstinate old man tossed off the last glass of a bottle of sherry, and smacking his lips, said "But I'll be even with the beggars yet, if it costs me another twenty."

And yet Mr. Martyn's dear and honest hopes were to be blighted, his good name sullied, his son's future made miserable perhaps, for the want of a couple of thousand pounds !

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LAST OF JACOB'S HAPPY DAYS AT CARTOWN; UPON WHICH NOTABLE OCCASION HE RECEIVES BAD NEWS AND GOOD ADVICE, AND EXPERIENCES THE SWEET SORROW OF PARTING.

WHEN he wrote the letter mentioned in the previous chapter, Jacob Martyn little thought he would be suddenly summoned home a few months afterwards; and never for a moment, in all his dreams and speculations relative to the future, did he calculate upon such events as those which were then progressing towards consummation. So far as he was concerned, that short space of time had been full of happiness. He had frequently seen Lucy; they had walked hand in hand, full of hope, through the dead leaves of autumn; and Jacob had written to Lucy, and Lucy had written to Jacob, when winter set icy barriers and very early sunsets between the young lover and his half-holiday walks to the house among the trees. Mr. Spawling had once or twice been on the point of writing to Mr. Martyn upon the subject of the tender relationship between Jacob and Lucy; but he had each time dismissed it as unworthy of serious attention. Boys will be boys, he thought to himself, and girls will be girls—with this addition in the present case, however, ran on Mr. Spawling's thoughts, that there are few girls so fair as Dorothy's cousin.

"I am sorry," began Mr. Spawling, at breakfast on a March morning, which Jacob Martyn had cause long to remember, "I am exceedingly sorry to learn, Jacob, that you must leave us to-day on a journey of a sorrowful character. You have had a letter this morning?"

"I have, sir," said Jacob, sadly.

Spen gazed stedfastly into his coffee cup, and Dorothy, looking at Jacob with tears in her eyes, said she "hoped things would turn out better than was thought."

"I trust they will. And you must be hopeful too, Jacob, my boy; but never forget that we all have our cares and troubles, and that there are times when adversity is a blessing, coming to us as the forerunner of real and lasting peace," said Mr. Spawling.

Spen still looked at his coffee, and tears trickled slowly down Dorothy's ruddy cheeks.

"You have my heartiest sympathy, Jacob. I shall feel your trouble as if it were my own. We have been acquainted with each other a long time now; and for my own part, Jacob, the more I have known of you the higher you have risen in my estimation. Do not think I flatter; I am not given to mere lip compliments; you will have the good sense to regard what I say in the proper light. Praise and commendation, fairly earned, represent a just debt, and I pay it willingly and with satisfaction."

"You are very kind, sir," said Jacob, a beam of gratitude lighting up his expressive features.

"Whatever may be our respective destinies, Jacob, I am sure we shall always remember each other with esteem and respect."

"Yes, sir," said Jacob.

"We cannot say what the future may have in store for us. When autumn tinges the leaf its sure decay has begun. The fruit falls with its own ripeness. But true affection lives on to the last; and memory has consoling pleasures, sad though they sometimes be, for those who have lived to wear grey hairs. Old men look for their pleasures in memory. It is youth which looks hopefully into the future. May yours be a bright one, Jacob! Do not expect it to be without clouds, and storms, and tempests. Affliction will surely come to you, sooner or later. Already you have tasted of the bitter cup. When next it is presented to your lips, take it meekly, submissively, and religiously. We are the creatures of an all-powerful and beneficent Being who ordains everything to a good and wise end. He puts us through the fire of adversity that we may be made the purer for the burning, and our afflictions are the offspring of His mercy. If ever you find it difficult to realise this, my dear boy, go down upon your knees and seek instruction and consolation at the hands of Him who will never desert you so long as you seek Him; and whose love is as infinite as His wisdom, and whose mercy endureth for ever."

Mr. Spawling spoke these words so solemnly, with an elocution so touching, and in a voice so rich and musical, that his hearers were no less astonished than they were affected. And when Mr. Spawling, after a short pause, said, "Let us pray," they fell upon their knees and joined the schoolmaster in his supplications with true religious fervour.

Family prayers had not formed part of the domestic arrangements of Mr. Spawling's household, though a blessing was asked upon every meal, and Mr. Spawling frequently closed the day by reading a chapter from the Bible; so that there was something unusual in the present proceeding, which would have been impressive from its novelty had it not been touching from its earnestness.

The truth is, the letter which Mr. Spawling had received prepared the schoolmaster for the event of Mr. Martyn's death, which it was feared would take place within a few days. This sad news could hardly be said to have been unexpected, though the information did at last seem to come with terrible suddenness. On his last journey to London Mr. Martyn had taken a severe cold, which had settled upon his lungs, in addition to which he had for some time past been suffering from disease of the heart. Poor Mr. Martyn was dying of disappointment and trouble. If his journey to London had been successful, he would not have taken cold. Mental anxiety and worry predispose men to all the ailments under the sun.

"And now, good-bye for the present, Jacob," said Mr. Spawling, putting out his hand. "Remember my words, and God bless you."

"Good-bye, sir," said Jacob. "You have been very kind to me, and I shall never forget it."

Mr. Spawling here left the room, just as Spen began to give note of the commencement of another scholastic day. The bell tolled slowly this morning, from first to last. Spen afterwards told Dorothy that he felt as if he were operating at a funeral.

"How solemn master was! It's enough to upset anybody—I wonder he did so," said Dorothy, when she was alone with Jacob. "But he has changed of late. He gets dreaming up in that room, and reading until he is quite strange sometimes. The letter you got did not say Mr. Martyn was dangerously ill, Jacob, did it?"

"No, Dorothy. Aunt Keziah says that father has been unwell for some weeks, that he is worse during the last few days, and wishes me to come and see him. I am not so much alarmed at it, Dorothy, as I otherwise might be, because I have asked him to let me leave school, and Aunt Keziah says, in a postscript, that it is possible I may not return to Cartown again."

"You don't say so, Jacob!"

"I do; you know why I wish to leave here, Dorothy?"

"Well, yes; and I like you for it, sir. But still I am sorry."

"You must take care of Lucy for me, Dorothy."

"Ah! heaven bless her. You will go and say good-bye to her?"

"Of course I shall, Dorothy."

"You can go on there now; Will Tunster can take up your box here, and call for you on his way."

"Thank you, Dorothy; how kind and considerate you are."

Spen entered the house at this juncture, with a small vessel in one hand and a piece of Indian ink in another. It was mapping-day, and the merriman had been filling in the wavy snakish wriggling twining twisting lines, indicating rivers around the western hemisphere.

"I just ran off to bid you good-bye, Jacob," said Spen. "Cheer up; don't be frightened at Mr. Spawling being so tragic this morning; he was carried away by his feelings and his eloquence."

"I am not frightened, Spen," said Jacob, shaking his friend by the hand.

"That's right; good-bye, Jacob," said Spen, returning the grasp. "We shall soon meet again; but tip me a letter."

Then their eyes met; they looked sadly at each other, and "Good-bye" was repeated in a low whisper.

"If I should not come back, Spen," said Jacob, following the mapper as he slowly left the house, "you will——"

"Write to you every day," said Spen, finishing the sentence.

"Yes, but that is not what I was going to say. You will——" and Jacob paused a second time.

"Never forget you, and take the first opportunity of seeing you again," said Spen.

"Yes, yes, my dear fellow," said Jacob, "and you'll have an eye upon Lucy sometimes; and watch over her for me in my absence."

"Lucy! ah, bless her, won't I, though? But Jacob, suppose *I* was to fall in love with her."

Jacob smiled at the remark, and Mr. Spawling's two boarders shook hands once more, and parted.

"Now I think I will go, Dorothy," said Jacob, re-entering the house.

"Dear me, how one thinks of all sorts of things when folks is going away like this," said Dorothy. "There is one thing I want to ask, so that nothing shall be on my mind. You'll never think about that morning I was so rough with you, Jacob—the very first morning you came? Lor', how time does fly, to be sure!"

"I shall remember nothing but your kindness, because, indeed, I have no other memories of you, Dorothy," said Jacob.

In less than half an hour Jacob was walking to the house among the trees. A March wind rollicked by him on his way. The tinkling of sheep-bells came over hedges that were swelling with the earliest reanimating influences of spring. Field-labourers were calling to each other; and there was a fresh earthy smell from the newly-turned furrows, that were beginning to make long lines on the brown soil, as if Nature had turned schoolmaster and were ruling giant copy-books. Rooks were cawing in the trees and holding great meetings about family rights of building on certain branches. Sundry other birds, which had mated in the previous month, were gathering wool and sticks and hay for making nests in out-of-the-way places. The world which had been dead was coming to life again. Jacob was almost shocked at his own want of sensibility. He felt happy in spite of his father's illness and notwithstanding his solemn parting with Mr. Spawling. Sorrow seemed to him at that time an impossible sensation. The song of birds, the chattering of rooks, the labourer whistling in the fields, the bright sunshine, the bursting buds, and the hot pulsation of first love in his heart—Jacob's feelings were in strong sympathy with nature.

"How you frightened me!" Lucy exclaimed, as Jacob entered the cottage unperceived.

"Is the surprise agreeable?" said Jacob, stealing his arm round Lucy and kissing her before she could reply.

"Jacob!" said Lucy, starting from his side, "you are positively rude."

Lucy's eyes flashed. She picked up her back-comb and looked almost angry.

"I am very sorry," said Jacob. "You are angry."

"No, indeed I am not," said Lucy; "but you surprised me at first, and then to take that sudden advantage of my confusion!"

Jacob could not tell whether Lucy was angry or not.

"And you have caught me in the middle of house-cleaning," she said.

That was the grievance. Lucy did not object to Jacob kissing her; but she could not endure his seeing her with dirty hands. Her face was not clean either, and she had a grimy apron on. Fancy Hebe cleaning the hearth with a dirty face and her hair falling down! Jacob thought Lucy all the prettier for this domestic taint. Her cheeks were red, and her print dress showed to perfection the round contour of her figure. There are ladies in Mayfair who would look very drabs in such attire and with dirty faces (if such a contingency were possible), but Lucy would have looked ladylike and Hebe-like under any circumstances.

"Ah, you will forgive me when you know why I have come," said Jacob.

"I do forgive you; I should not have objected even to your rudeness if I had been dressed," said Lucy.

"I am going to leave Cartown," said Jacob.

"When?"

"Very soon."

"Next week?"

"Earlier than that."

"Oh, Jacob, you should have told me before," said Lucy, with a look of real tenderness.

"You are sorry," said Jacob.

"It is very sudden, is it not?" said Lucy, not quite willing to say that she was very sorry.

"You will think it sudden and a little sad," said Jacob, "when you know all about it," lowering his voice and pressing the hand that somehow or other had found its way into his own.

"Tell me at once," said Lucy, "or I shall think something very dreadful has occurred."

"To-day, dear, to-day," said Jacob.

Lucy did not now attempt to disguise her sorrow. Her nature was less enthusiastic than Jacob's. She was not easily moved from the even tenour of her way. To her, life was a calm river, with none of the dashing over precipices and leaping over stones which were characteristic of Jacob's temperament. Lucy's was a quiet, loving nature that soon bent to circumstances. She liked a bit of finery, as her aunt would truly say—what pretty girl does not? And she liked admiration. When some of the gentlemen who came to shoot over my lord's estate called at the cottage, Lucy always looked her best and was as haughty as a queen. She made fun of Jacob when first he came to the cottage, mimicked his voice and manner when he left; but by degrees he gained a higher place in her thoughts; his companionship had broken down the monotony of her existence. When she found that he was going to leave Cartown her voice faltered, her heart beat convulsively, and when she went upstairs to wash her face and change her dress there were tears in her eyes. She forgot her mortification at being discovered cleaning the house, and she came down again with a bright blue ribbon in her hair, and a clean, pretty dress, and coquettish little apron; and while Jacob sat admiring her she took a little hand-brush and gave the finishing touches to the polished and shining hearth, which had been cleaned and brightened by her own fair hands.

Jacob told her he was going to begin the world for her sake, and win a name for both, when nothing but death could part them. He was not likely to return to Cartown again to live. Middleton was no distance truly, but still there was the parting under such different circumstances to those which had hitherto marked their partings. Heretofore they had only said "Good night." Now they would say "Good-bye." When they met again would anything have occurred to change their love?

"How silent you are, Lucy," said Jacob, leaning over her chair.

Lucy was very quiet all the day long; all her movements were more gentle than usual. When she did speak it was almost in a whisper. Jacob was content to sit with her hand in his, listening to the birds singing, and with his brain full of bright pictures of the future. When they walked out together she leaned more heavily on his arm than ever she had done before, and the sense of the first real parting seemed to deepen into a sacred feeling, a confiding trustfulness, that was best interpreted by silence. Lucy had not known how much she loved Jacob until now, and the consciousness that his love was reciprocated heightened Jacob's hopes of days to come, and if possible made Lucy seem to him more beautiful than ever.

Mrs. Cantrill and her husband had gone out to see a neighbour at Crossley whom they had not visited for many years. The old man had only left his bed about a week previously, and the change, it was thought, would be beneficial to him. The squire's steward had offered, the day before, to let a conveyance (which was going through Crossley and would return in the evening) call for them, and the poor old couple had made holiday—the first for a good round number of years.

So the lovers were alone. The time passed very rapidly. Their talk was chiefly the language of the eye and the pressure of the hand. And still the clock ticked and beat out the time with marvellous speed. The little sprites that swung upon the pendulum sent it to and fro with a swift perversity; a malicious hand turned the fingers round and round, in provoking harmony with the swaying pendulum. The fire in the shining grate burned quickly, and soon became white and dusty, as though night were coming before the afternoon was over; while a cricket began to sing long before its customary time.

At length Lucy placed cups and saucers upon the table and made the tea. How delightful it was to see Lucy cutting bread and butter and sitting at the head of the table.

"Some day we may sit in our own house and have tea together," said Jacob.

"We must not think of it; first love is never successful, Dorothy says," Lucy replied, with a touch of her former archness.

"Dorothy does not think so in her heart, though she may say so," answered Jacob.

"I hope to earn a house very soon; would you not like to live in London, Lucy? Mr. Spawling says London is the place for enterprising spirits."

"I don't know," said Lucy; "it is very dull here."

"Yes, very; is it not? I wish you lived in a town, Lucy."

"Why?"

"I don't know; I always think somebody will be running away with you down here."

Lucy laughed at this, and said Jacob was a silly boy.

"If I were a lord, or a great man's son, and came here to shoot, and had plenty of money, I should try and run away with you," said Jacob, handing Lucy her own bread and butter.

"Yes, but other people are not so silly as you are, Jacob; you think so much of me, you see."

"I do, indeed; you are all the world to me, Lucy; you shall see; some day I will do wonderful things; it is a pity this is not the age of knight-errantry."

"You would go to the wars then and be killed, and a great deal of good that would do," said Lucy.

And they went on talking lovers' talk until time seemed to be in a conspiracy against them. The wind began to rise; the evening shadows fell upon the window; the clock ticked faster than ever. Jacob, after a great deal of persuasion, induced Lucy to sing the factory hymn, in which she broke down and burst into tears, and then, for the first time, Jacob wished the last five minutes were over. The sweet sorrows of parting were giving way to the bitterness of saying farewell.

"My dear, dear Lucy," said Jacob at last, both his arms round the weeping girl, "good-bye; God bless you!"

Will Tunster's horn sounded shrill and clear through the leafless trees of March. Before the echo passages of "Tom Moody" had reached the last quivering variation, which was Will's especial pride and glory, Jacob was at the cottage door. He went away with the picture of it in his memory, to carry it about with him, to fill into his dreams—the home of his love, the scene of his happiest hours. Jacob had often talked of the battle of life; he had pictured himself a victor in the conflict, coming home in triumph to stand beside Lucy at the altar. From this time—this last day at Cantrill's—his soldiership, his courage, his prowess, his endurance, his faith in love and duty were to undergo great trials of warfare. Will Tunster's horn was sounding the first alarm of the battle.

CHAPTER XVII.

"WHITHER GOEST THOU, MISFORTUNE? TO WHERE THERE IS MORE."

MIDDLETON-IN-THE-WATER, I believe, retains many old customs even in the present day. Neither badger-baiting nor cock-fighting is quite extinct in the North Midland borough. Wife beating is looked upon as the exercise of a manly right. The proverb of a spaniel, a woman, and a walnut tree being the better for beating had its origin at Middleton. In the early days of Jacob Martyn there were trapper girls in the pits and women-slaves on the banks. Middleton fought hard to retain these glorious privileges when Parliament interfered with the local rights of property. Little sweeps were forced up the Middleton flues long after the Act of Parliament against this particular kind of cruelty was passed. In the old days they used to duck shrews, burn witches, drive stakes through suicides, and assemble together in joyous crowds to see criminals whipped or hanged.

The Middletonians clung to everything old, whether it was bad or good. The most harmless of their ancient customs was that of the curfew bell. It was tolling as Jacob and the mail driver neared the town, tolling just as it always had done from the first, and the sound brought back to Jacob's remembrance many strange recollections, including that most memorable incident of all, the arrival of his Aunt Keziah. Will Tunster answered the bell with a solemn bugle performance of "Tom Moody," after which he resumed a somewhat lugubrious attempt at conversation, which had not by any means been successful on the road. Now that they were entering the town, however, Will thought it was necessary to come to the point at which he had long been aiming.

"Hope you won't be down hearted," he said in his strong northern dialect.

"I do not know that I have any particular cause to be so," said Jacob, who had received a very different letter to that which Aunt Keziah had written to Mr. Spawling.

"I'm afeared thou has, Mester Jacob, but thou won't be so much at first as after. When a chap falls down and is badly hurt, he doesn't feel it so much at the time as after, thou sees."

Will flicked his horse with the whip by way of emphasis, and Jacob made no reply.

"I had a talk with Dorothy, thou sees," went on the driver, "before I took up thy box at Spawling's, and I've heard summat o' what's been going on in these parts lately. Bad luck always runs his cattle in pairs."

Will flicked his horse again, and dragged at the reins as if his willing steed were one of the demon's ill-begotten cattle.

"I don't understand you. I am not prepared for the ill news which you seem to suggest," said Jacob, drawing nearer to the driver, and trying to look up into his face, which was impossible, seeing that the night was dark, and that the town lamps were therefore not lighted.

They were just entering the town of Middleton. Jacob could hear the water rushing over the mill-weir by the bridge. "Well, it's a pity thou hast not been more prepared, Jacob," said the driver, with a familiar expression of sympathy. "Keep up thy spirits. It's no good meeting a winter storm with one's jacket off, as if it was summer."

"You alarm me, Will," said Jacob.

"Nay, don't be alarmed; set thy teeth, clench thy fists, and summon thy courage."

"What is it, Will? tell me before we stop; why this is our house —we are at home."

"Hush, lad; don't say no more just now; wait a bit; keep up thy courage and trust in God," said Will, pulling his horse into a walk.

The curfew bell had ceased, making the suddenly noiseless motion of the mail cart more impressive than the unexpected silence would otherwise have been. They were travelling over a muffled roadway. Bark cuttings, from the tannery, had been laid upon the street. So strong are local associations, that Jacob was at once reminded of the quarter sessions and the death of an eminent townsman. Tan had been chiefly used, in his memory, when the magistrates, "in quarter sessions assembled," met to try prisoners at the old Town Hall; and on these occasions it is questionable whether the boys, who rolled themselves in the soft broken bark, and pelted each other with the same, did not make more noise than the coaches and coal carts would have done over the ordinary flags and boulders with which the streets were paved. But when the bark was strewed before a house in which death was busy, to keep the sick chamber quieter than fear and love could keep it, the sign was respected, even in Middleton, and the knocker might have been left unmuffled.

"Surely my father is not seriously ill?" at length said Jacob to himself. He was afraid to ask the question aloud.

Tom Titsy was standing in the street waiting to carry Jacob's box into the house. When the cart stopped he came forward and assisted Jacob to alight, never uttering a word, but returning the pressure of Jacob's hand in a very different manner to his greeting at Cartown when he accompanied Jacob and Mr. Martyn to Clumberside.

Will Tunster very quietly moved on his way, when Jacob and his luggage were in Tom Titsy's custody. Tom threw the box over his shoulder, and preceded Jacob into the house.

"This way, sir," said a prim domestic, and Jacob was ushered into a comfortable dining-room, which in the old time had been an ordinary parlour. At Jacob's request, Tom took a seat, and Jacob began to question him.

"How is my father, Tom?"

"Bad, Jacob; very bad," said Tom.

"But—but, Tom, there is no danger?" said Jacob, in a faltering voice.

Tom held down his head.

"Don't be afraid, Tom; tell me truly. Tom, be honest with me."

But Tom maintained a miserable silence, broken only by a sigh that said more than Jacob's worst fears had predicted since the mail-cart rolled softly on the bark carpet without.

"Illness is not the worst," at last said Tom, rising and striding across the apartment, with his lips compressed and his hands clenched.

"For God's sake, don't drive me mad!" exclaimed Jacob, grasping Tom by the arm. "If you care anything about my friendship, tell me everything. Am I a fool, or a baby, or an idiot, that you hum and ha, and nod and sigh and trifle with me thus?" Jacob's eyes flashed with indignation. "Will Tunster treated me just as you are treating me. It is monstrous; it is cruel."

Tom turned upon Jacob a surprised look, and stopping his indignant protest against further silence by a motion of his hand, said, "Well then, Mester Jacob, you shall know all. Pull yourself together, for you will need all your strength if you were as old as Methuselah. Follow me; steady, steady."

Tom led the way to the kitchen. The door being ajar, he requested Jacob to walk on tiptoe and peep in towards the fire-place. Jacob did so, and saw a dwarfish looking man sitting in the chair which Jacob's mother had been accustomed to use, and in which Aunt Keziah sat on the first night when she made her appearance at Middleton.

The stranger was by no means prepossessing in appearance. He looked like a combination of several people. The head was that of a tall, muscular man, and it was reclining on the body of a stiff, thickset dwarf, with the legs of a miner, who had bent them out of their natural shape during years of labour in narrow and stifling headings. This combination was evidently asleep with its legs on the fender.

Jacob gazed in astonishment for a few minutes, and then looked eagerly at Tom for an explanation.

"Don't you know him?" Tom inquired.

"No," said Jacob, following Tom into the dining-room.

"What! not know Barnaby the——"

"Yes, yes," said Jacob; but still he did not seem to understand what was the matter.

"Barnaby the bum-bailiff," said Tom in a whisper. "He's in possession of the place."

Jacob staggered towards a chair, as Mrs. Gompson entered the room.

"Your father would like to see you, Jacob. Dear me, how you've altered."

Aunt Keziah could not resist this expression of surprise on finding the weakly boy of a few years ago a fine handsome fellow on the verge of manhood. She had a basin in one hand, and a napkin in the other, which she had picked up as an excuse for not shaking hands with her nephew. She felt for a moment half inclined to lay them down, on looking at him again. But the old antipathy arose when Jacob treated her with quiet, self-possessed indifference.

"Jacob," repeated Mrs. Gompson, "your father wishes to see you."

Jacob stared into vacancy, and remained silent.

"Well: it is hardly a time to try to make disturbances," said Mrs. Gompson, tossing her head, and walking away. "I was in hopes we might have been on better terms than before."

"Stay, stay; so we will be," said Jacob, rising. "I am not well; I have heard much worse news than I expected; indeed, I did not expect misfortune of any kind."

"Oh! of course," said Aunt Keziah, glancing angrily at poor Tom; "there's always babblers to tell bad news."

Tom was hurt at this cruel taunt, but he was compensated by a kind, sympathising, grateful glance from Jacob, who said—

"Tom did not wish to tell me."

"Of course not; making it appear all the worse by a little mystery," said Aunt Keziah.

"Well, well; say no more about it," said Jacob, sorrowfully. "I will go to my father's room;" and he followed Mr. Martyn's erratic sister to the staircase.

(*To be continued.*)

BRIDAL EVE.

HALF robed, with gold hair drooped o'er shoulders white,
She sits as one entranced with eyes that gaze
Upon the mirrored beauties of her face ;
And o'er the distances of dark and light
She hears faint music of the coming night.
She hears the murmur of receding days ;
Her future life is veiled in such a haze,
As hides on sultry morns the sun from sight.
Upon the brink of imminent change she stands,
Glad, yet afraid to look beyond the verge ;
She starts, as at the touch of unseen hands
Love's music sounds half anthem and half dirge ;
Strange sounds and shadows round her spirit fall ;
But stranger to herself *she* seems than all !

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

THE CORRAL.

PREVIOUSLY to the year 1832, up to which period the feudal servitudes remained in force in the island of Singhala, the royal pastime of the corral, with all its attractions, was distasteful to the majority of the European residents. The knowledge that from fifteen hundred to two thousand natives had been compelled at their own cost to provide the stakes and cordage for the enclosure, and were labouring unpaid to mark down and track the elephants, intruded at times an importunate reflection, which marred the enjoyment of the sport. There were, moreover, visible signs among the Indians of suppressed rage and rankling discontent. Their black looks and sulky submission jarred painfully with the joyous humour of the paid attendants, and few spectators were sufficiently insensible to be entirely unaffected by the contrast.

The abolition of statute labour in the island produced an immediate and thorough change. The native, paid for services the performance of which is altogether in accordance with his propensities, finds himself in the fortunate position of the famed Israelitish matron, paid by Pharaoh's daughter for nourishing her own infant. The tribes employed are the Panikis, or native huntsmen inhabiting the Moorish villages of the north and north-western divisions of the island, and as these are principally distinguished by their passion for the chase of the elephant, it may be imagined with what alacrity they obey the Governor's summons to assemble for the equipment of the corral.

Once in two years, at the end of the rice harvest, the jungle becomes the scene of what may be almost described as a national solemnity. All classes are interested in its institution and result; the priests encourage it on the ground of the elephant's impiety in eating the leaves of the *fetlbeh*, a tree sacred to the ancient Buddhist divinities; they also require elephants for the service of their temples. The rich vie with each other in the number and magnificence of their contingent of retainers, as well as in the caste and quality of the tame elephants displayed on the occasion. The middle classes, in addition to the enjoyment of the *fête*, are personally interested in the diminution of herds of wild elephants, which ravage the standing crops to an extent sufficient at times to raise the price of provisions. The peasant, employed to help the huntsmen, besides the recreation of the sport, has the advantage of regular pay and rations for several months in succession.

The corral, of which the name serves to designate the entire proceeding, is in itself an immense amphitheatre destined to receive the elephants driven or rather conducted into it by the manœuvres of the huntsmen. The large trees are preserved within the enclosure, being required for attaching the captive elephants during the process of taming. The smaller trees are cleared from the ground, with the underwood and bushes, except towards the approach from the jungle, their presence being there indispensable to mask the entrance of the ring.

At a convenient distance from the corral, under the shade of interlacing branches, rises a one-storied but spacious building, constructed entirely of bamboos and palm-leaves, and bearing the unsylvan name of the "Spectators' *hotel*." Here are commodious dining-rooms, bedrooms without end, and stores of provisions for a month's occupation. The chamber floors are carpeted with the softest grass, fresh-dried and fragrant from the savannas of Colombo, and inviting to the balmiest rest all those whose prospects for the night are nothing troubled by the certain companionship of vampires and mosquitos, of serpents and enormous spiders. A wine-cellar and bath-room complete this impromptu bungalow, the bath-room being not in this case an impracticable fiction, but a positive and refreshing fact, the close vicinity of water being one of the conditions of the elephant's choice of an encampment.

A platform raised from the exterior, but resting chiefly on the massive posts of the enclosure, overlooks the corral, and enables the Governor and his friends to command the entire scene. The posts are planted sufficiently near to each other to prevent an elephant from passing between them, but are wide enough apart to admit the passage of a man. Solid as they are, the fencings are less effectual from their strength than from their imposing appearance; an elephant exerting its power could easily break through them, and instances have occurred where a single breach thus effected has enabled the whole herd to return to the jungle, to the inconsolable disappointment both of the huntsmen and spectators. The resistance of the palisades is, however, far less relied on than the timidity of the elephants, which seem to be unaware of their own stupendous weight, and which regard all unfamiliar objects with mistrust and terror.

As soon as the corral is completed, the trackers begin their operations. It is sometimes needful to form a circle of many miles in order to comprise within it two or more herds of elephants. The trackers, selected entirely from the tribes of the Panikis, have here to exert their utmost skill and patience. The least alarm, the slightest ground for disquietude, would cause the elephants to abandon the track and depart irrevocably. At the same time they have to be kept in motion, and gently urged in the direction of the corral. For this purpose they must be just enough disturbed, and no more. The trackers keep to leeward, and constantly apply to their feet a moistened sponge. The Indian scent might otherwise be taken up by the elephants, which would infallibly produce an instantaneous and probably fatal panic. From time to time the men whisper in concert, or whistle thinly, if at safe distance and sufficiently concealed. On this, the herd rise in a body, agitate their trunks and ears, and look with anxiety towards the spot whence the sound proceeds, till, reassured by the perfect stillness which succeeds, they lay their trunks together and seem to agree that the alarm was false. They then quietly resume their postures, some browsing, some fanning themselves with branches or bathing in the dust, yet all moving off insensibly from the suspected quarter.

This same manœuvre is repeated by the trackers for days and nights together, till by degrees the herd get fairly within the limits of deviation defined by a spacious pathway leading to the corral. The task of the trackers is, however, by no means alleviated; the line is imaginary for all preventive purposes, and formed designedly of wood unbarked, and disguised to the utmost with leaves and branches. Should the wind vary and render necessary a change of ambush, or any casualty occur, either to cause confusion or thwart the conduct of the elephants, the trackers have no alternative but to lie quiescent and await with patience the return of order. It is seldom, however, that the wind varies at that season of the year, and the precautions of the huntsmen are usually too well taken to be frustrated by unforeseen occurrences.

Meanwhile the trackers relieve each other with concerted regularity, returning by parties for food and water, and keeping in daily communication with a second line of trackers, posted in the opposing direction, but too distant to need the same degree of watchfulness, or to risk betrayal by revealing scent. This second line is less select in composition than the first, the office of its members being subordinate and the labour comparatively irresponsible.

It sometimes happens that in spite of all precautions the troop takes premature alarm. In such case extreme measures are resorted to. A rocket signal makes known the danger to the second line, who, right and left, form circle rapidly, with the first, lighting huge fires between the intervals of the palings, till the entire circumference becomes represented by a burning ring. The elephants rush madly to the frontier limits, where the fires arrest their flight, and they one and all stop suddenly, terror-struck and trembling. At the same moment the hunters start up with shouts from their concealment, waving red flags and discharging pistols in the air. On this the elephants turn back and make directly for the opposing boundary, where the same frights await them, until, driven from side to side, and breathless with exhaustion, they at length reassemble in the centre, shaking with violent emotion, entwining their trunks together, as if soliciting mutual succour, and imparting to each other their afflicting and unaccountable impressions.

The result of such a turn of events is, however, not always in favour of the hunt. Sometimes the elephants, grown desperate and unconscious, break blindly through the barriers in spite of flames and scarecrows, and disappear for ever in the depths of some untrodden forest. And even when successful, the end is very often disappointing. After a fright so terrifying, it is usually found hopeless to attempt to restore confidence to the demoralised elephants, and it becomes absolutely necessary to force them to advance. It follows too often that the unconscious actors are driven on the stage prematurely, and the spectators thereby miss the most exciting scene of the performance.

It is otherwise when the chase proceeds in the instructed order The daily progress of the herd towards the corral is then regularly and distinctly gradual; the trackers compute the nearness or remoteness of the crisis with surprising nicety, and announce their conclusions to the authorities with admirable assurance. A week or ten days before the term predicted, two scouts are despatched to an agent of the Governor, who thereupon immediately sends round to the friends invited, and enjoins the official staff to hold itself in readiness. Neither staff nor visitors require pressing. Long before the appointed time, the platform and all available supports and footings are crowded to excess. This eagerness, however, on the part of the public by no means influences the march of the elephants, whose arrival is not always as punctual as the spectators could desire. The whole assembly have sometimes to keep their seats, after the opening, for days and nights together, merely passing to and from the hotel when positively necessary for refreshment. None, however, seem to flag; the biennial institution of the corral has become a veritable popular passion, and all regard the suspense and weariness of waiting as redeemed by the excitement of the event.

The cause of these unforeseen delays is various: a wild boar, crossing the pathway before the leader of the van, has been known to cause the entire herd to turn back with precipitation and affright. At other times a troop of monkeys, spying out a sentinel in his ambush, have chattered incessant warning to the elephants, after the manner of magpies in the covers in England. The elephants, perceiving nothing but dreading much, have thereupon halted suddenly, and remained huddled up together in counsel and perplexity for many hours in succession; and on one occasion a wounded serpent, struggling to quit the path before the advancing outposts, produced a panic, which well-nigh ended in the dispersion of the elephants and the total frustration of the hunters' pains.

At length a sound in the distance of trampled underwood and cracking branches announces to the breathless assembly the long looked for approach of the elephants. Presently the leader of the band passes noiselessly through the entrance of the enclosure. At first he looks around with timid curiosity, turning his head from side to side with a cautious and uneasy movement; but finding nothing as yet to confirm his suspicions, he continues his way through the fatal passage, and at last proceeds into the corral. Immediately the others follow, and soon afterwards the entire band has entered the arena. The passage of the last elephant is the signal for the commencement of the strife. A troop of spies start up from their concealment, drag off the loose branches which disguise the portals, and at the same moment let fall two massive beams, which effectually close the opening. The noise of this manœuvre, and the sudden apparition of the spies, strike terror and dismay into the elephants. They tremble in all their limbs, and then remain for some moments motionless and paralysed. A shout from the spectators recalls them to a sense of their position, and they all rush off to the opposite side of the enclosure, with their tails and trunks in the air, and uttering a plaintive and shrill cry. On the other side the same frights await them. Indians start up from ambush with shouts and gesticulations, scaring them from post to pillar, till finally the poor beasts, despairing of escape and blinded with floods of tears, take refuge in the centre of the arena, crowding together in a body, and intertwining their trunks in hopeless consultation.

This pause is the moment chosen to complete the preparations for the process of taming. The barriers farthest from the entrance are hurriedly thrown open, and as hurriedly closed again upon a detachment of tame elephants admitted to assist the breakers. The aid of these trained domestics is indispensable to the success of the proceedings. It would, indeed, be impossible without it to subjugate or even to calm the wild ones.

Tennent gives a picturesque description of a capture of elephants, where the number enclosed in the corral was limited to nine, three of which were of the very largest size, and two were young ones of only a few months' growth. Of the three largest, one was what is styled in English a "vagabond" or "solitary," and in the native Cingalese a *gundah*. A gundah is an elephant whom the others have sent to Coventry. Each family keeps to its own members, and if an individual, from one cause or another, gets separated from his own family, he cannot gain admission into any other. So long as he keeps at a respectful distance he is allowed to browse and sleep in the same neighbourhood, and to lave and drink at the same watering-places; but all his advances towards a closer relationship are received on the tusks of the repudiating clan. Compelled thus to lead a solitary life, the gundah becomes morose and vicious. He is especially feared by the hunters, whom he has been known to attack on sight, instead of flying with the other elephants, or revolting only at the last extremity. An instance is related of an Indian trapper being pursued by a gundah from the forest to the town, and there crushed to death before the gates of the bazaar.

But to return to the corral. In the case cited by Tennent two trained elephants only were employed in the taming. At a given signal the two animals entered the enclosure side by side, with silent steps, and with all the appearances of unconcern. Each one bore on his neck his cornac, and a servant charged with straps and cordage. Between them, and completely hidden by their vast bodies, entered also the chief of the Panikis, a renowned tamer, who desired, though seventy years of age, to repeat the oft-earned honour of vanquishing the first elephant. The younger of the two trained elephants, a well-grown male of fifty years of age, had been so long a successful allurer into captivity of his wild relations that he had acquired the cognomen of *Siren*. The other, upwards of a hundred years old, was an ancient conquest of the Dutch original occupation; from thence he was transferred to the British Government in 1802, and had ever since remained in their dependence as an oft-tried and invaluable coadjutor. His real name, as consigned on the register, was *Siribeddi*, but he had gone for time out of mind by that of the *Old Dutchman*.

In approaching the wild elephants, Siren affected to be quite indifferent to making their acquaintance. Now he swerved aside, as though he had changed his purpose; now he stopped short to gather a twig or blade of grass, or fan himself with a branch of palm; and now he emitted sounds of piteousness in mock sympathetic imitation of those which proceeded from the captive troop. At last, on approaching within thirty paces of the band, the leader came forward to meet him, touched him gently with his trunk, and then returned to his companions.

Siren followed him slowly, twined trunks with him amicably, and caressingly pressed against him in such a manner as to cover his right side. This gave the old tamer a moment's opportunity to glide unseen under the leader's body, and rapidly fasten the lasso on his near hind leg. Siren meanwhile redoubled his traitorous attentions; but in spite of the distraction the leader perceived the danger, shook off the lasso violently, and turned on the old tamer, who would have paid dearly for his temerity had not Siren protected him with his trunk, and given him time to take refuge under the Old Dutchman, who stood in readiness a few steps off.

The next attempt was made on the largest of the troop, who stood surrounded by the eight others. The two tame ones of their own accord went straight up to him, separated him from the others, and detained him between them by pressing their sides against him at the same moment. The gigantic prisoner made no resistance, though he occasionally evinced impatience by lifting his four feet from the ground alternately and uttering from time to time a feeble wail. During all this time the old tamer was on the watch, and, profiting by the voluntary movements of the animal, adroitly passed the slip-knot around one of its hind legs, drew it tight with a jerk, and fled. The two tame elephants then withdrew. Siren took the cord in his trunk and stretched it to its length, whilst the Dutchman kept constantly passing between the prisoner and his companions, and intercepting all communications.

The great difficulty was now to assure the conquest by making the captive elephant securely fast to a tree. For this purpose it was necessary to inveigle him to a short distance farther on, but as he now began to fully comprehend his peril, he obstinately refused to move. By degrees, however, and in spite of his increasing rage, his two false friends succeeded in circumventing him. The tree was attained, and the cord fastened round it. The noose was adjusted by Siren without any help from the old tamer, but it required the Dutchman's aid to wind the end round the tree. In passing between the tree and the wild elephant, it became impossible at the same time to continue moving and to maintain the tightness of the cord. The Dutchman saw the difficulty, and advancing quickly, placed his foot on the cord, and thus preserved the strain until his companion had passed. By repeating this manœuvre the cord was wound and the elephant gradually drawn close to the tree, without having been once tempted to recede by feeling the attraction lessened. This done, the two deceivers resumed their odious assiduities; but their wild friend had by this time come to understand them, and began too late to deplore his misplaced confidence. In vain they offered him their trunks, and sidled up against him; he now repelled all their advances, started, snorted, shook his ears menacingly, and did his utmost to let them know he considered them a pair of humbugs. They succeeded, nevertheless, in keeping him sufficiently quiet to enable the old tamer, who dodged about under their stomachs in safety, to secure, one after the other, his three remaining legs, and then tie all four tight together, using cordage mollified with a preparation of axunge, to prevent wounds and suppuration.

The luckless savage being now fast in his bonds, the two ignoble trimmers unceremoniously deserted him, walking off with triumphant tails and laughing eyes, like the fox in the fable, adding irony to wrong, and amply justifying their civilised education.

Another effort was then made to secure the leader of the band, whose conquest it was hoped (and as, indeed, usually happens) would render easy the subjugation of the rest. The task was difficult, but at last accomplished through the intelligent perseverance of the tamer's two incomparable aids. The victim grew furious, and rent the trees like laths; his plunging shook the earth, his roaring stirred the jungle. Far out, the royal tiger's answer, heard faintly but distinctly, set the horses trembling with instinctive fright, and exacted even from the habitual spectators the involuntary homage of attention.

But these mighty struggles were of brief duration. Spent with his efforts, and hopeless of deliverance, the poor leader soon surrendered to his fate, kneeling mute and motionless before the spoilers of his liberty, his head drooping to the ground, and his whole being the picture of exhaustion and despair.

The securing of the gundah, or "solitary," was effected without resistance. He regarded with unconcern what passed around and about him. He even lent himself to the designs of his persecutors by lifting his feet at the will of the tamer, like a domestic horse when tapped on the fetlock. He seemed a soul-sick animal, careless of what became of him, and disposed to accept any change as necessarily an improvement. About an hour after he was secured he began to lean against his tree, which the tamers took as a sign that he was going to die. Shortly afterwards he lay down, stretched his trunk on the ground at full length before him, and appeared to sleep. His sleep was that which has no awakening; a swarm of black flies announced to the spectators that the poor solitary was dead, and his body was forthwith dragged out of the enclosure by a train of mules.

The two infant elephants were at first left to themselves. They kept by the troop so long as their respective dams remained at liberty, but whilst these were being made fast to the trees, they scampered round and round like huge pet-lambs, continually pressing up against their dams, and gravely impeding the operations of the capture. They were equally friendly with the tamers, but as they usually knocked down somebody with each caress, it was found necessary to attach them in their turn, in spite of their pleading looks and comic lamentations.

When once convinced of the uselessness of resistance, the captive elephant is not long refractory to education. Three months of skilful training suffices to reduce the wildest animals to domesticity. At the end of two or three days they begin to take their food without repugnance, and tame elephants are then given them as companions. Two valets stand by, continually stroking their backs and ears, and speaking to them in soft tones. For some short time the elephants continue sulky, and afterwards get angry, striking right and left with their trunks and uttering shrill cries; but watchers stand ready to receive their blows on the points of their lances, till at last the trunks become so torn and wounded that they can serve no longer as offensive arms. The wild elephants learn thus to dread the power of their subduers, and thereafter the tame ones suffice to complete their education. In case of momentary rebellion, the sight of the cornac's iron spike produces an immediate return to submission, and they are sometimes brought, before the end of the second month's training, to lie down in the water, which is regarded as the infallible sign of their definite acceptance of the rule of man.

The tenderness of their skin, and especially that of the feet, is frequently an obstacle to the reclaimed animals being immediately made use of as domestic servants. In spite of the lubricity of the cords, the outer cuticle gets often wounded, and proudness of flesh invariably follows. Months sometimes are needed to subdue the inflammation, and the animal remains meanwhile a helpless charge upon the owner's hands. The wounds of the trunk heal easily, but the cicatrices disfigure the animals for life. On the average, the assistance of the tame elephants may be dispensed with at the end of the first quarter's training. The cornac may then mount the new acquisitions, and begin their practical and final education. Proprietors of elephants are nevertheless recommended to be less in haste to fructify their bulky capital, instances having occurred where valuable elephants have succumbed under their first charge, and died of grief at the remembrance of their too recent loss of liberty. Such at least may be the cause assigned to their decease, from the laconic wording of the death-note in the official register: "Died of broken heart; cause of breakage unknown."

The accounts of the elephant transmitted by the ancients are singularly defective, regard being had to the opportunities that have existed, from the earliest times, of studying the living subject. But the fact is still more remarkable that up to a comparatively recent date the credence has been maintained inviolate which was formerly accorded to the ancient fables. It is only of late years that accurate histories have been printed of the life in freedom of these interesting quadrupeds, and it has been seen from these that at least two-thirds of what was formerly believed and taught to children is fabulous. The real elephant is not the fearful beast he has been so calumniously represented: he is mild and peaceful; he attacks no living thing, unless driven to extremities by fear or by aggression; he carefully avoids the society of other animals, even of the most minute. The fly, says Tennent, is the most terrible enemy of the elephant. The mouse, adds Cuvier, affrights the elephant to such a degree as to cause him to tremble. All the stories, writes Brehm, of combats between the elephant and the rhinoceros, the lion, and the tiger, are to be consigned exclusively to the domain of fiction. Beasts of prey dare not attack the elephant, and the elephant gives no cause to beasts of prey for wrath or vengeance. Such meetings do not take place. The circumspect herd avoid all risk of broil or chance encounters.

Certain birds, nevertheless, both in Africa and India, reside permanently with the elephants on terms of admitted intimacy, the contract being grounded, as in all social relationships, on motives of reciprocal advantage. In this case, the service rendered is to relieve the elephants of the vermin that torment them, and the recompense, the sustenance thereby furnished to the birds. One of these birds, the

Ardeola Bubulcus, may be seen perpetually exploring the vast skin-folds of the enormous pachyderm, and thence from time to time withdrawing a malignant bog-tick, or a leech that may have clung to it whilst bathing.

In the Urach, again writes Tennent, where the upland summits are all but covered with perennial hoarfrost, the elephants are found at an altitude of upwards of six thousand feet; whilst it would be in vain to seek for them in the jungles of the plain. No elevation seems too rare or cold for them, or too exposed to the wind, provided water be procurable in abundance. Contrary to the vulgar belief, the elephant lives clear of the solar rays as far as possible. In the daytime he lies close in the thickest recesses of the forest, choosing the coolest and darkest nights to accomplish his peregrinations. Like all the pachydermatous tribes, his habits are rather nocturnal than otherwise. It is true he sometimes grazes also during the daytime, and it is chiefly due to that fact that the history of his life and characteristics has been acquired to modern science.

Should the traveller surprise, during the daytime a troop of wild elephants, he invariably finds them browsing tranquilly, or reposing together in the shade. Their mere aspect refutes to his satisfaction the idle tales of their ferocity and love of vengeance. They are there, under cover of the dense forest, some plucking with their trunks the leaves and berries from the bushes, some fanning their sides with huge branches torn expressly from the trees, some dozing, and others fast asleep. The aged sentinel of the band seems alone charged with the task of thoughtfulness for all; he stands by, awake and immovable, his grave head pendulating slowly from side to side, and his whole person presenting the living symbol of serious tranquillity. The young ones, on the other hand, offer the contrasting but charming image of innocence at play; they form a sportive and joyous group apart. But the traveller who would look long must breathe softly and lie facing the wind. Should the quick organs of the sentinel either catch the human scent or detect strange sounds, in an instant the whole band would disappear in the forest, and probably return no more to the scene of their violated repose.

But if the elephant, to serve the ends of the recounters of marvels, has been long maligned in character, his intelligence, with all that has been said of it, cannot be declared to have been overrated. It would be tedious to multiply instances of the rare sagacity of elephants, or insist on the faculties they assuredly possess for even complex reasoning. They can be taught to reserve particular modes of operation for exceptional difficulties, and are themselves the unerring judges of these exceptions. It is not possible to refuse the gift of reasoning to an intelligence thus demonstrated. The elephant's good will is a fact no less established; he renders voluntary service to strangers, and conducts himself towards other animals with an obliging self-constraint. A strange horse, fearing to pass an elephant employed at heavy stonework on a bridge undergoing repairs, the rider dismounted, and endeavoured to reassure him. The horse continued restive, and refused to advance. On this the elephant crouched down behind the parapet of the bridge, and remained invisible till the horse was out of sight. He then resumed his work as though no interruption had occurred.

The patience, kindness, and obedience of domestic elephants are nevertheless not regarded by those who have most to do with them as qualities insusceptible of change. The mildest and most tried among them are liable to unaccountable revolutions, and exhibit, during the continuance of the paroxysm, defects and vices the most opposed to their habitual excellences. Hence the Indian proverb, "You should never rely on an elephant," applied with such caustic meaning by the native princes to their ambitious and self-constituted neighbours.

Formerly the African chiefs surrounded their dwellings with railings of elephant's tusks, the curves projecting outwards, and offering the points to the exterior by way of a defensive fortress. Such costly palisades are now become rare, the greater part of the rails composing them having found their way to Europe. Africa still supplies Europe with the largest portion of the ivory employed in commerce. Siberia comes next, the fossil deposits there found in abundance being scarcely inferior in quality to the produce from the living animal. India provides the least in quantity, but the most esteemed for grain and colour. The negroes of the Upper Nile exchange yearly vast numbers of entire tusks, but considerably less than formerly, the supply diminishing sensibly each year. The most frequented ivory markets are Chartoum, Obeïd, and the ports of the Red Sea. From Chartoum and Obeïd caravans start yearly for the upper basin of the White Nile, whence the ivory is transported to Egypt. From Massoura large quantities procured in Abyssinia are carried to India on the backs of camels. It is thus that so much more ivory is exported from India than could be supplied by the native elephants. A large traffic in ivory is also carried on at Berbera, a private mart facing Aden, inhabited only at the time of the yearly assembling of the merchants, and abandoned to the hyænas during the rest of the year.

Of late years, Zanzibar has also become a resort for dealers in ivory, and quite recently the hunters of elephants have commenced an active chase along the whole line of the western coast of Africa. Large troops of these noble animals still inhabit the virgin forests of the interior; but man pursues them without rest or respite. They have disappeared from the Cape, have been exterminated in the north of Africa, and doubtless the same fate awaits them in their last refuge in the West.

A TALE OF THE POST OFFICE.

BY THE REV. F. ARNOLD.

THE story which I have to tell has some reference to the extraordinary conduct of the principal official at our local post-office. I had some thoughts of drawing the attention of the authorities of St. Martin's-le-Grand to it, but in the result it was thought unnecessary, and the matter was condoned. In the present day we live in the full glare of publicity, and our postmasters and postmistresses are well-nigh surfeited with the superabundance of private information. I have reason to believe that some of them regularly go through the post cards as a matter of duty. I telegraphed for a man's character the other day, and the postmaster—the man who succeeded the incapacitated Miss Midge—smilingly informed me that he thought I had got hold of the right man. Even the postman touches his hat and hopes that I have better news about my aunt, concerning whose precious health he regularly brings me some telegraphic message or other. I sometimes think it presumptuous of telegraph clerks to remind me of their intimacy with my private affairs. These things would, of course, be nothing in London, but in a quiet neighbourhood they afford a valuable amount of food for that great resource of country places, a good gossip. At the present time we do nearly all our concerns in the full light of day, but in the old days, when country post-offices did not possess the same facilities of information, a good deal was surreptitiously obtained; and the famous post-office scene in Scott's "Antiquary" was probably often enacted.

I am the curate of Ashton-on-Water; I lodge at Miss Midge's. Miss Midge labours under the hallucination that she lets furnished apartments. For these apartments she charges me sixteen shillings a week. I have reason to believe that this is a good hebdomadal half-crown beyond the recognised tariff of our country neighbourhood, where lodgers are scarce; but in the first instance I was taken in, and I have never had the moral courage to rectify the mistake. But if Miss Midge thinks that she lets furnished apartments, that is merely a delusion. When I first came there was some stiff furniture of the horsehair description, and the wall was decorated with a portrait of one of Miss Midge's ancestors, in the dress of the period, and a sampler woven by Miss Midge's own fair fingers. I flatter myself that you see nothing of that sort now. If I have a weakness it is for my pretty rooms. I brought my books and pictures from college, now so many years ago—far below the horizon of life. I have no more now than I had then, but I hope my books have grown in acquaintance, and that the quality has improved. I have renovated Miss Midge's wall-paper. I abolished Miss Midge's carpet at an early period of my residential history. I am particular in the item of tables, and have round tables and writing tables quite beyond the local mind. Similarly Miss Midge's chairs were instruments of torture, but those which I have introduced are as comfortable as any in a West End club. I flatter myself that if I ever introduce a Mrs. Seaforth to the startled society of Ashton-on-Water, she will be perfectly content with my lodgings until circumstances may render it necessary that we should go into a house of our own. In my bedroom I have done away with the hideous four-poster which always suggested to me disagreeable speculations respecting the ancestral Midges that had been born and died therein. As I look around my rooms there is not a stick of any description that Miss Midge can claim as her own. Yet Miss Midge for years labours under the impression that she lets furnished apartments, and I am content to pay for them as such.

Miss Midge keeps the village post-office—at least, she did at the time of my tale. It had its disadvantages; still, all the business took place on the ground floor, and I was fairly out of the way. Also, as I have a chronic weakness for putting off things to the last minute, the position has had other conveniences. I cannot say how often Her Majesty's mails have been delayed because I wanted to finish a cigar before I wrote a note. The Government more than once took the matter to heart and addressed a serious remonstrance to Miss Midge on my account. In my position as local parson, I reformed; I wish I could say as much for Miss Midge. I found that Miss Midge was accredited with a good deal of eavesdropping in the parish. One of her neighbours, indeed, once pushed into her hands a card purporting to emanate from an Anti-poking-your-nose-into-other-people's-business Society, inviting her to a membership with that society; but, at the warm instance of Miss Midge, I rebuked that malevolently-minded neighbour for her unseemly insinuation. Still there was a good deal of gossip spread about, worse than gossip generally is, much of which was traced to the post-office. It was asseverated that it was not an uncommon thing to see Miss Midge doubling up a paper for purposes of inspection, as if all was lawful prey that was not sealed down, and once or twice I had reason to suspect that safety envelopes had proved unsafe, and had permitted one of the folds to be temporarily withdrawn. And a very queer story came to my ears, but as it came on the doubtful authority of a discarded servant, I did not pay much attention to it. This damsel asseverated that during the sacred hours of Sunday afternoon Miss Midge subjected all self-sealing letters that she had to the solacing influence of a teakettle spout, and then leisurely perused the correspondence of the nation. I did not attend to the matter, or if I did, I chiefly thought of the heinous conduct of Miss Midge in neglecting afternoon church, and slighting me in my double capacity of lodger and curate.

The nicest house in our parish was The Cedars, and it belonged to the nicest woman in the parish, Mrs. Leslie. She was the Lady Bountiful to all the poor, and set the tone to all our neighbourhood. She was the widow of a general officer, infinitely useful in our place, and greatly beloved. I remember dining there one summer day shortly after her daughter Edith had come home from school for good. I remember a Cambridge man was there, Weston of Trinity. I had never seen her since she was a little girl; Weston, though no stranger to the place, had never seen her before. This was accounted for by the fact that Mrs. Leslie generally spent her winter holidays in town, and her summer holidays at the sea coast. She was a pretty, engaging girl, but I thought that Mrs. Leslie, wise in most things, was not very wise in taking her away from school so early. I could very well understand, however, how greatly she desired Edith's companionship, and what a resource she found in her only child. I was rather amused, as Weston and I took our long walk home that night, and in one or two long subsequent walks, to observe the different points of view which we took of the young lady.

My view. She was a pretty girl, and possessed a certain amount both of ability and amiability—her manners were good, but she erred on the side of showiness. At sweet seventeen I should like to have seen her a little more subdued and retiring. A mind unformed and of course illogical, full of the irrational enthusiasms, antipathies, and prejudices of girlhood. She sang, but it was chiefly the silly trashy fashionable songs of the day; of Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn she had the merest notions. She read, but it was chiefly the average circulating library stories; of Walter Scott she knew nothing, and even of Thackeray very little. She talked French, even volubly, with a pure accent, but of the treasures of French literature she knew no more than of those of her own country. She was a brilliant little bit of light and colour. I admitted she had nothing to distinguish her from the average boarding school miss, except perhaps a peculiar thrill in the voice which always affected me. Still I thought that the best thing that could happen to her would be that she should be sent to a good and rather strict school for the next three years.

His view. She was the very perfection of beauty, such as might visit the imagination of an Italian painter in a summer dream. She had every charm of graciousness and goodness; was full of noble feelings, noble enthusiasms. She was elegant and accomplished, a lady every inch and a born poetess. Never nobler soul gleamed through more brilliant eyes; in music, what a touch and what a tone! in literature, what tastes and accomplishments for her age! Thus, Mr. Weston, with much language of an expletive and superlative kind which I need not put down; still considering that Weston was not totally destitute of a critical faculty, and thinking it always a good thing to check a blind, unreasoning admiration, I pointed out to him, as we rested beneath one of the two noble cedars from which the place derived its name, that whatever might be her capabilities, she had hitherto moved in a very average groove. Mr. Weston admitted that she might have looked for a little cultivation and some useful hints from a Cantab of a superior order; he certainly lent her the best kind of books and helped her with all the resources of a powerful and well-stored mind.

The young fellow was loafing a good deal about the village in those days. He was a relation of some people who had once lived here—a former rector, I think—and used still to come a good deal, partly for fishing, partly for pretty scenery, and I suspect most of all for the sake of the pretty girl at The Cedars. He stayed at a little quiet inn, where he had his rooms. Sometimes I used to go and see him, for in this village we all knew one another, and had no hard thoughts of each other; I was not afraid of an honest public-house, nor yet of an honest tankard. Ofttimes, however, he came to me. He said, and said truly, that he wanted to read quietly, and he certainly read a good deal. He had a fair chance of academic reputation, for he had come up from a public school laden with exhibitions, and had got a scholarship at Trinity. But he was evidently very desultory in his reading, increasingly desultory; and I, who knew Cambridge and how jealously Cambridge requires the whole energies of a man who wishes to gain her honours, thought my young friend was rather muddling his chances. It did not very much help him that he had fallen violently in love with Edith, and read all the love poetry in all the languages he knew, besides consuming a good deal of time and paper in effusions of his own. He was a most interesting man. I never knew a young fellow of his age who had a fuller and exacter knowledge of history, and of the history of literature and philosophy. He was a bit of a dreamy visionary, with schemes of society, with philosophical theories of religion, with a very copious yield of poetry and theology. He was the kind of man of whom you might expect to hear something considerable in after life if he entered the Church or could get into Parliament. But Weston had no taste for the one and no chance of the other. All his chances were at Cambridge, and although there was a vague high expectation of what he might do, I did not for my own part think at all highly of his chances. I often went up to Cambridge in those days, and I found my opinion fully shared both by Weston's coach and the tutor of his college. Consequently I was fully able to share Mrs. Leslie's anxiety, when she informed me, in one of those confidential talks which good women have with their unworthy pastors, that Edith had voluntarily confessed that the young Cantab had been making fierce love to her and she felt obliged to love him very much in return. Mrs. Leslie felt it very keenly, for her happiness was bound up with that of her daughter. She had only a life income; the young people could not live upon air. Mrs. Leslie was sensible and decided. There was to be no engagement and little intercourse until Weston had taken his degree and shown what he was able to do. Then one fateful January day I went up to Cambridge and met Weston, the picture of blank despair, in Trumpington Street. "It is all up with me" he said—"Gulphed."

"Gulphed"—awful word to the Cambridge man of that time. In those days a man could not go in for classical honours unless he had attained mathematical honours. Now, Weston was nothing if not classical, and he had failed to take the mathematical honours which would enable him to compete for classical honours. I did not myself think he had lost such very great chances. He read Greek and Latin as fluently as he read French and German, but he was no philologist, no exact scholar, and could not write verses. The Cantabs are pharisaical scholars, and a man of that stamp could not earn high honours. But I pitied Weston from my soul. It was sad to disappoint the general expectations of University friends that he was to do something very creditable. It was sad that he should be "disgraced," as he not unjustly called it, in the eyes of his lady-love and her mother. But, most of all, his modest scheme of life was entirely frustrated. He had hoped by a good degree to get a good mastership, which would enable him to marry Edith.

"And now all that has been knocked on the head. My scholarships have run out. There is nothing now to come to me. It is absurd to think of marrying. As it is I shall have to starve!"

I reasoned with Weston. I pointed out that a man like him never need starve. If he liked he could get, doubtless, a commission in a militia regiment, and exchange into the line. These were the evil days of the Crimean War, and the Government wanted men.

"And why not try for the Indian Civil Service, according to the new regulations which Macaulay and those other fellows have made? Then you could marry. Then you would have an assured income and position."

Weston had heard something about it, but he had never applied his mind to the subject.

"There are lots of fellows, and I should never have a chance. I have never worked up to it."

"I think you have a first-rate chance, Weston. This is the first year that such an examination has ever been held. By-and-by the value of these appointments will be thoroughly understood; the competition will be immense; the examinations will be systematised; the matter will be one of cram and long-planned preparation."

I think the experience of years past in these examinations has amply vindicated this observation.

"But this being the first time," I continued, "and the new state of affairs not being thoroughly realised by the public, men will fall back on their raw state of knowledge without the peculiar training that will certainly follow very soon. Now few men, Weston, in their careless, lazy way, have covered such wide, intellectual ground as you have done. You had better gather your sheaves together, and get your knowledge into ship-shape form, and you will do extremely well. If you get this appointment you will be able to marry; you will be worth three hundred a year, living or dead, to your wife; your income and allowances will increase; you will be on the full shoot for the chance of ten thousand a year. This is almost the only opening to life on which a man may marry at once. It is almost the only profession, too, that will give a man a great career. The chances of a great career in England are, after all, infinitesimally small; but in India you may come to be the beneficent ruler of a vast tract of country. You may colonise and civilise, and govern like a Roman proconsul. I only wish I was a young man with your chances, Weston. Cambridge is, after all, only a petty place. What a man does there is not his only chance, nor his best chance."

So I exhorted, and Weston listened. There was a determination and an expression of energy about him that I had never seen before. He went in for the Indian Civil Service examination. Six months after the list of names came out. I looked at the bottom to see if he had scrambled into a place. My eye had to travel upwards and upwards. He had a very good position nearer the top than half way. He described the examination as being really very delightful. It gave full scope to all he knew. Every shred of information that he had came into play. Not a single author that he had loved and studied but gave him a helping hand. So a bright summer came out of that winter of affliction. Weston had far better prospects now than if he had been a wrangler. His was one of the first and brightest of Competition Wallahs.

Mrs. Leslie could not very well make any objection now. This brilliant bit of success had smoothed over all difficulties. I was not surprised to find that he and Edith were soon on the footing of betrothed lovers. A widow may wish to keep her only daughter to herself; but she must look beyond her own day. And after all, what better lot can the average woman's mind shadow out than a prosperous marriage? I met the pair walking hand in hand along the garden-path, as if it had been in Paradise itself. Once again, when I called, Mrs. Leslie gave her wondrous twinkle of the eye, and told me that she had no doubt I should find the lovers in the garden; and there, on the seat beneath the cedars, was Edith, and Weston stretched on the lawn at her feet reading Tennyson to her. It was pleasant to see the unresisting hand clasped openly beneath the mother's loving, approving glance. She was welcoming the young man to her heart as a son of her own. Weston wanted to get married before he went out. After all it might have been the wiser plan. But India was a *terra incognita* to Mrs. Leslie. Weston must go out first and see what it was like, and then come over as soon as he could to marry Edith. In case he could not come over, Edith would, if necessary, go out to be married to him; but Mrs. Leslie insisted that Edith was too young, and that Weston must be out there for at least a year to prepare a home for her.

He was gone at last, after staying in England for some period of probation to make headway in Oriental studies, in which I learned without surprise that he had exhibited remarkable proficiency. I rarely went to The Cedars without hearing something about Henry Weston. Those were lovely presents that he sent—coral, and gems, and Cashmere shawl. We thought he was generous, too unsparing in his gifts. Then I was pleased to hear long extracts from his letters—clever, interesting letters, into which he had thrown all his keenness and ability—all about the overland journey, the humours of Suez, the heat of the Red Sea, the jolly life of the P. and O. steamer, touching at Point de Galle, the voyage up the Hoogley, Calcutta and its palaces, the Hills and their gaiety—all were sketched in the skilful literary way that does not often manifest itself in the British love-letter. I had no doubt but Edith poured out treasures of love and feeling in answering them. She had given her whole heart to him, and it seemed to me that love had ripened her into womanhood, and made her whole intelligence keen and bright. Society voted her most interesting and charming. There was a halo of romance about her engagement. We knew all about it along the country side. We had our little jokes on the subject, and made sly inquiries about the Civilian. Edith answered with maiden boldness, triumphant in an acknowledged love of which she might be proud. The Civilian was quite an institution among her wide circle of friends.

But somehow matters darkened over. When I went up to the cottage there was a cessation of quotations from the capital letters. There was a sadness, a deep anxiety, a deep care about mother and daughter. I felt that somehow things were going wrong. A malign shadow seemed to settle on the happy home. One night I heard it all, heard it in the twilight told by a mother's trembling voice, the narrative broken by one or two deep sobs from Edith, clinging to her mother's heart. The girl had been jilted in a most cruel and heartless way. One letter had been brief, another had been long in coming and was curt, then the correspondence had suddenly ceased. Might he not be dead? was the first inquiry that rushed to my lips. Oh, no! Indian Civil servants did not die off and leave no trace. His name was flourishing on the lists. Everybody has friends in India, and Mrs. Leslie caused some cautious inquiries to be made respecting him. He was well; he was getting on; he was spending money fast; he was flirting vigorously. His letters had ceased, utterly, totally ceased, for a whole twelvemonth. She sent back the Indian presents—coral, gems, and shawl. They were returned to him in a roundabout kind of way, passing from one hand to another, and all that came back was a business-like sort of receipt, that had been asked for and given when finally placed in Weston's hands. If I could have met that man, parson though I be, I think I could have flown at his throat, and brought the hound to his haunches to plead for mercy.

So Edith wore the willow. There may have been some poor-hearted natures who jeered and smiled, but Edith was careless or unconscious of this. Years passed on, and Edith ripened, as I had expected, into a very handsome woman. She had suffered deeply, and suffering had given a kind of spiritual refinement to her beauty. I could never have expected that round-faced, fleshy girl to become so etherealised. She did not often smile, but when she smiled, that smile was worth the seeing. Strangers thought her cold and proud. If any man admired her and sought to win her love, instantaneously there came over her a repellent, distant manner that would freeze such feelings and forbid all overtures of affection. It would seem as if mountains rose and oceans rolled between her and any kindly human love. If ever she was gay and pleasant it was in her mother's presence—that mother for whom she seemed to live, and whom she sought to help and comfort. But I watched—I came to learn that science of watching well—the drooping eye, the hollowed cheek, and that sharp expression of pain that would flit across her closed lips. At last I longed to gather the poor stricken deer to my bosom. I thought that perhaps I could heal that wound, wipe away those sad tears, and give back some joy and colour to that faded life. I felt that my pity and admiration for the girl were ripening into a kind of honest love; and though I knew that she could no longer give me the fresh affection of the heart, there was still love there that might be won far transcending my poor deserts.

But before such thoughts had obtained any mastery over me—before I said anything to her, or had even distinctly shaped them to my own utterance—one day I had a talk with her, in which for the first and last time she opened up all her soul to me.

"Yes, Mr. Seaforth," she said, "I felt very much what you said in your sermon about the uses and the nobleness of life. In my poor way I try to fill up my time in doing some sort of good in the world, in drawing, in studying, in looking after dearest mother, in pottering about, as you call it, after the old women, when you tell me that they want any visiting. I have my griefs—you know them all," and that little hand resting on my arm sent a momentary thrill through me, "but I conquer *them*, and I do not let them conquer *me*."

"Ah yes," I said, brightening up, "and that unhappy old love affair with that worthless Weston is all passing away now. You do not care for him now?"

"Yes," she said, "but in a sort of way. He is no matter of care to me, has no human interest for me. He is buried out of sight. I wish him well. Perhaps he is married now; I wish him happy in his love. But oh! somehow," she exclaimed, "I feel that I do and must love him, and shall love for ever. Day by day he is my first thought and my last. I always seem to see him moving about the paths, and resting beneath the cedars. Morning after morning, when I awake, his image rushes into my mind even before my prayers. When I close my eyes I see him; when I listen to music I seem to hear his voice. He is blended with all the better part of my life. He has made me what I am: he found me a silly, thoughtless girl, and he has made me a woman. He has taught me what the world is in the highest ways. He took me away from trashy stories and a conventional education to open up a higher world. I should never have read German and Italian but for him. I should never have cared for poetry or for thinking but for him. He made me love true art and the masters' music, and give up my silly school-girl tastes. I had not a thought, a dream, a hope, that did not belong to him. I would follow him to India; I would follow him all over the world. I would have died for him; I would die for him now." And then the hand was held to the face, and the tears came through the slender fingers.

"Oh fool!" I thought to myself. "Oh immeasurably more than fool, to have thrown away the treasure of a love like this. Could all the wealth of yonder India give the treasures of such love?" I listened, almost horrified, to this deepest outburst of feeling that I had ever heard in my life.

"But God is good," she said, "and great, and merciful. Otherwise I should have broken my heart. Though my days are darkened, I believe in God. Though my faith is dim, I believe in God. Though my heart is breaking, I believe in God. Somehow I trust His love. He is so mighty that I feel He will make me better for this burden."

Ah! poor parson that I am, I had never spoken so purely and so eloquently as this.

We never spoke on the subject again. As long as I am a curate, I expect I shall be an informal kind of monk. A curate has vows of poverty, obedience, and celibacy imposed upon him whether he likes it or not. If ever I come in for a living, I shall perhaps reopen the subject for consideration. I might have done so if I could have seen any traces of kind feeling on Edith's part; but none were to be discerned, and I think I can honestly say that I am glad of it now. Mrs. Seaforth continues to be a purely imaginary quantity to be evolved by my inner consciousness, but not otherwise.

Miss Midge—I beg her pardon for losing sight of her so long—gets old, and cross, and deaf, and rheumatical. She was always mean and miserly. She had also a gift of utterance, generally of a religious character, but often lavished on inadequate occasions. For instance, if I asked Miss Midge for a scuttle of coals, she would quickly express a wish that "a blessing" might rest upon it. I wondered how Miss Midge could with a quiet conscience invoke this blessing on the coal-scuttle, for it was a subject of great interest to me noticing to what numerous dodges and cheateries the institution of the coal-scuttle gave rise. Latterly, Miss Midge's old bones were yielding to the influence of rheumatism. Occasionally from her office a series of short howls would emanate, indicative of much bodily discomfort. As she moved about from one pigeon-hole to another, from her seat to the counter, and thence to the pigeon-holes, her oilless old bones crackled in their sockets and produced shrieks. The local proceedings of Her Majesty's Government were hardly carried on to the satisfaction of Her Majesty's liege subjects, and Miss Midge provided an assistant, lest she should be postmistress no longer. Then she retreated to her chamber, where her peculiar idiosyncrasy had a fine field. She did not care for coals herself, as she preferred the warmth of the blankets. She did not read, and so she blew out her candles. She received no visitors, and went to no expense. She was as completely cut off from my notice and observation as if I was not only living in another wing of the building, but in another part of the town, or of the country.

Chronic rheumatism may not be very bad, although there are ugly forms of it; but acute rheumatism comes upon you like a clap of thunder. The rheumatism did the worst that rheumatism could do—it touched the heart; not that there was much pain, but there was great danger. I had called upon her once or twice, as I should call upon any other sick parishioner, but there was something so cold, artificial, and metallic in her line of talk, that I found the visit very unsatisfactory. Latterly, whenever I sent up word that I was going to call on her, I had some message that convinced me my call was altogether undesired. She showed her wonted alacrity when I sent up my little cheque now and then, when my current account reached a figure worthy of a cheque. But meeting the doctor one day, who told me that she really was in a very queer state of health, I the same day simply walked into her room unannounced. The doctor had told me that I had better tell her that she was in some danger, a duty often delegated by the doctors to the cloth, and always painful. I got through it somehow, and saw that the poor old soul trembled and was much shaken.

She did not improve, and things looked more and more serious.

She withdrew any objections to my visits, and, indeed, seemed rather glad of them. I thought it my duty, according to the good old formulary, to ask her whether she had anything on her mind, and whether she had settled all her affairs. She told me it was all right, but in a tone that convinced me it was all wrong. Evidently there was something that made her uneasy, for once or twice she began oddly, and let her vague expressions die away. At last I suppose that failing nature herself convinced her that she was in great bodily peril. One day, being now able manifestly to see that there was an unavowed trouble on her soul, she asked me whether I thought it absolutely necessary to confess that she had done anything really wicked. This was a large question, but I thought I should be safely within the lines if I replied that if she owed restitution or redress anywhere, she must make amends.

"Then it must be done, sir," she said; "but I am not so wicked as you will think me."

I sat expectant.

"Would you have the goodness, sir, to shut the door and turn the key?"

I did not much like this, but I complied.

Miss Midge was not an interesting person, and her room was not a savoury room. Her heavy curtains were suggestive of Norfolk Howards, the dust lay heavy on the floor and on every object on the floor, and the only light was from a tallow dip stuck in an empty blacking bottle. I did not very much appreciate an interview of such close intimacy with this ancient bedridden crone, but after a moment's hesitation I arose and turned the key.

"And now, kind sir," continued Miss Midge, without the least perceptible touch of grim humour, "would you kindly get under the bed, and bring me a little tin box from under the middle of the sacking?"

I thought it rather indecorous that the Reverend Charles Seaforth should creep under the bed in that kind of burglarious fashion which old ladies suppose to be the constant occupation of men of unlawful aims. Moreover, the position was fraught with some damage, both to my dignity and my raiment. Nevertheless the request was repeated with such urgency that I thought it best to comply.

"Are you quite sure, sir," inquired Miss Midge, with a cunning twinkle in her eye, "that the doctor says that there be a real danger that I may die?"

"Miss Midge," I said, "I only know what the doctor tells me, and he tells me that the rheumatism has seized your heart once or twice, and when it attacks you there again, as it probably will, it may be fatal. You are still labouring under the last heart attack, which may kill you."

"Oh then," said Miss Midge, in a somewhat business-like tone, "then perhaps you had better look into the tin box. But I wish to say something first. Mr. Seaforth, I am a very honest woman, and much respected in the neighbourhood. You have been in my house many years, sir, but I have never taken a halfpenny out of your rooms, although you know, sir, that you have been very careless with your coppers."

The old harridan had never touched a coin, but I knew that she had cheated me as long as she could get about.

"But about them letters, sir, I am afraid that I didn't do the thing that is right, but we post-office people are put under great temptations, sir, and I hope they will make an allowance for us up there. Would ye please open the box, sir, and bring out the papers that are tied up in a paper with blue string? It was very wrong of me, sir, to open that first letter of Mr. Weston's, sir, but the people said all sorts of things about he and Miss Edith, and I thought it might be best if I knew the rights of things, because then you see, sir, I might prevent any stories being told."

"You wretched woman!" I exclaimed; "do you mean to say that you stole any letters belonging to Mr. Weston or Miss Leslie?"

"I don't call it stealing, sir," she answered, "for I never made away with any scrap of any one of them."

"You don't call it stealing!" I reiterated, almost with a shout, and with a vehemence little suited for the chamber of sickness. "You little know the frightful, the irreparable mischief you have done. People have been hanged before now for stealing letters."

"Bless ye, sir, don't say that," said Miss Midge, now apparently under the impression that I was about to hand her over to the police.

It seems that by her diabolical arts—I mean the application of hot water—she had opened one of Weston's letters. By some inadvertence, she had torn the envelope across; the result of this was that she did not like to deliver the letter, and so it was left undelivered. She then thought it best to open one of Edith's to Weston, to see if there was any allusion to a missing letter. There was such an allusion, and Edith's letter was suppressed. Then came a letter, showing, as I was afterwards given to understand, all the hurt feeling, but full of kindness and forbearance. Miss Midge, after giving it an attentive perusal, thought it best to put it in her tin box. One or two rather short curt notes she delivered, being anxious to deliver them rather than otherwise, if she did not think herself implicated. I understood all this by-and-by, when the particular bearing and effect of each letter left undelivered were explained to me. And here were the letters, altogether some seven or eight in number, the subject of an atrocious crime, which had caused suspicion, unhappiness, and separation between two persons devotedly attached to each other, and so cruelly severed.

It was very sorry comfort that I administered to Miss Midge. I tried, and I hope not quite unsuccessfully, to wake her up fully to the wickedness of the act which she had committed. I told her that I must restore the letters to their owners, but would intercede for her, as she had done an act of confession and restitution. Even then, I believe the old woman had an idea that having confessed her act, the matter might drop, and she herself be let off all further consequences. I had these letters, and I also had to consider how they might be turned to account. The most important thing, to my mind, was that Weston should learn the truth. I knew that Edith was true to him, but in such matters you can always rely more upon the woman than on the man. He might have been married, he might have been engaged, he might have become totally estranged in feeling. Of course, I explained the whole matter to Mrs. Leslie, and she would do what she thought best in reference to her daughter. I was not myself in favour of tearing open the old wound. Mrs. Leslie had no hesitation, however, in telling her daughter all about it. She considered that to do so was an act of bare justice towards Weston. She thought that it would at least console her daughter to know that she had not thrown away her affections on an unworthy scamp, who had treated her with the indignity she supposed. I was glad to see that Edith, though agitated and excited by the communication her mother made her, was much happier and easier, moving about with a lighter tread, and with the light of hope rekindled in her eye.

I thought that the great thing necessary was to secure a meeting between Weston and Edith. I must first get my man to England, and then I must get him to see his old love. I had only been a short time in a state of incertitude, when I saw in one of the papers in a list of home passengers—I was always looking out for such—his name as home on furlough, and I had no difficulty in tracing him to the Langham. I was prevented by a good deal of sickness in the village from running up to town as I had wished, but I wrote to him at length, telling him of the extraordinary confession made by the wretched woman Midge. I said I would send him back his letters if he wished, but then I hoped he would be coming down into our neighbourhood, and would receive them from my own hand. For some weeks there was no answer. Weston had gone down to Brighton or Cheltenham or some Anglican Asia Minor that irresistibly attracts all Indians. Then he wrote to say that he designed to spend a week or so in his old quarters at the little fishing inn. Then I began very busily to beat out the problem how I should bring these two people together who had once loved each other so tenderly. It occurred to me that I would give a little dinner party, the only dinner party to which I had ever invited ladies during my prolonged residence at Ashton-on-Water. It so happened that the opportune absence of another lodger enabled me to add a drawing-room to my own three rooms. The high contracting parties agreed to come. Weston promised. Ladies are always ready to come to bachelors' dinners, but perhaps some deeper feeling influenced Mrs. and Miss Leslie. I only told them a few hours before who my guest would be. I need hardly say that I had ordered in piano, flowers, wines, and the best dinner our little inn could furnish, to the serious detriment of the last quarter of my slender clerical income.

As I looked upon Weston and Miss Leslie on that eventful day I could not but feel that if they made a very pretty couple in the old days, they made a very noble pair now. She had lost the suppleness, the full-rounded contour, the high sparkling animal health and spirits. But the lissome form and graceful movement were there; the face had gained exquisite mobility, indeed there was something too sensitive, almost quivering about the lip, and there was a delicacy, a refinement, a *spirituelle* expression, that Edith had not known in bright youth. Her eyes had gained infinitely in depth and tenderness, her voice was deeper, more tender, more musical. There was just a gleam of a few silver hairs, just a clearness and decision about her tone, that reminded one how thoroughly the girl had become a woman. But for all purposes of companionship and sympathy, of comfort and cultivation, Edith seemed as a very help of God meet for any man. And he—well, he was a noble fellow too; bronzed, broader, almost overwhelmingly manly in his physical health. The old talk of art and literature and poetry had well-nigh left him; he was evidently weighted with active interests and responsibilities that left him little room for the old quiet books. But it was a pleasure to hear that man talk, to hear his descriptions, in a vein of learning which very few Civilians possess, about ancient races and bygone civilisations, old forms of religion and morality, the life of the forest, the jungles, and the hills, the vastness and the complications of our imperial interests. There was a force and a sobered grandeur about him as if the East had given tangible form to all his indefinite visions. I have heard of such men as Burke and Macaulay being quite transformed by Oriental life; and Weston, without being the one or the other, had had his whole nature strengthened and developed. He had progressed rapidly in the service, was high up now, was making a very large income, and had a finer career before him than I had ever thought would have been possible. As I sat in the long evenings—then and afterwards—with him, I had such a flood of light thrown on the whole cycle of Indian subjects as all the multifarious correspondence of the penny papers had never produced. There was one thing, however, in the conversation that I did not quite like. He always spoke as if there was a great chasm between his past and present life; and it seemed to me as if Edith had been embarked on that fragment, and torn asunder, and had drifted away from present mind and memory.

He told me that he had been very lonely in India, very sorrowful, ofttimes very wild. He had taken once to drinking. He had always flirted hard. There were many things for which he was sorry and ashamed. He had cursed womankind, and formed the lowest of low notions about them. Ah, this is just the difference between man and woman! All through, however, he had clung with desperate tenacity to his vocation in life. It is in this weak, guilty way that a man acts under the pressure of a deep sorrow, while a good woman takes to self-repression and to prayer and active goodness, and enshrining some poor worthless image in her heart of hearts. And there is nothing that she will not forgive—the desertion, the worldliness, the sinful despair. I felt sure, as I listened to his story, that it consoled Miss Leslie to hear that through all Weston had truly loved none but her.

I handed Weston the old letters. He took them carelessly, and I thought superciliously. His eye glanced down them at first hastily, and then dwelt upon them. "By Jove, I was awfully spoony in those days." This was the commonplace exclamation which I was expecting, and yet was afraid to hear. "Dear me," he said, "I had forgotten all about these people, these places; and how strangely these letters read now." There were some of hers among them. I had intended to have separated them, but on second thoughts I had left a few there. "Yes," he said, "I remember how wild I was when I got this curt, cold note from Edith. I thought I would be cold and curt myself, and I see that I succeeded. After a time I wrote one more letter, humbling all my pride, and only entreating for some love; but no answer ever came." He seemed to forget my presence. Presently I saw him reverently take up one of Edith's letters and kiss it. When he next spoke his voice was tremulous and his eyes were full of tears. Then he put the letters together and moved off to the drawing-room.

Edith was at the piano, striking a few notes here and there with a master's touch that seemed to tell their own story. Her mother had walked out into the garden.

"It is a very odd thing about those letters. That wicked old woman has caused a great deal of unpleasantness. The post-office people ought really to have a hint how untrustworthy she has been."

"Yes," said Edith, with an infinite coolness. "She did a great deal of harm. We both became very unjust. We were very foolish in those days, but that was all. And it happened so long ago, and the postmistress is so ill now, that I think we may forget all about it. I am an old woman now, and must not think of those childish days."

She rose up to face him as he stood on the hearth in the firelight. He looked at her very calmly, and then he extended his arms and whispered the one word, "Edith."

Her face flushed like crimson. She drew near to him timidly, glowingly. She stopped, she bowed her head. Still the arms were extended lovingly, his eyes eloquent with all the passion of appeal. She is within his arms, she is resting on his breast.

"Oh, my love, my darling!" she cried. "At last, at last! God is very good to me. All those weary, heavy years, in which I might have been so happy, have come back to me again. I felt you were not lost to me. I have always loved you next to God; have loved none other, and will love you for ever."

No; those years were not lost! They had made of boy and girl noble man and noble woman, whose union showed to what rare heights of purity and felicity true marriage can be raised. They were not lost, as, cleric-like, I thought how those who go forth weeping, bearing good seed, are to return again with joy bearing their sheaves with them. That wretched old postmistress still lingers on in a kind of living death. Those noble natures have taken the only revenge of which they are capable. They have visited, comforted, helped the wicked woman who caused them such miserable years. Thus did they heap coals of fire on her head.

THE DUTY OF DECENTRALISATION.

WHAT a text is here for a sermon! Yet to the best of our recollection we never heard any discourse, whether preached on week-days or Sundays, that touched upon it. Moralists tell us what to do and to leave undone in most matters pertaining to daily life, but they do not go deeply into those nice distinctions between right and wrong which are only apparent to the imaginative. Cut and dry ethics, indeed, seem to have little in common with provincial operas, art collections, and the localisation of culture generally; though in the fact it is not so. Dulness demoralises; stupidity does more harm in nine cases out of ten than active sinfulness; and at the present day we are fostering dulness and stupidity with the most perverse activity.

Compare, for example, the abnormal activity of such a city as London with the stagnation of some of our large watering places and country towns. The surface of the habited globe offers no more bewildering spectacle than the first. The stranger who visits our capital for a few weeks finds himself surfeited with the intellectual banquets spread before him. What with picture galleries, music, society, learned societies' meetings, and other opportunities of amusement or information, he must have a capacious appetite indeed who is not more than satisfied. The chances are that he goes away with a vague feeling of depression at the little he has been able to achieve in spite of the liberality of occasion. He has wished to make the acquaintance of this or that man or woman of note, and perhaps may have got five minutes' talk with the one at a crowded assembly, and led the other down to a late, long, over-lighted dinner. He has done a dozen things a day simply because none could be put off, and has thus crowded into a few hours impressions which might well have been dispersed over as many days or weeks. Finally, he makes up his mind that after all country life is the most rational, and betakes himself to it afresh, with resignation if not with zest. But is country life the most rational? The clergyman, surrounded by wife and children, having friendly, often affectionate, relations with his parishioners, and, as generally happens, literary tastes and a love of nature to fall back upon, will certainly find it so; equally, the country squire devoted to agriculture and sporting has little time that hangs heavy on his hands. But a large class does not come under this category. What vast numbers of men and women compelled to lead a retired life in country towns and villages find life a bore! If boredom were no more noxious than chimney-pot hats or chignons we might leave it alone without compunction; but under such social slime are sure to lie ugly things which are brought to the surface now and then. Sins against temperance, truthfulness, chastity, and so on, are especially attributable to the discontent which grows out of inanition, and great tragedies as well as small miseries may be equally laid to the morbidness of a mind preying upon itself.

Anything worthy the name of philanthropy, therefore, must deal with those larger questions in which the smaller interests of humanity are involved; and here we are brought face to face with the duty of decentralisation. If a many-sided culture, widely-extended sympathies, varied studies and recreations are undeniably the foundations of a cheerful and rational existence, then it clearly follows that we are bound to spread these benefits as far as possible. A field to work upon lies ready to hand. It is the greatest mistake in the world to suppose that all the best people are collected in London or in any other large city. In almost every country town you find the materials out of which the most important society of large cities is formed, only with this difference, that in the latter case there is nothing to bring people together. They assemble to eat, drink, play croquet, and dance; but that is all. Thus it happens that many educated men and women live as completely separated as if they were in nunneries and convents; and one of the chief reasons for diffusing intellectual activity in the provinces is the present abnormal isolation of the sexes; once associated in any kind of work, study, or dignified recreation, easy and pleasant relations are sure to grow up between them. But how little opportunity is there either for work, study, or recreation in most country places! We are familiar with an English watering place of sixty thousand inhabitants which has not the resources of a little German town equally familiar to us of one-fifth its size. In the one there is no opera-house of course, no good public library, no School of Art, no museum, no picture gallery, no pleasure gardens, no musical union; whilst the latter boasts of all these, and far more.

Why should it be so? Why do not men and women of wealth, position, and energy try to divert the main stream of activity into local channels? Nothing is needed but qualities we see in full force every day—namely, courage, liberality, and self-devotion. For ourselves, we do not regard a good provincial opera as chimerical amongst a people whose musical tastes are developing as rapidly as our own. Equally, those musical societies of which my German town can boast might be set on foot with very little risk or trouble. Scientific and literary societies also, of which there are embryos in most country towns, if affiliated with the larger bodies in London would soon become important. Again, of what incalculable value would be choice loan collections, not only of pictures, but of works of art generally! When we come to mere amusement, a hundred schemes occur to us which would break the gossiping, half-crazy inanition and sameness of country town life.

But, *quid multa?* The sort of charity which begins at home begins last of all. Nobody ever doubts that it is a benevolent act to write a cheque for the starving Persians; but to put our hands into our pockets for the spiritual benefit of friends and neighbours seems quite another thing. The grosser wants of the first must be supplied or we should not rest in our beds, but the last may starve and shiver to the end of their days for all we care.

M. BETHAM-EDWARDS.

AT SEA.

THE sweet breeze freshened, the moon shone bright,
We pushed out to sea at the dead of night;
At the dead of night, when the heart beats free,
My Love and I we pushed out to sea.

And wood, and valley, and hill, and stream,
As the waning forms of a broken dream,
Or the dying fall of a mournful lay,
Afar in the moonlight faded away.

And speeding swift from the haunts of men,
Our light boat bore our light hearts then;
Swanlike, sailing with wings outspread
Under the arch of the stars overhead.

The moon, and the small stars caught in her rays,
Struggling pale through the luminous haze,
Saw how fair was my Love, and came
Wandering to wed her in night-bleached flame.

The sea, and the waves in their fall and rise,
Bosomlike heaving with languid sighs,
Lifted, and tumbled, and broke with desire,
Licked and fawned on her with red tongues of fire.

For what on the earth, the sea, or the air,
Could with my beautiful Love compare?
So delicate, subtle, pure, and intense,
The rich world's honey and quintessence.

Her eyes, where love like a great light shone,
Thrilled to their depths as they met my own;
Thrilled, and kindled, and flashed in mine,
Luminous tremors of love divine.

As the fierce hot shock of cloud upon cloud,
When their lightnings leap through each sultry shroud
Till the deep sky reddens, thus frame to frame
Flung convulsive, and mixed in flame.

Yea, her whole life swooned into mine, as swoons
The sunset into the broad lagoons;
Ruddy red radiance of sunset that flows
To the sea, till the sea blossoms out as a rose.

Low lisped the light wind, low laughed the wave,
The sleek sea rocked as meek as a slave;
In silver linen the moon us laid,
And sleep o'erlapped us with enslaving shade.

* * * * *

Is it the night wind sighs in a dream?
Shrills thus through my slumber the sea-gull's scream,
Wailing afar with a homeless cry?
Dank on my bosom the night dews lie.

Blurred is the moonlight, the starlight is quenched,
The sunbright locks of my Love are drenched
With a limber mist, that has stealthily crept
Over her limbs while she lay and slept.

Her fervid limbs and her flower-like face,
They feel so chill in my fond embrace;
Yet still she slumbers, as deep and mild
In her ocean nest as a cradled child.

Awake thou, dearest! See, yonder the white
Bright moon, the radiant Queen Lily of Night,
Strains through wan drifts to gaze down on the sea:
Thus break through thy dream, Love, and stream love o'er me.

Lo, the moon bursts forth in warm splendour and might,
The fiery small stars swarming after her light,
All at once, all together, shine straight from above,
Awfully clear on the face of my Love.

The face of my Love! My faint body quakes
Like a rattling leaf the winter wind shakes;
A curdling fear seems to thicken my breath;
O God! In my Love's face—I meet—that of death.

Icily beautiful! Terribly fair!
Her eyes with a wide, blank, lustreless stare
Are fixed upon mine, and the strangling gold
Of her hair coils over me fold upon fold.

Her snow-soft arms freeze round me like chains
Whose strange cold eats through my burning veins,
Till the sick heart rears and its pulses moan
'Gainst a heart that is as a heart of stone.

Hide, hide thy light, garish moon, lest I see
The dull froze passionless eyes upon me.
Come, darkness, engulf us; black storms, come and hide
The glittering marble that once was a bride.

Rage round us, Old Ocean; with primal pain
Roll over, confusing the forms of the brain;
Roll round with large roarings, trample my head,
Bury the quick that is chained to the dead.

Bury the dead and the quick in one gloom,
One ebbing and flowing, and earth-girdling tomb:
Ever for ever quench light, that is shed
As in derision, on the sweet Love dead.

MATHILDE BLIND.

LIBERTY AND LIBEL.

A NEWSPAPER Proprietor lately remarked to me that all the profits of an honest journal were destined to find their way into the pockets of the lawyers. "Well," he added, "perhaps that is going a little too far, but it is a fact that I must submit to a fine of several hundreds a year or else cease to freely and fairly comment on the public words, public acts, and public writings of public men." I reminded my friend that only in those countries where the law of libel is severe and comprehensive is there any liberty of the press.

"Oh," he replied, "I do not object to a severe and comprehensive law of libel, but I do object to the press being gagged by an oppressive law. On an average for every writ that is issued a dozen actions are threatened. Out of a dozen actions that are commenced not more than four are tried. Of these four actions the paper wins two, has to pay a farthing damages in the third case, and substantial damages in the fourth case. Think of the harass incident to these threats, of the lawyer's bill for consultations, of the expenses that do not appear in the bill of costs; and further, reflect that in nine cases out of ten when the paper wins it has to pay its own costs. What is the inevitable tendency of this system? Why, that public writers and critics are so far intimidated that they prefer to conceal the truth rather than run the risk of legal proceedings. I repeat I do not object to the press being punished for faults, and having to pay for mistakes, but believe me it is inimical to the liberty of the press to worry and fine newspapers for fair criticisms written and published in the public interest."

I suppose that most newspaper readers must have been struck with the increase of actions for libel. Twenty years ago they were few and far between, but now they are an everyday occurrence. Twenty years ago libel suits were to some extent injurious to the reputation of a paper, but now no one regards them as in any degree discreditable. And when we consider that the actions tried do not represent more than a tithe of the actions commenced, and that the actions commenced do not represent nearly a tithe of the actions threatened, I cannot help fearing that the law of libel does unduly, and therefore to the detriment of the public interest, restrain the liberty of the press. I propose to shortly discuss this most important subject. I remember the saying of Locke—that no man is free from prejudice, yet I trust that I shall deal with this matter, not as a partisan of the press, but as one who is above all else anxious to uphold that freedom of discussion which has saved us both from despotism and from anarchy, and made us a happy, prosperous, and glorious community.

Our law of libel seems, and indeed is, based on a wise, salutary, and safe principle. The protection of the rights of the individual and the defence of the liberty of the press are confided to the community at large, as represented by a jury. What better plan can be suggested? Will not a jury be careful to protect the rights of the individual? Will not a jury be careful to defend the liberty of the press? For it is the natural interest of a jury to do both one and the other. It may be said that the judge, and not the jury, is the authority in actions for libel, and it is true that some judges have thought proper to direct the jury as to what does or does not constitute a libel; but if we examine even these exceptional directions, we shall perceive that they are of a general character, and that the question of libel or no libel is treated as a question of fact and left to the decision of the jury.

Although this plan is right in principle and ought not to be departed from, yet from the indefiniteness of the law and the difficulties incident to the subject, it results in serious practical inconvenience. No one knows what is or what is not a libel. If the question of what constitutes a libel had been left to the judges we should have had some trustworthy and understandable *dicta* for our guidance, in spite of the inherent difficulty of the subject. As it is, the verdicts of juries are so conflicting that when a counsel gives an opinion as to whether a publication is or is not libellous he is obliged to do so under great reserve. I shall be told there are judicial *dicta* which are quoted both at *nisi prius* and before the full court, but I repeat that practically it is left to the jury to determine whether the impugned publication does or does not come within the undefined, and perhaps undefinable, limits shadowed forth in the *dicta* of the judges. If our law of libel had any shape and consistency I should describe it as jury made law.

Nor can we blame the juries for the inconsistency of their verdicts. The function of the jury is to weigh evidence, but in libel actions it is called upon to interpret and even to make law. In other actions a jury has to decide whether this or that averment is or is not proved. Take the case of a claim against a railway company for damages for personal injury. The jury has to say from the evidence adduced—

1. Whether the plaintiff has been injured by the act of the railway. 2. Whether the injury was due to a preventible cause—that is, whether it was the result of negligence. 3. If these questions are answered in the affirmative, to estimate the amount of compensation that the plaintiff ought to receive. But in an action for libel no such clear issues are put before the jury. The statement which is alleged to be libellous may be true, yet a libel. The law righteously declares that you must not publish the truth about a man to his injury unless for the public good. If a libellous statement is false the falsity involves an increment of the offence that ought to weigh with the jury in the consideration of damages, but if the statement is true and yet libellous the correctness of the statement does not excuse the libel. It is the same with the proved or probable malice of the libel. If the plaintiff can convince the jury that the libel was instigated by malice the jury will consider the malice in its award of damages. But the plaintiff need not prefer a charge of malice. The defendant may adduce the most unquestionable evidence that the publication of the libel was without malice, but that will not save him from an adverse verdict. The plaintiff has suffered a wrong and he is entitled to redress, though the defendant was not actuated by malice. But what shall we say of the criminal punishment of a man for a libel for which he is in no degree morally responsible? A recent case, which will be remembered without naming the parties, illustrates this anomaly of the English law. The editor and proprietor of a newspaper was confined to his home by sickness. His sub-editor improperly inserted a paragraph injuriously reflecting upon the character of a certain person. It was ruled, and the ruling is in accord with the law, that though morally innocent, the editor and proprietor was legally responsible, and liable to imprisonment for the offence. I only cite this case to show that, *à fortiori*, in civil actions the jury cannot be guided as to its verdict by the question of motive, except, indeed, as to the amount of damages. Well, then we come to another anomaly, I do not say an improper anomaly, but still a perplexing anomaly, in the law of libel. The jury is called upon to award compensation to the plaintiff if it deems he has been libelled, but the plaintiff is not bound to show that he has suffered either in his estate or reputation. In other actions for damages the plaintiff has to give evidence as to the amount of damage he has sustained. Even in breach of promise cases the plaintiff adduces evidence of the duration of the engagement, the property of the defendant, and of any other considerations that are indicative of the extent of the injury she has suffered. In a libel suit the plaintiff may prove damage, and by so doing increase the

amount of the award, but he need not prove any special injury; and yet if the jury determines that he is libelled it will have to compensate him, not for the damage done, but for the damage that in its opinion the libel was calculated to inflict. Hence we have the one farthing, the one shilling, and the forty shilling verdicts, to which I shall presently refer.

Thus the jury in an action for libel may have to return a verdict for the plaintiff and award him damages for a statement absolutely and entirely true, that was published without malice, and that, so far as the jury is informed, has not in any way injured the plaintiff. I am not suggesting any change in the law in respect to the principles we have been considering. I admit that the publication of an injurious statement, even though it is true, is not justifiable unless the publication is for the public weal. I admit that when a man is libelled he ought not to be debarred from redress because his libeller was not instigated by malice. I admit that it is both just and expedient to compensate a man for the pain, annoyance, and *possible* injury of a libel even though no actual injury has resulted from the publication of the libel. But these just and expedient principles devolve upon the jury the performance of a difficult duty.

Above all and before all the jury has to determine whether the alleged libel is or is not a libel. The directions of the judge are of very little service. What is the use of telling a jury that a public writer must not exceed the limits of fair criticism? What is fair criticism? Or what is the use of telling the jury that it is unlawful to hold up a man to ridicule or contempt? The tendency of adverse criticism is necessarily, to a degree, calculated to bring the subject of it into ridicule or contempt. I may, at least I presume so, lawfully assert that the novel written by Mr. A. is foolish, childish, and trashy. Well, but surely such a criticism is calculated, so far as it has any influence, to make Mr. A., as a novelist, appear ridiculous. Or I suppose I may lawfully say of a novel by Mr. B. that it lacks originality, that it is a mere hash of commonplace fiction, and that it is more likely to injure than to improve the tone of the reader's mind. Well, but surely such a criticism is calculated, so far as it has any influence, to bring Mr. B., as a novelist, into contempt. A public writer may hold up a man to ridicule and contempt with limits and on conditions left to the jury to prescribe and to set forth. I do not wonder that the verdicts of juries in libel cases are conflicting. Every jury in every case has to interpret the law, perhaps I should say to make the law, for that particular case. The profession and the public were surprised at a jury finding a verdict for the plaintiff in an action against a newspaper for calling a trade-mark name vulgar. I am sure that before that decision no one had imagined that the epithet "vulgar" was libellous. There is no criminality in vulgarity. There is nothing immoral in vulgarity. Still it is calculated to bring a person or thing into contempt to say of him or it that he or it is not genteel, is not aristocratic,—is plebeian, is vulgar. If the jury erred, as I conceive it did, its error was not an error of principle but of degree.

I have no desire to relieve the jury from the responsibility of deciding whether the alleged libel is or is not a libel. It is, as I have said, a question of degree, and therefore a question of fact, and I hold that in trials by jury every question of fact should be left to the jury. Nor do I desire—for the thing is impossible—to have precise and binding definitions of libel; but whilst leaving to the jury a very wide and very onerous discretion, I submit that the Legislature might do something to guide juries in libel cases, and by so doing prevent verdicts which offend the conscience of the community, and also put a stop to a vast amount of vexatious and frivolous, yet costly and oppressive, litigation.

We know, for example, that the public critic is not, save in rare exceptions, and then only indirectly, concerned with the private deeds of men. In this country we, as a rule, respect the right of the individual to be solely accountable to his conscience and to God for transgressions of the moral law. A French journalist has no conception of such a principle; but believes himself justified in assailing the private character in order to injure the public influence of his foe. In this country the private character of a man, unless he happens to be a Prince of the Blood, is usually protected from criticism. But there are exceptions to the rule, for now and then we meet with comments and criticisms that, by manifest inference, if not directly, pass judgment on the character of the individual in what, for lack of a better phrase, we may call his personal, domestic, and moral relations. Now, it would be a guide both to critics and juries if the Legislature expressly declared criticism of or even reference to the private and domestic acts of individuals to be a libel, except when such private and domestic acts involved a public scandal or detriment to the public weal. If a clergyman, or a schoolmaster, or a schoolmistress violates the moral law either by unchastity or by habitual drunkenness, the public writer is justified in denouncing that conduct, because it is a public scandal and is detrimental to the public interest. But if a merchant, or a statesman, or a lawyer chooses to violate the moral law by unchastity or by drunkenness, that is no concern of the public writer, and any reference to such failings ought to be dealt with as libellous. If a butcher, or baker, or draper is a drunkard that is no concern of the public; and therefore to publish the fact of his drunkenness ought to be treated as a libel. But if a dispensing chemist is a drunkard the publication of the fact ought not necessarily to be treated as a libel, because the drunkenness of a dispensing chemist is a matter of public concern. If a grocer sells inferior tea at an exorbitant price it would be a libel to publish and comment on the fact; but if the grocer sands his sugar that is a fraud, and it is not a libel in law to denounce a fraud. In a word, whilst public words and public acts are justly subject to public criticism, any reference to private character—that is to say, personal, domestic, and social relations—ought to be dealt with as libellous unless it can be clearly shown that the reference is made in the interest of the public. What I am now stating are, I apprehend, the principles of the common law, but I contend that it would be highly beneficial to have them embodied in a statute. The public writer would then clearly understand that any reference to private character would, by a presumption of law, be regarded as libellous, and upon the public writer would be cast the *onus probandi* that the imputations against the private character were true in fact, and further, that the impugned conduct was absolutely and directly a public scandal or detrimental or dangerous to the public weal.

It is noteworthy how in the public interest we sacrifice the rights of the individual. Take the extreme case of a man convicted of a crime, for which he is sentenced to a term of imprisonment. The theory of the law is that the punishment expurgates the guilt, and that when the offender leaves prison he is no longer to be treated as a guilty man, and therefore there are so many degrees of punishment. It is in law a libel to recite after the lapse of years the fact that a man was at one time a felon. But in practice the offender is branded for life. His trial and conviction are recorded in the newspapers, and he cannot blot out the record. All we can say is that the publication is necessary in the interest of the community. Reports of the proceedings of police courts are also privileged, and a man falsely accused, and who is not put upon his trial for lack of even *prima facie* evidence, is subject to the annoyance, the pain, and the injury of having the false accusation against him published in the newspapers. But it is for the interest of the public that such publication should be privileged, because it is the best means of obtaining evidence against the guilty. I think, however, that *ex parte* applications should be heard *in camera*. When an application is made to strike an attorney off the rolls the name of the defendant is not published, and the same regard should be paid to the reputation of other persons.

We have suggested that without any infringement of recognised principles the Legislature might define the lawful limits of criticism in respect to comments on private character. The Legislature might also with advantage set forth the privileges of the public writer. Any criticisms, however sharp, caustic, or uncompromising, of public utterances, public acts, and published writings, ought to be in fact, as they are in theory, privileged, provided there is no imputation of motive; that is, not a personally corrupt or immoral motive. If a critic says that a book is grossly immoral, that ought to be privileged, whether the judgment is true or false; but if the critic says, "the author of this work seeks to lower the moral tone of his readers," that ought to be treated as a libel, although the book is vile and the imputation is manifestly true. If the Legislature embodied these well-known doctrines in a statute the jury would be able to attach a definite meaning to the term "the limits of fair criticism." If there is any imputation on private character that would be *per se* a libel, and the defendant would be cast in damages unless he succeeded in rebutting the presumption of law by maintaining a plea that the imputation on private character was published in the direct interest of the public. On the other hand, if the alleged libel dealt only with public utterances, public acts, or published works, then the jury would assume that the publication was privileged, and it would devolve upon the plaintiff to prove that in some way or other the alleged libel reflected upon his personal character by the imputation of corrupt or other improper and dishonourable motives.

The one farthing, one shilling, and even the forty shilling verdicts ought to be abolished. What is the meaning of such a verdict? So far from benefiting, it injures the character of the plaintiff. It means "The plaintiff has been libelled, and he deserved to be libelled, for his character is worthless;" or, "The defendant has committed a technical error, but the plaintiff deserves no sympathy for bringing the action." I shall be told that here at the discretion of the court the verdicts do not carry costs, and that therefore the jury practically fines both litigants. That seems to me most objectionable. It is the business of the jury to find for one side or the other, for a juryman is not and ought not to be an arbitrator. I am sure that it would be more just and also more salutary if the jury were directed to give the defendant the benefit of any doubt, and therefore if it was not of opinion that the case justified the imposition of substantial damages, that it should find a verdict for the defendant.

The theory of the common law is that a man has an inherent right to his good reputation, and so if his character is assailed he is entitled to redress, though he cannot prove any special damage. But surely a man ought not to make a market of his good reputation. If the plaintiff has sustained special damage let him be recompensed. In cases where there is no proof of special damage let the damages awarded by the jury be a fine payable into the public exchequer. It is preposterous and immoral for a man to ask for and to receive a sum of money as a salve for his wounded honour. If a man is damaged in his estate by a libel let him be recompensed. If his honour only is hurt let him have the redress of public vindication, and let the defamer be punished by a fine.

I now come to points of practice, or rather the application of the principles of the law of libel, and this part of the subject is of the highest importance, for it brings us to the consideration of those defects in the law which are oppressive to the journalist and therefore are a restraint on the just and wholesome liberty of the press.

The proprietor, publisher, and printer of a newspaper are severally and conjointly liable for libels. It is no doubt hard that more than one person should be legally responsible, but it is so important that the public should be protected that no change would be expedient. Besides, when one of these parties proves his means to meet the case, even though several actions are commenced, they are consolidated by the undertakings of the parties who are severally liable, and no additional costs are incurred. Sometimes, when the printer is a man of means and the proprietor is without resources, the printer has to pay a heavy penalty for a fault for which he is in no degree responsible, and which he could not by the utmost vigilance have prevented. There is no remedy for this, except that the offending newspaper should be primarily responsible for the costs and damages. That is to say, if the proprietor fails to pay the damages and costs, the copyright of the paper, in spite of any mortgage, should be liable to be sold either by auction or by advertisement to the highest bidder, and the proceeds of such sale should be applied in the first instance to the payment of the damages and costs of the libel suit. But this is a matter which does not concern the public, but the parties severally and conjointly responsible for libel.

It very rarely happens that the successful plaintiff in a libel suit against a newspaper does not recover his damages and costs, because worthless newspapers are not often sued, but, unfortunately, it is a too common occurrence for the successful newspaper to have to pay its own costs. The judges almost always refuse, and very properly, to make an order for the plaintiff to find security for costs. If they did so it would be equivalent to debarring a poor man from seeking redress for a wrong. But there is a middle course that would be just to both parties, and would put a stop to what I do not hesitate to call a system of extortion and oppression.

I propose that when the plaintiff in an action for libel has delivered his declaration the defendant shall be entitled to apply to a judge in chambers to stay the action unless the plaintiff finds security for costs. This application shall be on the ground that the action is frivolous, or that the defendant has offered such apology and compensation as ought to satisfy the plaintiff. Now in no case whatever would the plaintiff be compelled to stop his action provided he has the means of paying the costs of the defendant if he loses. The defendant would have to satisfy the judge that the action was frivolous or that he had rendered fair apology and reasonable compensation before he could claim an order for security for costs. Surely when a judge holds that an action is frivolous, or that the defendant has rendered or is willing to render full redress for the wrong, there can be no injustice in compelling the plaintiff to find security for costs if he resolves, in opposition to the opinion of the judge, to go on with the action. Such a regulation would be a great boon to newspaper proprietors, and it would not interfere with the right of the subject to seek a remedy for the wrong that he has suffered.

With regard to threats of action for libel, any one who by the agency of a lawyer's letter threatens a newspaper with an action for libel, and though the newspaper declines to apologise, does not begin and go on with the action, should be liable to be summoned before a magistrate on the charge of intimidation, and be liable to a fine not exceeding (say) ten pounds, provided he cannot satisfy the magistrate that though he has not commenced or proceeded with an action yet he had reasonable ground for threatening to sue the newspaper. Those who are aware how newspapers are annoyed and harassed with threats of actions for libel will agree with me that it is an evil that ought to be checked. Sometimes these letters are sent for the mere purpose of intimidation, and they often answer the purpose. An editor is naturally loth to continue to criticise the conduct of a man who has threatened legal proceedings for a late criticism. If the threat is carried out and the case is tried it may tell against the newspaper that whilst there was notice of an action the alleged libels were repeated. Threats of action for libel are thus calculated to gag the press. Then writs are issued, not with the intention of going on with the action, but in the hope of a compromise. "Insert an apologetic paragraph, pay my lawyer's bill, give me a trifling compensation as a substantial acknowledgment of your fault, and I will let the matter drop." Actions for libel are frequently threatened and commenced with a view to black-mailing the newspaper. If the action goes on, whatever may be the verdict of the jury, the newspaper is sure to lose. If there is a verdict for the defendant the newspaper will probably have to pay all its own costs, and even if the taxed costs are paid by the plaintiff there will be the extra costs to come out of the till of the newspaper. The temptation, then, is very strong, and often prevails, to settle the matter for £10 or £15. The plaintiff and his attorney are delighted. The speculative writ has succeeded, though the plaintiff had no ground of action and would not have gone on to trial. Leading papers are not the victims of this system—they are not intimidated by threats, and they can afford to reply to a suit by giving the name of a solicitor to accept service on their behalf. But there are hundreds of honest and useful organs of public opinion not rich enough to defy speculative threats and writs, and they ought to be protected by law. The attempt to prevent the free expression of opinion, and the attempt to employ the machinery of the law for extortion, are serious offences and ought to be punished.

A restraint has lately been imposed on the press which I hold to be altogether unjustifiable. It has been asserted that when an action has been commenced it is a contempt of court for the newspaper to comment on the character or acts of the plaintiff. The further comments are published at the peril of the newspaper, and the plaintiff can produce them at the trial; or, if he chooses, commence another action. But I hope and believe that such further comments are not unlawful, and that they will not be regarded and dealt with as a contempt of court. Suppose that A. is defrauding the public. Three or four of the leading newspapers comment on his conduct. A. serves them with writs; and if the doctrine we refer to is sanctioned by the courts, then A. could for many months continue his foul practices without the risk of exposure. I wish that one of the judges would take an opportunity of declaring that a man cannot gag the press by issuing writs.

In offering these observations I trust I have not manifested an exclusive or even an undue regard for the liberty of the press. He who supposes that liberty can abide and flourish without the restraints of law has not read, or has not understood, the lessons of history. Liberty can only exist when it is as far removed from license as it is from despotism. An untrammelled press—that is, a press which might trample on the rights of the individual with impunity—would not be a free press, but a cruel, hateful, and death-stricken tyranny. For the sake of preserving the liberty of the press we must have a stringent, searching, and comprehensive law of libel. If any one contends that the protection of the right of the individual is more to be considered than the liberty of the press I am not prepared to deny the proposition—at least not without reserve. But happily the liberty of the press is compatible with the due protection of the rights of the individual, and it should be our anxious desire to uphold the latter without doing detriment to the former. I maintain, and I think I have justified the opinion, that the present law of libel—that is, the application of the doctrines of the law in respect to libel—is needlessly oppressive to the press and does unduly, and consequently to the public injury, militate against and curtail the wholesome liberty of the press. The nation is now engaged in the sacred work of education. We are striving to emancipate the minds of all men and women from the bondage of ignorance. We are endeavouring to ensure to every man and woman the blessing of free thought, which is the most precious of human birthrights. At such a time we ought to take heed that the expression of thought is free, for nothing is more dangerous than free thought and a manacled tongue. We should insist upon the utmost liberty of criticism which is compatible with respect for the right of the individual to have his reputation protected by law; but unless there are some changes in the law of libel I am persuaded that the just and beneficent liberty of the English press will be seriously and fatally impaired.

JOHN BAKER HOPKINS.

A VISIT TO HELIGOLAND.

BY MRS. FORRESTER, AUTHOR OF "FAIR WOMEN," "MY HERO," &C.

HELIGOLAND! The name falls with a sort of vague familiarity upon British ears. Two ideas are connected with it by the general public—"It belongs to us, and the Germans want it," or "It is an island somewhere in the middle of the sea that is being gradually undermined by rabbits; there were letters in the *Times* about it." But after all there is not a rabbit in the island—at least, I never saw or heard of one. Of Germany coveting it I will say a little more by-and-by. Meantime, as very few people really know where Heligoland is, I may mention that it is in the North Sea, about three hours from the mouths of the Elbe and Weser, six hours by steamer from Hamburg, and five from Bremen, or rather Bremenhafen.

I left London on a broiling August day, and my destination was Heligoland, whither I was going on a visit to the Governor. At the last moment I abandoned my intention of travelling overland *viâ* Brussels, Cologne, Hanover, and Bremen, for the thought of railway journeys and continental towns in such heat was unbearable, more particularly when the awful word "cholera" was in every one's mouth. So having taken my cabin on the previous night, I found myself this fierce August morning on board a fine steamer bound for Bremenhafen, which is two hours by rail distant from the free city of Bremen. Two of the most delightful days imaginable I spent on board the Sperber. As we steamed down the Thames a gentle breeze sprang up, the sun seemed to lose its heat and fierceness now our backs were turned upon it, and the cool air fanned our faces. We worked our way down to the sea slowly but surely, the river widening, widening, until the banks were but indistinctly visible on either side. "Is this the sea?" I asked the pilot at last, for never a ripple stirred the smooth waters. "Yes, mum, this is sea sure enough, and you'll have it much the same all the way now I reckon." And I blessed that Ancient Mariner for his jolly, hearty assurance (I am not the best sailor in the world), and was sorry when a boat picked him up off Harwich and conveyed him to the shore to find his way back to London and wait until another Lloyd's North German steamer wanted piloting down old Father Thames. On we steamed past light-houses and light-ships—a gallant Trinity boat shot past and past again, going from one to another on a tour of inspection. At last the sun went down like a ball of fire, the stars came out, and as our good ship sped onwards she left behind a long track of silver, though there was no moon. This was the *Meerleuchten*—or, as we call it, phosphoric lights. The air was getting quite cool. I wrapped myself up in a fur cloak; fur! when on shore a muslin wrapper had seemed unbearable, and I pitied the dwellers on land. Then to bed in my tiny crib, where I really slept till morning. Another heavenly day greeted me—blue sky, unruffled sea, delicious air—and at 8 p.m. we anchored in sight of Heligoland, with its beacon glittering brightly in the distance. "Oh!" I thought, "if the Governor only knew I was here and would send off his boat for me!" but I was not discontented at the idea of spending another night at sea. We were at the mouth of the Weser; the captain, a cautious individual, thought it not well to venture up the river in the dark without a pilot, so there we remained until 3 a.m., when, with a noise as though every plank of the good ship were parting asunder, the anchor was drawn in and we steamed up the Weser. At six the ruthless steward disturbed our slumbers—we "were in," we "were there"—which was not quite the case; but up we scrambled, partook of breakfast (by courtesy), and then really and truly we were in. I must *par parenthèse* mention that the *cuisine* on board was inconceivably bad—cheap enough, ten shillings a head for the whole voyage; but if you had given fifty pounds you could have obtained no better fare. That was the only drawback to my otherwise charming voyage. I could get nothing to eat. On shore—oh, irony of Fate!—I had been surrounded with every delicacy, but without appetite to enjoy it. Now I was ravenously hungry, and all offered me was raw sausage, raw herrings, cold potato salad, and *Spiegeleier*, otherwise fried eggs, which do not suit my digestion. We arrived in Bremenhafen at 7 a.m. The moment the ship stopped we found the heat unbearable; then landing, we took a carriage and drove to another part of the harbour to find the Heligoland boat.

We were the first passengers on board, and had our choice of seats. Presently the train came in, and the boat was flooded from end to end with the new arrivals, for it was Saturday, and the Bremen folk take their trip to Heligoland from Saturday until Monday as Cockneys go to Margate or Brighton. Besides these were groups of *Badegäster* or bathing guests, with a good deal of luggage, going for a fortnight or three weeks, to whom Heligoland is a kind of Scarborough on a small scale. The moment we were under way every one sought distraction by breakfasting. A swift-footed little waiter, with a junior satellite, hurried to and fro, bearing cutlets, biftecks, beer, wine, and coffee with unflagging zeal, until he seemed fain to melt with fervent heat. I thought by the quantity of provisions I saw disposed of every passenger must have breakfasted twice over, but lo! at one o'clock tables were laid the whole length of the deck—the little waiter and his Ganymede rushed about more frantically than ever, and it was evident that a large majority were contemplating the serious business of the day. About this time there was an eager looking out ahead. Then came the announcement—Heligoland was in sight, and everybody became intensely excited and flocked to the spot whence the best view was to be obtained. "Ach Gott! the little island, how clear! how pretty, how lovely!" There could be no doubt about one thing—Heligoland was very dear to the German heart, and I felt myself swelling with a certain pride of possession as being the only "Britisher" on board. I ascended the little staircase to the summit of the paddle-box—the captain lent me his glass. Far away through a thin white mist of heat something red and shining rose out of the sea. Fairy-like it looked in the distance, far away across the green unrippled sea, and as we came nearer and nearer I thought it one of the prettiest pictures I had ever seen in nature's sketch book. This little island! how tiny it looked rising out of the vast expanse of water—to think that within an hour I should be landed and living everyday life on this rock, surrounded on all sides by the great waste of waters. There was a certain awe in the first thought of being cut off from the rest of the world—of being hemmed in by the arms of "our great fair mother the Sea," so placid and friendly now, but in a few hours perhaps to be lashed into wild, fierce storm.

Nearer we come to the red rocks flooded with sunshine, and now little white specks are visible, and then the green, grass-covered summit. Gradually the island grows larger—we distinguish the lighthouse, the church, the houses, the boats, even the expectant crowd on the shore. A gun booms through the air, presently another, and at the third salute we come to anchor, and everything is distinctly visible. After all now we are there it does not look at all strange. I am reminded a little of Scarborough by the red-tiled houses of the lower town, and the row of white houses above on the cliff, similarly situated to the Crown Hotel and Crescent. There is no pier, so boats put off to land the passengers, and there is a good deal of crowding to get off first, for this is the height of the Heligoland season, and it is a matter of importance to be first to secure good apartments. Thank heaven! these cares do not assail me. I am taken on board the Governor's boat, landed, and escorted to Government House, where I am not expected quite so soon, as the letter and telegram stating my change of plans only arrive by the same boat as myself.

It is 2.30 on a day only fit for a salamander; but hot or cold, alive or dead, one must mount the two hundred steps that lead to the Oberland with one's own legs, for no quadrupeds but cows, sheep, dogs, and cats are known on the island; many an islander has never set eyes on a horse, and unless indeed you had one that had been in the habit of walking up stairs from a circus, I do not know what use it could be put to, for the Oberland is the cliff that rises sheer above the little town built on the sea-shore, and is reached by four flights of fifty steps each. Wooden are they and easy, and partly shaded by trees; at intervals you take the opportunity of benches to "rest and be thankful." *Nolens volens*, your motto must be *Excelsior*, for having planted your foot on the two hundredth step, there is still a gentle rise in the ground all the way to Government House. Once there, you are amply repaid for your exertions; the fresh breeze, pure, unbreathed before, meets you, and you look down over the little town below on the blue waters and picturesque Sandy Island a mile out in the sea. Heaven be praised that the broiling sun has driven every one indoors save a few Heligoland boatmen, for it is the usual custom of the visitors, numbering some hundreds, to take up their station on either side of the ropes drawn to keep them from pressing too closely on the new arrivals, and stare, with a relentless curiosity, too often bursting into shouts of derisive laughter at the appearance of some woe-begone face that bears evident traces of the "sad sea waves." I should here comment with much severity on "ye manners and customs" of foreigners had I not a vague remembrance that such scenes have been witnessed on our own shores ere now. Happily to-day we have had a fair passage, and there are but few curious eyes to take stock of us; so I follow the gallant tar who is my *cicerone* unabashed up the principal street towards the steps. A large *restauration* on either side commences Regent Street (as we used laughingly to call it) from the sea-side; then a few little shops, principally devoted to views of Heligoland on paper, wood, china, glass, &c., and collections of shells; then the Conversazions House, a large building, similar to the Etablissement at Boulogne, (where until this year gambling tables seduced the *Badegäster*. Now more innocent recreations have superseded roulette and rouge-et-noir; the visitors go there to read the news, to dine, to flirt, to dance, to hear concerts; for life in Heligoland is very much the same as at any other watering place: to bathe, to *far niente*, to make love is the order of things, the latter conducted with great warmth and ardour. The technical term for it in German is "freien," and as one of the coastguard's wives informed my maid, "there was nothing but fryin' going on all over the place."

But before proceeding any further, I will pause for a moment to say a few words about the Heligoland of old times, for the antiquity of the island is not its smallest boast. Adam of Bremen in the eleventh century wrote an account of it, describing it very much as it is now, with the exception of the *Bädegaster*; he surmises its name to have been originally Heiligland, for it was held in great estimation by all sailors, and more particularly by pirates, who had a superstition against robbing it, believing that the smallest booty stolen from the island would infallibly entail shipwreck or death upon them. Writings from the seventh century have also been found relating to Heligoland, and some keen historians have endeavoured to prove that it was mentioned by Pliny. Many are the legends connected with it; in one we find that St. Ursula landed here with her 11,000 virgins, but met with such godless treatment at the hands of the Heligolanders that to punish them Heaven caused the greater part of the island to be swallowed up by the sea. Certainly it must have diminished considerably since it was big enough to accommodate 11,000 visitors, for now, at the height of the season, only 1,000 guests can be received in addition to the population of 2,000. Many are the legendary tales of the origin of Heligoland as a name; the most romantic and interesting, perhaps the most probable, is the following.

In the sixteenth century King Helgo landed on the Saxon coast in the dominions of the haughty and war-loving Princess Olufa, and demanded her hand in marriage. This flattering proposal was couched in such terms as made it evident the suitor had no idea of being refused, and, a little intimidated by threats of the consequences of a rejection, the proud Princess consented. But on the happy day that was to unite her to King Helgo, she caused him to be drugged, had his head shaven, tarred and feathered him, and in this plight had him conveyed on board his own ship. It may be imagined that his sensations on waking were none of the pleasantest, but as he was thundering for revenge the Princess appeared on the shore with such a host that he had no choice but to defer his vengeance until a more favourable opportunity. Burning with fury, he put off to sea, but not long afterwards appeared again on the coast. This time he had recourse to stratagem. In the forest, not far from Olufa's Castle, he hid some treasure, and bribed one of her servants to confide to her its hiding place as a great secret. The bait took—haughty Olufa went at midnight on her quest, was seized, and carried off to King Helgo's ship. . . . . A daughter was born to her, whom she named Ursa, and gave to a peasant on the sea-shore to bring up. Twelve years later the King returned once more to this part of the coast, and finding a lovely maiden wandering on the shore, carried her off and married her. Olufa's vengeance was nearly complete—she sent at once to her daughter, whom she took from Helgo and married to the King of Sweden, whereupon the former, horror-stricken, stabbed himself. It was from him the island took its name.

We have heard a great deal lately about the Germans wanting Heligoland, and though I have heard several scout the idea, the following quotation from a book published in 1855 will, I think, show that the wish to possess the island has occasionally been present to the mind of Germany:—

> In 1848 the idea was mooted of making Heligoland the principal harbour for the German fleet. The subject was seriously handled by the newspapers. The German *Naval Gazette* aired the theme widely in its columns. "Heligoland," it said, "must be gained from the English by a straightforward appeal to the Parliament and nation. Then a dam must be made round the island, that, at any price—cost what millions it might—a harbour for 'three-deckers' should be ensured. The reefs stretching far into the sea would afford stone enough for the purpose." . . . . . I do not know whether England was even aware of the extent to which this idea was carried, but I believe she would as soon leave her American or Australian colonies to stand by themselves as to *give away* Heligoland. That a safe harbour for men-of-war could be made there admits of no doubt, but the cost would be so enormous that its value to Germany would in no degree be commensurate with the outlay. True, the island is of great importance, but more on account of it being in foreign hands in time of war than of its individual importance to Germany. . . . Heligoland is too small and too out of the way to be of real use as a harbour in war-time. It is not enough to ensure safety against storm, but there must also be no danger of seizure. How long could Heligoland hold out against a siege? In the sixteenth century George Brueck was of opinion that the Overland, or upper part, was uninvadable. But no tales of heroism have ever been told of Heligoland, and never will be, for in a very short time the inhabitants must perish, to a man, of hunger. Three times already it has been taken—1654, 1714, and 1807. And if for its protection batteries were built out into the sea, the cost becomes stupendous. The *Naval Gazette* proposed to make use of the reefs, possibly because the writer was utterly ignorant on the subject, for the reefs are composed of stone so brittle, of such masses of chalk and clay, that you could not build a stable out of it, let alone a fortified harbour. As the neighbouring coasts do not afford the necessary material, stone would have to be brought from Germany, Scotland, or Norway. What sums that would run away with may easily be conjectured. Why, the making of a harbour for merchantmen and brigs would offer very great difficulties, and before even that small undertaking the inexhaustible purse of Great Britain has hitherto recoiled, though the advantages of it would be great, and the Heligolanders have often made urgent representations on the subject. When in 1811 Napoleon conceived the project

> of making a fortified harbour on the German North Sea Coast, England began to consider the expediency of improving the defences of Heligoland. But it ended in smoke. Napoleon fell, and England stood fast without fortifying Heligoland. There was only one rusty old gun on the island, but it served to maintain strict neutrality throughout the Danish-German war.
>
> If we only had a united Germany! a resolute Prussia! harbours and three-deckers would soon be forthcoming, and perhaps the opportunity of winning Heligoland would not be wanting if Germany but knew how to turn her strength to account. England only respects practical people and nations.

How the writer must rejoice now that his longings for German unification are accomplished, and that beyond his wildest dreams! According to him we must begin to quake for our little island, of which I am certain we undervalue the importance. The great argument for it is not so much its intrinsic value to us, but the enormous advantage it might give to another Power. And having spent some very pleasant days under English rule upon the little sea-girt rock, I for one should be sorry to think of its being ceded to Germany or any other country.

The Heligolanders are very well affected towards England, much better than to Germany; but their strongest sympathies I am told are Danish. The language used by them is a queer compound of Frisian, English and German. Now that Colonel Maxse, the Governor, has instituted schools on the island, many of the children speak and understand our language well. Not the least curious feature on the island is the church, though it boasts no very great antiquity. In the middle of the nave, suspended from the roof, is a ship in full rig. The pulpit forms the centre-piece of the chancel, and has on either side a huge silver candlestick presented by the King of Sweden. All round the galleries painted in panels are a series of pictures representing sacred subjects, from Adam in Paradise to the shipwreck of St. Paul. The Governor's pew is as comfortable as it is curious, reminding one of something between an opera-box and a railway carriage—it has windows on three sides, and is *furnished with comfort.* The men occupy the galleries, the pews below are all appropriated to the women, and in front of each seat the occupier's name is inscribed with many flourishes and in lively colours. Five pounds purchases a sitting in perpetuity. The font is of brass, very ancient—date unknown. A curious custom prevails at christenings. As soon as the sermon is over, word is sent to the christening party, who immediately form themselves into procession. A number of little girls from six to twelve years of age go first, carrying a little silver or china mug with warm water, which they pour into the font.

The rest of the party—child, god-parents, friends—go in by another door, and the ceremony commences.

In former days the Heligolanders bore no surnames—the name of the child (generally called after its grandfather) was tacked on to its father's with an addition of S or Ens. If the father was called Jasper, and the son Pai, the full name of the latter was Pai Jaspers—the firstborn grandson was Jasper Paiens, and the great grandson Pai Jaspers again, so that grandfather and grandson often had the same name. In 1763 a new order of things was instituted. But it was very difficult to carry the adoption of a fixed name into execution. It often happened that the baptismal name of the father was made the surname, though the first was retained, so one often finds both together, such as Jasper Jaspers, Klaas Klaasen, &c. Very near relations, even brothers, often had different surnames. Names of men still retained from old times are Nummel, Bad, Nan—singular women's names are Dulke, Bogge, Wentje, Maike, Pontje, Amke, Mamke, Wibke, Perke.

While we are at the church, I may as well say a little about the courtship and marriage of the Heligolanders, which may also be considered *eigenthümlich*. And here I must not fail to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Oetker for a good deal of the following information.

Marriage is preceded by a courtship which frequently lasts for years. As soon as the young people who intend to marry have obtained the consent of their parents, they live in what we must call a prenuptial state. The man from that time becomes a *Freier* (wooer), which word has a somewhat broad significance. In former times the lover, though permitted to visit his betrothed twice or thrice a week at her parents' house, was not allowed to go out walking with her, but all restrictions have been done away with, and the engaged pair not only visit dancing places and walk out together, but the bridegroom elect makes his visits to his lady love as often and as long as he chooses, without any harm being thought of it. As a rule the courtship only comes to an end when circumstances make it expedient that the wedding should take place. Then preparations for the ceremony are made in all haste, and the intended husband is not allowed to go to sea lest the bride be made a widow before her marriage. It is almost unheard of that a man breaks his engagement to a girl—he would be pointed at with scorn by every finger in the island.

The wedding breakfast takes place at the house of the bridegroom's parents. A young girl stands at the door with a bowl of warm wine, and gives a ladleful to every guest who enters. Only when this ceremony is at an end does the bride make her appearance.

The day before the wedding the bride elect has personally to invite her two *supporters*, the *churchgoers*, and the principal guests, in company with her intended. The supporters (*Bisetters*) are married women, her next of kin, who conduct her to church and afford her the necessary support and countenance—the churchgoers (*Kark-gungers*) are men who are particularly invited to go to the church without necessarily participating in the subsequent festivities. They present themselves in the morning at the house of the bridegroom and accompany him to the residence of the bride, where the procession to the church commences. After the ceremony the happy pair adjourn to the house where the breakfast is held, followed by the fathers and the supporters. The house has meanwhile been decorated with flags and flowers by friendly hands. Then begins the rather arduous task for the bridegroom of fetching the invited guests from their own dwellings. The young people may perhaps excuse this formality, but all the elderly and married folk would consider themselves greatly slighted if the young man omitted the ceremony. When all are assembled, the feasting begins—in which, as usual, the wedding cake holds a prominent part. Towards the end of the "breakfast" the woman who has made the cake comes into the room with a piece of burning rag, affecting to complain bitterly that she has burnt her—well—*chemise.* A subscription is at once made, and the money is put into a dish of salt. The feast over, every one goes for a walk, arm-in-arm, and bad indeed must be the weather that prevents the promenade over the island and through the streets customary upon such occasions. Other amusements follow, until about midnight all adjourn to the dancing-place, where a particular dance in honour of the bride takes place, after which the happy pair are escorted to their own house.

I was tempted one night by curiosity to see a Heligoland dance, and went in for half an hour to the "Sonnen Untergang," a sort of public-house, where it was being held. Some fifty people were assembled—the girls neat and respectable-looking, but none of them deserving in my eyes the appellation "Die Schöne Helgoländerinn," which is frequently bestowed on them. The men were as rough a looking lot as one could well see—some islanders and a sprinkling of Englishmen from the fishing smacks lying off the island. The music was a very bad barrel organ, called a "Nudelkasten," let into the wall, which played at a furious rate polkas, waltzes, galops, and Rhinelanders (something between a waltz and a polka). Twopence a dance is charged to each man, and the organ stops in the middle of the dance while the master of the ceremonies collects the money. So it becomes a very expensive amusement to a "dancing man," and the landlord must reap enormous profits, as his only outlay is a few oil lamps; and the men who do not dance, drink at his bar, while every one who enters pays an admission fee of twopence—strangers, fourpence. Ladies are not called upon to pay; but though this piece of gallantry is shown them, they have to make up for it by doing all the real hard work of the island. The men are a very lazy set, and high pay is no incentive to them to work. They are good at sea; but on land! For instance, when I arrived I was highly amused to see my trunk—which, if somewhat large, is not at all heavy—carried on poles and ropes by *four* brawny Heligolanders. It took ten men to carry up my luggage, which was by no means unreasonable or excessive. The islanders are for the most part a peaceful race—there is very little brawling amongst them, and murder is an unknown crime.

When I was a child I remember reading of some heathen savages who prayed for wrecks. But "burning suns must shine and many waters roll," I thought, between that and our "Christian land." However, this dreadful thing happened no farther distant than Heligoland, where prayers were regularly offered in church for shipwrecks. For the natives lived by such flotsam and jetsam as the waves cast up, and to them it was no more sin to pray for wrecks, than it is to us to beseech as we do for our daily bread. Happily all this is changed now—when I attended divine service the clergyman prayed impressively for those abroad on the deep waters, and there are tales of gallant rescues of drowning mariners by the Heligolanders and our British coastguard. Everything on the island has vastly improved and continues to improve under the judicious and liberal rule of Colonel Maxse. He has done away with the old administration of justice, which was rank corruption and favouritism, and taken the law into his own hands. The captain of the coastguard settles all minor differences—the Governor, the more important ones; and there is always power of appeal from the lower court to the higher.

It is a pity that the old costumes are giving way here, as in most places, to the ruthless hand of ugly modern fashion; still you may yet see the scarlet petticoat with its yellow border, the kerchief pinned across the breast, and the curious sun bonnet and veil of black silk edged with lace; the men nearly all wear blouses instead of the corduroys, blue shirt, and souwesters of former days. During the season, the islanders make considerable profit out of visitors—in the winter, when the island is storm-locked and boats cannot come near, they live on very little, principally on fish purchased from English smacks and dried.

Now a word about the life of the visitors. The great event of the day is the bathing, and as this takes place from the Düne, a sandbank in the sea, a mile away, those who have not chartered their own boats wait their turn to be pulled across by the omnibus boats. A very pretty sight it was from my window on a fine morning to watch the boats, some fifteen or twenty, each with four rowers and a brown sail, scudding across the blue rippling waters. On the shore a closely packed crowd stand patiently in the hot sun waiting for their turn, and consoled for the ills of the present by a delicious hope of the future, when they shall be swimming and diving in the cool, fresh, strong water. For the sea in this part has peculiar properties—it is more like strong spirit than water, and for the unwary who remain in too long is really dangerous. The bath over, people walk about, or sit on the sand with their books—the ladies of course with hair unbound—then they recross, put on fresh attire, read the papers, and at three the dinner commences and lasts two hours. If you happen to pass the Conversazions House at this hour you will see through the open windows some three or four hundred persons dining together, and your ears will be assailed by a perfect Babel of voices. There are several other *tables d'hôte* on the Oberland and Unterland, and no vacant seats at any of the tables. The afternoon is occupied by sipping coffee and listening to the band, or watching the arrival of the Hamburg or Bremen steamers—if it is not Tuesday or Friday, when no boat comes in. After two or three rough days, when the steamers have not been able to come, there is a very keen anxiety, for provisions fall short, and people do not quite like the thought of being cut off from the outer world, and getting no letters or papers. At seven the theatre, built and supported by the Governor, commences—a fairly good company from Berlin perform five nights a week; and besides that amusement, there is the Conversazions House, where there is dancing or a concert almost every night. So it will be seen that life on a little island in the middle of the sea can be made as cheery as in a big city. The Governor entertains with much good taste and hospitality—not a few members of royalty and nobility are his guests—and with picnics, yachting, impromptu dances, private theatricals, and pleasant dinner and supper parties, time wears swiftly away, and leaves only a grateful and cheery memory of the days spent on the bright little island of Heligoland.

PLAYERS OF OUR DAY.

XIX.—MISS BATEMAN.

JUST at the time when this lady seemed likely to drop out of our consideration, except as an actress of one character, she has taken the town by storm, almost as successfully as she did in the part of Leah. Despite our reminiscences of this remarkable performance we were beginning to take Miss Bateman at her own estimate. Already in these papers we had referred to one important test by which even the most superficial observer can gauge the capacity of an actor or actress, namely, by asking the simple question, "Is his or her name associated with a single character or with many?" When we think of Mrs. Siddons a number of striking characters rise up before us—Queen Catharine, Constance, Jane Shore, Isabella. The same with Rachel; and, indeed, with all our greatest players. It is true that in these days such opportunities for acting do not offer as presented themselves to the Queens of the stage in the days that are gone. Expensive accessories, the ruinous cost of advertising, and the absolute necessity of making one piece run for hundreds of nights, do not encourage versatility; and the tendency of management as we have known it for some time, both here and in America, is to make one-part actors and actresses. We may instance Jefferson's Rip Van Winkle, Miss Bateman's Leah, Sothern's Lord Dundreary. Fortunately, however, for her reputation, and happily for art, Miss Bateman has recently stepped out into Ristori's greatest part, and with such undoubted power as entitles her Medea to be ranked with that of the great Italian.

But we propose first to deal with Miss Bateman's earlier history. We have only until recently seen her in two or three great parts, and her name is associated in the public mind only with these representations. Most people consider Mary Warner to be Miss Bateman's second best character. The acting had high merits undoubtedly for its realism, which is most sought after in these days; but to our thinking she rather lowered than raised or ennobled a picture of squalid misery and suffering. There was little or none of that refining and spiritualising which in all such scenes should take us out of the region of miserable garrets, tattered rags, and broken-down furniture, and show us the noble soul in its dignity that pierces through all. Miss Bateman's aim was the direct contrary—to level her own natural feeling to the scenic squalor about her, and in as realistic a way as possible present the picture of a workwoman of the lower class reduced to straits and privations, and such as she might be seen by some casual visitor who had come to relieve her wants. This effect, the reader need not be reminded, is outside the legitimate circle of the drama, and belongs to the realism that includes cabs, houses on fire, &c., though it belongs to a popular style of modern playing. One of the aims at least of fine acting is to bring before us the nobler and more heroic side of our nature, and the aim of presenting it in a theatre is to furnish such a spectacle to those who may not have an opportunity of seeing it in real life, or may be under a false impression as to such matters. As Mr. Gladstone reminded an audience recently, the search for and illustrating of *beauty* is the true aim of all art; and every actor and actress should keep well before their mind that the most faithful imitation of nature is utterly stupid and valueless save as an exhibition of mere mechanical power.

It is, however, very different in the case of Leah; and it may be fairly said that any one who had seen Miss Bateman in the part would never forget his impressions. The play itself is written on true principles—the same that guided the great masters, viz., the choice of some grand popular emotion or passion, and its legitimate results. This is speaking in a tongue intelligible to all ages and nations. The play is broad, simple, powerful, and rationally characteristic; and it may be said to consist of a series of emotions, not of a mere narrative. Such is that which lives and makes the deepest impression; and with such a piece the figure of Miss Bateman will always be associated. Nothing more picturesque can be conceived, and there is in it an air of truth and breadth which is captivating. One of the most dramatic, because the simplest, situations on the stage is the conclusion of the first act, where the hunted Jewess is seen rushing in, pursued by the crowd, and the village priest interposes to protect her. The whole story is here told in the most effective way; and, in fact, in the only effective way, for a quarter of an hour's description of persecution, given in the most lugubrious manner, would not convey the idea dramatically. The tender situations, especially the one at the close of the scene where she relents, is of the highest order. Miss Bateman lavishes quite a wealth of elaborate art on this character. It is finished like a Meissonier painting—gesture, above all, attitude. She has also a strange, dreamy glance, that seems to look beyond the audience, and which imparts a wonderful depth of poetry and sentiment to the whole. The curse which she hurls at her weak lover will always be a dramatic memory. Old men and women will tell the next generation of it with undimmed admiration; while that moaning, wailing sob of recognition and repentance, which is the leading feature of the last act, will dwell in the hearts of all play-goers who have had the privilege of sitting through Miss Bateman's dramatic story of the passionate, loving, tender, persecuted Jewess.

It must have been the peculiar passion and tenderness of Miss Bateman's Leah which marked her down in the mind of Mr. Wills for a humanised version of Medea. The wonder is that this actress had not already been furnished with a series of strong classical parts. Mr. Tom Taylor would have shown far greater insight into character and capacity if he had given his part of Joan to Miss Bateman. She is the only lady upon the stage at the present time who could realise the wild, dreamy, fanatical valour and single minded purpose of the Maid of Orleans. Whose fault is it that Miss Bateman is known only as Leah? We have been inclined to lay the charge at her own door. Medea answers a half-committed injustice. It may be said that the tenour and passion of "Wills's Medea" is more Gothic than classic; but the purely classic is unsuited to our age and manners. It needs that very essence of humanity which Mr. Wills has put into his version of the story, and which Miss Bateman interprets with a force of pathos which comes within the highest order of the truest art. Her entrance is in itself a splendid situation, and she is equal to it. The meeting at Corinth between Medea and Jason brings out a peculiar subtle power which reflects back from actress to audience full confidence in her capacity to interpret passion. Indeed, from the opening scene you cannot help feeling that Miss Bateman holds her strength in reserve; and when it does burst forth there is no strain, no effort; the passion is natural, it has smouldered all through; that it lights up and becomes a blaze is in the nature of things. There is no tearing of passion, no screeching, no wild action of the arms, no ugly contortion of the features. Her rage is a real terrific outburst, the letting loose of pent up passion, not the passion of a drab, but the rage of a strong-willed, wildly-loving, guilty queen, who has sacrificed kith and kin, conscience, virtue, home—everything, to a barbaric admiration for a great warrior. Since the curse in "Leah" first heightened the pulses of Adelphi audiences, nothing more terribly impressive has been seen than the incantation scene at the Lyceum, in which the face of the actress, under the lurid light of a fine stage effect, entirely changes. It is another face, as if the soul of the woman possessed of a fearful spell looked out from its windows, the eyes, and showed the hideous character of the house within. Here is facial acting indeed. Mr. Planché in his long looked for book of recollections tells us how Lablache used to give a most extraordinary representation of a thunderstorm simply by facial expression:—"The gloom that gradually overspread his countenance appeared to deepen into actual darkness, and the terrific frown indicated the angry lowering of the tempest. The lightning commenced by winks of the eyes, and twitchings of the muscles of the face, succeeded by rapid sidelong movements of the mouth which wonderfully recalled to you the forked flashes that seem to rend the sky, the notion of thunder being conveyed by the shaking of his head. By degrees the lightning became less vivid, the frown relaxed, the gloom departed, and a broad smile illuminating his expansive face assured us that the sun had broken through the clouds and the storm was over. He told me the idea occurred to him in the Champs Élysées, where one day, in company with Signor de Begnis, he witnessed a distant thunderstorm above the Arc de Triomphe." Any one but a true artist would simply make a mountebank of himself in such a performance as this, and it is difficult to imagine Lablache being really impressive in it. The idea has only occurred to us in illustration of that extraordinary change which takes place in Miss Bateman's features during her imprecation over the charmed veil, which is the instrument of vengeance against her rival. There is no twitching, no nervous spasm of the features, no tricky motion of eyes or mouth; but the hot, hissing, murderous, witch-like words have their counterpart in the face, which receives and gives back, like a landscape, the lowering clouds and the wild watery flashes of the sun. What a contrast is this to the gentle motherly sympathy of the woman in the third act where she appeals for her children! Mr. Wills has shown considerable ability and judgment in his adaptation of the story to suit the very special power of Miss Bateman in portraying emotion. From the point where the mother tries to win back the love of her children, to that last tiger-like attempt to carry them off, ending with their death; and the grand figure of the murderess, and her pealing monotone reply to Jason—"Who slew them?" "Thou!" (upon which the curtain goes down)—Miss Bateman gives us a sort of dramatic storm, beginning with sunlight looking down upon flowers through a tearful sky, and ending with a blinding hurricane that has its finale in a blasting, crushing, scorching thunderbolt.

Under Mr. Bateman's management the Lyceum has earned a deservedly high reputation for the manner in which pieces are mounted. "Fanchette" was full of exquisite scenic pictures; "The Bells" was put on the stage with studious attention to details of time and place; "Leah" had never been so excellently mounted; and the accessories and dresses in "Medea" are perfect. It says everything for an actress that in the presence of a triumph of scenic art she is superior to accessories, that she towers above them, that she stands out alone, that she keeps your eyes and your mind from wandering to classic temple or purple hills. Miss Bateman fills the Lyceum stage with a presence that overshadows all surroundings.

In conclusion, it may be fairly said that "Medea in Corinth" gives a fresh guarantee of Lyceum prosperity, and establishes the reputation of Miss Bateman as a classic actress of the highest rank.

OLD LOVES AND OLD LETTERS.

A REMARKABLE FAMILY HISTORY.

BY A LADY OF QUALITY.

IN the year 1816, when this grey-bearded century was young, a lady and gentleman met in London at the Pulteney Hotel, a house then in favour with the fashionable world. The meeting was one of those events that we call accidents for want of a better name, but which none the less often leave a mark on the sands of our lives that no after tides can wash away.

The lady was young, captivating, closely connected with several members of the aristocracy, and destined to be the mother of the present Duchess of Buckingham and Sir Robert Harvey of Langley Park, Bucks, by her marriage with the eldest son of the late Sir Robert Harvey of Langley and Black Park, whose estates fell to his son by will, although for obvious reasons the baronetcy passed to Sir Robert's nephew, Mr. Bateson.* The gentleman, on the other hand, was the son of a merchant to whom fortune had been adverse, and at the time of his introduction to Miss Collins he was reading for the bar, through which, with the buoyancy of youth, he hoped to redeem his fallen fortunes.

The introduction took place through a mutual friend—a Miss C——tte R——t (a near relative of the late Lady Peel), a lady at that time intimate with Mr. Rotch. Some say this lady, who was many years older than Mr. Rotch, brought about the acquaintance with a view to the aggrandisement of her friend by a marriage with Miss Collins, whose money and connections would have made her a rare prize for a poor embryo barrister. Whether this was so or not remains in obscurity. All we hear of her through the correspondence which gives the main links of this unhappy story casts no light upon it. That she and Mr. Rotch ultimately quarrelled and even ceased to speak Rotch himself tells in a letter written long after his introduction to Miss Collins; and that, despite her gracious office, he held her in very slight regard before that final breach is equally clear from a letter he wrote to the writer's grandmother in the year 1817, wherein he entreats her to warn Miss Collins against trusting Miss R—— t, in these words:—" C——e R——t[*] is now at Cheltenham. She had not seen my beloved when she wrote to me, but she tells me C——tte has been told everything by Mr. S——. I am sorry for it, for I know C——tte to be *all treachery.* She has introduced that little spy Maria[†] into S——'s family, and to tell you the truth, I much fear the consequences, unless you will caution our little pet on this score. Pray do, my dear Mrs. Reilly, the first time you write to Highnam, both on your own account as well as ours."

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* The present Sir Robert Harvey was created a baronet by Letters Patent in 1868.

The " Mr. S—— " (Miss Collins's stepfather) mentioned in the letter I have quoted was my granduncle Mr. Sheil, one of the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber to the Prince Regent and brother of the Mrs. Reilly to whom Mr. Rotch's letter was addressed.

This meeting by "chance" resulted in a love affair, secret in its opening, calamitous and disappointing in its close. Any one with common prescience might have foreseen the end, but when have lovers prescience or worldly wisdom? and when they have, it takes the silvery down off Cupid's wings.

Between these two whose history I essay to write love was madness; but nevertheless they ventured to indulge in it and to keep it warm by whispers and stolen words and stolen looks, by notes slipped into bouquets, and such chances as daring lovers delight to grasp. At the time the acquaintance commenced Miss Collins was on a visit with her aunt and uncle, Sir Thomas and Lady de Trafford, in whose rooms at the Pulteney she first met her lover. To these kind but obtuse relatives the young gentleman made himself so very agreeable, so cunningly pleasant indeed, that he was admitted as a frequent visitor without being suspected of any deeper object in his calls than to make himself gracious in the eyes of an elderly lady and gentleman. But there were pains and penalties following his successful *entrée*—penalties such as having to talk more to Sir Thomas than to his young niece; pains such as seeing her surrounded by other men more eligible than himself, with whom the young lady made no scruple to amuse herself, even under the eyes of her lover.

She was a very darling when they were alone—a mirror of love and constancy in the brief moments they snatched from under her aunt's surveillance; but when other admirers were by—and being a girl of more than ordinary attractions those admirers were not a few—she was prone to indulge in flirtations which tried the temper of her lover. Jealousy found vent in remonstrance, to which the lady replied by fresh vows of constancy; by declarations that he and he alone had her heart, while with others she only amused her idle hours; and she wound up the interview by entreating him not to judge her by present appearances. To this little misunderstanding the following lines allude:—

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[*] Miss C——tte R——t's eldest sister. [†] A servant she had recommended.

No, Jemima, I will NOT *judge of you by present appearances.*

Too well I know how oft the heart
Will slumber in repose,
While we in gayest scenes take part,
Of which it nothing knows.

Too well I know how sorrow's breath,
Fast swelling to a sigh,
Is chased away in idle words,
To greet some flatt'rer nigh.

Too well I know how oft the smile
Of courtesy is found
To check the tear-drop's swelling course,
That else had sought the ground.

No; I will judge by all I know
Of what thou wast before;
I'll judge by all that won my heart—
What should I judge by more?

15, South Molton Street,
Grosvenor Square.

June 26th, 1816.

These small quarrels, this poetry and love-making under the rose, had just that dash and novelty about it which gave zest to the enjoyment. To this girl, hitherto bred in the staidness of home, there was a piquant romance in receiving her lover's secret letters—a delirious danger of detection in hearkening to his stolen whispers—a risk, often run perhaps for the relish of the thing, and because the flavour was strangely sweet.

Into the decorous dulness of Miss Collins's circle this young barrister carried the light and the life of his own world. He had at least the superficial gifts which bring social triumphs. He was fresher and swifter of thought and word than the wearied or inane men who surrounded her. He had that dangerous vigour of temperament to which natures slower and softer than his own were likely to succumb. In his early letters we can trace the fire of the man's nature, and one which I transcribe below, and which was written to Miss Collins at the Pulteney in the early days of their engagement, although a trifle exaggerated in style, is perhaps as passionate as any of those later letters in my possession which comprise the history of this ill-starred love story.

"*Monday Morning,* 2 *o'clock.*

"You will perceive by the date of this, my beloved Jemima, that I have but just left you; and, with *self* wounded feelings, I address you to apologise for having too thoughtlessly urged you a *second time* to do that which your refined nature recoiled from when first suggested.

"Do not think that my asking you to write to me *now* was consequent on your having addressed me before. Oh, no!—but I considered that, since our last interview, we stood in a different light towards one another than we had ever done before, and that *now* our plighted love might sanction that which *before* required the excuse you *gave* to justify it. Be this as it may, I respect that delicacy, which refused my request this morning, too highly to wish that my arguments may woo you to a different sense of feeling on that point, so I will plead guilty at once, and with more willingless perhaps from being certain of your forgiveness."

Then the letter goes on to bemoan with loverly intensity the swiftness of those stolen moments, which were no doubt snatched in fear and trembling, a complaint he repeats afterwards in a letter written in anticipation of an hour's interview with his "beloved," in which he tells us that such an opportunity never but once occurred through the whole course of their acquaintance, although a few weeks later we come on daring trysts carried on through the fevered heat of a London season, when their love was at its warm meridian, and yet perilously near its close.

But at the time the letter I am quoting from was penned no chance of those rash and secret meetings was possible, a misfortune Mr. Rotch goes on complainingly to deplore.

"It is a cruel thing, Jemima, that I can only enjoy your society in such fast fleeting moments as those I have just spent with you, and the uncertainty of which must wound your honest nature I am sure, as it does my own; but let us hope the time may come when I may associate with you among friends who do not imagine that all goodness lies in *worldly* greatness, or that it is a sin to love for virtue's sake alone.

"If in the love I bear you, Jemima, you would strive to trace one beam that is not reflected from your own inherent virtues, you strive in vain. No, my love, it is what I know of *them* that wins my heart, nor can the knowledge of any rank in life to which you may claim alliance ever add one ray to my affections.——"

* * * * * * *

"When I reflect, my beloved girl, on the poor penniless boon I have offered you in the tender of my heart, I can but blush at my own temerity; and when I think on the kind reception you gave to it I am left in wonder at your unbounded confidence. It is that confidence, Jemima, which it shall ever be my dearest care to preserve unshaken; and in so doing, I shall hope to make a harbour of peace for my future happiness to ride in, which no intruding storm shall ruffle, and the calm surface of which the chill breath of discontent shall never venture to disturb.

"Though a penniless youth, I am yet fortune's child—yes, my love, I am possessed of a better fortune than many of the richest can boast—a host of *tried friends!* With these for my support, and my own talents (such as they may be) for the foundation of hopes, I have commenced the study of the law—but alas! five long years, or nearly that time, must elapse before my abilities, if I should prove to possess any, can entitle me (in the eyes of your friends I mean) to claim that heart which your generosity has already bestowed upon me."

And here, with a lover's wiliness, peeps out the half concealed wish for an elopement or a private marriage, which later on was made with a bold insistance that almost carried success.

"And are we to be separated all that time?" he asks. "Must we for so long sigh over the remembrance only of the few swift-winged hours of joy which are past, and pine in *secret* five years for their return? 'Tis a cruel thought, and yet the task were easier far for *me* than *you;* for I have known what it was to have all my hopes destroyed, and to live on in sad despair. Then was the selfish thought of my own welfare hateful to me, but now that I may live on hope again I can almost be happy; and the thought that I am not labouring *only for myself*, but for one far dearer to my heart, will lighten every task, and so smooth the ragged path of duty that I shall no longer perceive it to be a thorny way. But for you, Jemima, the case is different. You will have no reflections of this nature to cheer your solitary hours; yet still if the knowledge that you live in all my waking and mingle in all my sleeping hours can recompense so long a maidenhood (or where the heart is pledged, I would almost call it *widowhood*) still you may be happy; and if to know that the heart you have won was never won before, adds value to the victory, why still you may the more enjoy your conquest. No, Jemima, I never loved before; nor, while you live for me, will I exist but for you. Every thought of my future life shall circle you in its embrace. Every deed shall claim you for its object; and if I am worthy of your love this hour, time shall render me doubly so in proportion to its lapse — under the care of that divine Providence who is our mutual parent, and of that worthiness which alone must entitle us to His future love and blessing, and in Him by whom we trust to perfect that union which your guardians would seem to deny.

"Adieu ! my *best beloved*——— Remember the ring I gave you was in pledge of that heart, your acceptance of which has sealed my happiness in this world; and, though years should roll away before we meet again, let the look which you cast upon it bring to your recollection that vow which followed, and which no time nor circumstances can ever alter.

"That kind heaven may bless you as you deserve, is and will ever be the constant prayer of yours, henceforth, for ever,

"B. ROTCH."

The ring to which this letter alludes was a gift from the gentleman to the lady after their most rash engagement, and we find it cropping up more than once during the course of their unhappy courtship. It was a small Mocha ring, whose narrow band of gold was fractured before it was long in the possession of Miss Collins, a prescient of the pledged and broken troth of which it was a souvenir.

Over that ring promises were asked and given, and vows of fealty reiterated, which found no echo in Churcham Church, when less than three years later the lady swore those other vows to a husband of her mother's choosing.

It was very easy to vow and swear troth in those halcyon days at the Pulteney, all stolen though the chances were, but the time was coming when these delights were to be, if not cut short altogether, at least interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Sheil to take his daughter back to Gloucestershire. What the lovers said at parting, or whether they managed to have a farewell interview at all, is not recorded; but certain it is that Miss Collins adroitly induced her stepfather to invite her lover to join their Christmas party at Highnam Court, a country place within two miles of Gloucester, where Mr. and Mrs. Sheil then resided.

This suggested invitation, however, appears to have roused a momentary suspicion in my granduncle as to how matters really stood, for he met Miss Collins's request with the remark, "I hope you are not going to get up a flirtation with this young man, Jemima." To which she replied with scorn so apparently real as to allay all doubt, "If he had the wealth of the Indies, I would not marry a merchant's son."

That answer was but another step on the road of wrong, which this infatuated girl afterwards deeply repented of and bitterly expiated by a loveless marriage and an early death, for which in a moment of rash and miserable excitement she prayed on her knees.

Between the time of Miss Collins leaving London and Christmas, when Rotch was to arrive at Highnam, nothing worth narrating occurred, save that the lady fractured her lover's gift ring, which, in deep distress at the accident and its dark omen, she sent to Mr. Rotch to have repaired, who returned it along with the following lines:—

Breathe not one sorrowing sigh, sweet maid,
  Tho' '*twas* thy lover's first pledged token,
Nor let the boon aside be laid,
  Altho' the glittering band be broken.

'Tis but an emblem of the chain
  That thinks to bind our fates for ever;
But oh,—the hostile hope, how vain!—
  'Tis made of links that soon must sever.

Then guard the ring, and if a sigh
  Should steal upon thy hours of sorrow,
Oh, think 'tis but the breath of joy
  That bids thee wait a happier morrow.

Mr. Rotch reached Highnam at Christmas, where rather a large party were assembled, amongst whom was my grandmother, Mrs. Reilly. All that Christmas party are dead and gone now—the host and hostess, the lover and his mistress, the guests who gathered round the hospitable board, have vanished into the shadow and the silence which must fall upon us all; new faces are in the drawing-room and library of Highnam Court; other feet tread the lawn and gardens where, in that Christmas time of 1816, the lovers renewed the vows they had sworn in London, and whispered anew all they had said in those swiftly fleeting moments so pathetically regretted in Mr. Rotch's letter.

Still while spending every moment which could be spent with Miss Collins without exciting suspicion, Rotch contrived to make himself as agreeable to Miss Collins's relatives in the country as he had made himself agreeable to them in London. He was not exactly of the same standing as they were, but what then? There are plenty of social outsiders in society who share the glitter of its jewels without being suffered to wear them: men who are clever at billiards or conversation, who sing or play chess or relate anecdotes better than other people; men who are invited from town to enliven country houses, and are taken up and dropped down again at the whim of their inviters.

The hero of my true romance was one of these. His friends held a different place to the lady's, a circumstance which somewhat ruffled her pride a year or two later, when the gilding was beginning to wear off her toy.

But just then everything was *couleur de rose.* Mr. Rotch was agreeable to the step-papa (a most pleasant and witty social companion himself), agreeable to the lady mother, and, above all, still daringly and dangerously agreeable to the young lady herself. He was a man of many talents. He had the gift of talking well, he sketched, he took likenesses, he wrote verses in albums or on stray sheets of paper, he played delightfully on a "crystal flute," he adored the lady of his choice, and he told her so behind the back of host and hostess and fellow guests whensoever or wheresoever opportunity served; while above board he paid mock attentions to a young lady visitor, which young lady, however, was quite as sharp as this smart young barrister himself; in consequence of which she was promoted from a blind to a *confidante*—a rather dangerous position when the *dénouement* came which must come some time.

At last it did come. A whisper, a look, or some other of those slight passages by which keen eyes can track out lovers' secrets, betrayed the state of affairs to the young lady's grandfather, then a Christmas guest in the house. The discovery was followed by a stormy scene, which took place late at night, between Miss Collins's stepfather and her lover. Their separation was to be final; they were forbidden to meet again—forbidden to correspond. The hospitable gates which had opened so wide for him on his entrance were to be barred against him for all time to come; the pleasant visit, with all its entrancing love trysts, the moments snatched for a word in the morning before late sleepers were astir, the wintry walks in grounds or garden, with a discreet *confidante* who knew when to lag behind—these and a thousand other dangerous delights were to be laid aside for ever, and the whilom welcome guest was dismissed in anger and disgrace.

In the chill of a winter's morning he looked back his last glance at the "old red brick house," which he never was

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destined to enter again save once, and that once was in stealth and secret.

All the day after his departure Miss Collins sat in her own room a contumacious rebel, weeping over and bemoaning her vanished love, against whom hard things were uttered and hard decrees made, while aside in a private corner of her wardrobe, as sad souvenirs of his last hours at Highnam, lay the pink silk dress she had worn at dinner, never again to be desecrated by use, and beside the dress a sprig of myrtle which she had worn in her hair.

From London, despite my granduncle's desire to the contrary, Rotch wrote to Miss Collins, and wrote more than once before his daring disobedience was discovered; but here again fortune was against the lovers. Their correspondence was suspected, and the suspicion brought on an angry interview between Miss Collins and her parents, in which she was peremptorily ordered to deliver over his letters to the powers that were. The young lady, driven to bay, first resisted, then temporised, and finally wrote to Rotch for advice. That appeal, written, as her lover describes it, under the "sudden ebullition of cruel despair," he dare not answer direct to herself. Any letter coming from Rotch, or even addressed to her in a strange hand, would be suspected and withheld, the Highnam post-bag being subjected to the scrutinising eyes of Mr. Sheil; but as Love laughs at locksmiths, so did he on this occasion laugh at and elude the watchfulness of the lady's relatives. Amongst the Christmas guests at Highnam was my grandmother, Mrs. Reilly, Mr. Sheil's sister, of whom mention has been made before. This lady, whose subsequent prominence in our sad romance will bring her often before the reader, was one of those kind-hearted women who have always a warm sympathy with unfortunate lovers. Of the early part of their untoward courtship she knew nothing, but in its later stages she was always the firm friend and wise adviser of Miss Collins, and to her calm counsels it was owing that no rash elopement or private marriage was resorted to after Rotch's expulsion from Highnam to cut the Gordian knot of opposition.

To Mrs. Reilly Miss Collins was much attached, and out of her affection for her almost always endearingly called her "aunt," or her "best beloved aunt," although she was aunt by blood only to her baby brother * and sister, and under that title we find her frequently addressed even by Mr. Rotch, on the loverly assumption that she who was aunt to his "beloved" must stand in the same relationship to him.

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* Now Mr. Sheil, of Bear Forest, near Mallow, co. Cork.

To this lady Mr. Rotch wrote in his distress and perplexity on receiving Miss Collins's despairing note. The letter, which bears no date, was forwarded to Mrs. Reilly to Dublin, whither she had just gone, and where soon after Mr. Rotch paid her a visit.

"My dear Mrs. Reilly,—With feelings so much agitated that I can with difficulty hold my pen, I am seated to pen the following lines for you to transmit to my poor distracted little Jemima. In a moment of agony she has turned to me for counsel, and may heaven inspire me to yield her such advice as will *ensure her happiness!* This is, my dear Mrs. Reilly, the sole end to which all my actions tend. Yes; I can have no thought—no wish—that is not intimately connected with it.

"The heart-chilling misery that assailed my frozen senses on the *first* perusal of my sweet Jemima's hurried note can only be conceived by her dear self, who has, I fear, so often felt the same since the wretched hour that tore me from her presence; but on a second reading, when my ideas were more collected and my mind more composed, I was convinced it was the sudden ebullition of cruel despair, and that the propositions it contained were not for the happiness of my beloved. *Oh no; far, very far, from it!*

"That she should *reject duplicity* is most natural to so good, so chaste, so virtuous a mind as hers, and I revere and honour her feelings on this point. Here, then, is *the path of candour* to pursue. *Give up* all such notes of mine as she has received since I left Highnam, but she need not return such as Sheil has taxed her with receiving, and which she has not denied—the note I gave her in London she may keep." [That already transcribed, which she received at the Pulteney Hotel.] "She may keep *the ring—the dear ring!* Oh, yes; if she knew how much of happiness to my heart is contained in its magic circle she would value it even more than anything else she has of mine. Yes, *the ring* she may keep, for it was given her before I went to Highnam. My likeness she must *give up*, and it shall one day be restored to her." [This likeness never was restored, and months after her marriage to Mr. Harvey it is alluded to in a note of Rotch's as having been torn up in a fit of anger; but how little did he foresee all this then!] "Clandestine communications of every kind must be under the control of necessity and not of pleasure or inclination. All this *must be given up;* but oh! she cruelly mistakes her own happiness if she thinks it depends on giving up her dearest friend—*her future protector*. No, no; this would still be *duplicity*. *She cannot give* ME *up*. It is impossible, and to say so would be duplicity.

"She is unhappy under the impression that she is under *a clandestine engagement to me.* From this engagement I have released her. Let her mother be told of this amiable step that her daughter has taken, but never let Miss Collins for one instant *deceive her mother afresh* by telling her *she has given me up!* This I say again is not in the nature of possibilities—*she cannot give me up*, and she must not profess to do so. Jemima must continue to persist in the declaration she has so often made to her mother that she loves me still, while she continues to temper this declaration with a reassurance to her mother that she will not unite herself to me without her mother's consent. Tell the sainted spirit of this dutiful child that she can owe no duty to her mother's undutiful demands paramount to that she owes to *the declared man of her heart.* I need not tell her where to refer for this sacred law. Not to unite herself with me without her mother's consent is all that duty can require of any child; but to ask a child to give her hand to one man *while her heart is avowedly* another's is a sin against both God and man that no tie of blood can authorise, much less sanction. Jemima *must* draw the line where her duty to her parent ends and that to herself and her husband elect begins. She will find on a careful examination that her duty to God is alike interwoven with each."

This letter was duly forwarded to Highnam, strengthened by many lines of counsel from my grandmother advising patience and submission, to which Miss Collins yielded so far as to deliver over the demanded correspondence, retaining only such letters as she had received when staying with Lady de Trafford and that "dear ring" which she never parted with until she sent it to my grandmother a little before her marriage with Mr. Harvey.

After the letters were delivered up, and to all outward appearance the lovers were finally parted, a correspondence broke out afresh. Amongst the servants in Mr. Sheil's household was one Mrs. Protheroe, who held the post of housekeeper. This woman, whom, notwithstanding the staunch help she gave the lovers, Mr. Rotch, as it seems to me rather ungratefully, called "the full moon-faced Abigail," had been in Mrs. Sheil's service before her second marriage, and, like every one who came in contact with Miss Collins, bore her strong affection. By a preconcerted arrangement, Rotch wrote letters to Gloucester, addressed to a supposed "Mrs. Nillocs," which the reader will see at a glance is Collins spelt backwards. These letters, directed to the "Post Office, Gloucester, to be kept till called for," Mrs. Protheroe carried to Highnam and put into the hands of her young mistress. It was very wrong, yet still where there is much to blame there is also much to excuse. Miss Collins was very young, and—all against her friends' wishes though it was—she was very deeply in love, and completely under the thrall of her eager and passionate suitor, who himself declares long after, "that everything she ever did she did at his desire," that of every rash thing done he was in effect the doer. To this Nillocs correspondence we find Mr. Rotch alluding in a letter to Mrs. Reilly, addressed from Bath in March, 1817.

Prior to the writing of that letter Rotch had been in Ireland on the pretext of business, but in reality with that restless going to and fro which seems to have taken hold of him from the beginning of his unlucky wooing to its close. In Dublin he had seen Mrs. Reilly (indeed, he had chiefly gone to Ireland for the purpose of seeing her), with whom he had a long conversation touching Miss Collins and the Nillocs letters, which Mrs. Reilly strongly deprecated. On his return from Ireland he went to Bath, taking the way of Gloucester, and riding past the house which held his lady true, without daring to enter its gates.

"*Bath, March* 12, 1817.

"MY DEAR MRS. REILLY,—Here I am at length arrived at my destination. I took the earliest opportunity of calling on Jane[*] and delivering your package, and yesterday I took my friends the Wilkinsons to call on her. She is looking very well, and, as I shall send this in a frank, I desired her to have a letter ready for me to enclose to-day.

"And now to the subject of your letter. I perfectly agree with you that the sooner the Nillocs communications are dropped now the better. I trust in heaven we are as strongly impressed with the immutability of our attachment as can be necessary for our future happiness; and, this being the case, I am sure it will be for the improvement of our little friend's health if the constant agitation which the uncertainty of such a correspondence must occasion be removed. I called on the R——ts at Cheltenham, and from Charlotte[†] I learned that she had been in Cheltenham only three days before to consult Dr. Borregan, who, I am happy to say, pronounced the pain in her side to be merely a muscular affection, and deprecated the violent remedies she had used in the application of blisters." * * *

"Business obliged me to write to Sheil before I left home," the letter goes on, "and in speaking of Dublin I merely said, 'Since I saw you, unexpected business called me to Trim. On passing through Dublin I called on Mrs. Reilly, who expostulated with me on the folly of my attachment, and no doubt did it with the best intentions, but with how much success I do not pretend to say.'"

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[*] A daughter of Mrs. Reilly's, then a child at school in Bath.

[†] This lady is the C——tte described later as "all treachery."

From the next paragraph it is clear that Mr. Rotch had told my uncle of his intended passing through Gloucester and that he had some hope of seeing him, Gloucester being only two miles from Highnam.

"I found a note from Sheil on my arrival, which I answered, but I did not see him. The little children* were playing with their nurses on the lawn before the house, and you will guess my heart went pit-a-pat as I rode by the lodge gate. I did not see even a servant from the house while at Gloucester.

"I arrived about four o'clock and amused myself for the remainder of the evening in making up the package for Nillocs; and now, lest you should be at a loss when she writes to you, I must tell you that I addressed a second letter to you which I inserted in the cover. I should not have taken this liberty had you not offered to insert anything *(sealed if I wished)* when in Dublin. It was not any communication that I could object to your seeing, it being only a repetition of the sentiments I expressed to you on the subject of religion, and had no reference to present occurrences more than as it expressed a hope that the little difference in opinion which existed between us on this point would not affect our *future happiness*. I arrived on a Friday, and on the following morning committed the little package to the letter box, hoping that, it being Saturday, the full moon-faced Abigail would be in town for the marketing.

"And now, my dear Mrs. Reilly, let me express a hope that I shall hear from you occasionally when the Nillocs is dropped, and that you will keep me informed of the movements of my beloved. Miss C. R——t told me that Sheil still had a trip to Ireland in view about June, and that he had promised to take our little friend with him. I hope to Fate he will! It would rejoice her heart to see you again. And now adieu, and believe in the unfeigned gratitude of your very sincere friend,

"B. ROTCH, Jun."

This package, which he speaks of dropping into the Gloucester Post Office with his own hands, was probably the last of the early part of the Nillocs correspondence, which was dropped at Mrs. Reilly's wish, although it was re-adopted later in a different form, for in his next letter, written at the close of April, 1817, when he was again in Bath, he complains of having "no news of the Highnam party."

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* **Miss Collins's brother and sister.**

"*Bath, April 26th,* 1817.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I have deferred writing to you thus long in hopes of being able, when I did take up my pen, to give you some account of Jane; but as Miss Cooke only allows her young ladies to go out on the first Tuesday in the month, we have as yet been prevented the pleasure of seeing her in Burlington Street.

"She is to dine here next Tuesday; but, as my ill stars will have it, I am obliged to be off for London on Sunday (to-morrow), to keep the April term, so that I shall not have an opportunity of seeing the little girl again."

* * * * * * *

"I sent you two letters by private hands lately, which informed you of how matters now stand between Sheil and I. Since our meeting in Bath I have not heard anything of the H——m party—need I say how ill this agrees with the lover?"

Then follows the part already quoted in reference to Miss R——t.

"C——e R——t is now at Cheltenham—she had not seen my beloved when she wrote to me; but she tells me that Charlotte has been told everything by Mr. Sheil—I am sorry for it, for I know Charlotte to be *all treachery*. She has introduced that little spy Maria in Sheil's family; and, to tell you the truth, I much fear the consequences, unless you will caution our little Pet on this score. Pray do, my dear Mrs. Reilly, the first time you write to H——m, both on your own account as well as ours—"

* * * * * * *

"Adieu, my dear Mrs. Reilly; and, if I do not at all times express my gratitude for all I owe you, believe me it is never forgotten by your very sincerely attached and grateful friend,

"B. R.

"My address for the future will be at 15, South Molton Street, Grosvenor Square, London."

Between Mr. Rotch's letter of April 26th, 1817, and the September of the same year, there is a break in the correspondence, many intervening letters having been lost. In that month of September the Highnam party were projecting a visit to Bath at Christmas, probably in lieu of the summer excursion to Ireland, which was never carried out.

In a letter of Mr. Rotch's, the next of his extant, dated September 22nd, 1817, he speaks of this Bath journey, and hopes thereby to catch a glimpse of his "beloved," but the letter also alludes to another circumstance which it forces me to explain, a circumstance that had just set all Cheltenham talking a month or two before, and into which Miss Collins's name was, as I believe, in all innocence, and by no fault of her own, involved.

In the summer of 1816, when Cheltenham was full of notabilities, a grand ball was given, on the opening of the new Assembly Rooms, in honour of the late Duke of Wellington, then in the flush of his fame. At this ball, at which the Highnam party, comprising Mr. and Mrs. Sheil and my grandmother, were present, appeared a very lovely girl, a Miss ——, that season the belle of Cheltenham. During the course of the ensuing year, 1817, this young lady became engaged to a Mr. C——, a gentleman of good fortune, living in or near Cheltenham. It was one of those matches with which the friends on both sides were satisfied, and it was progressing in the smooth way such wooing does progress, when Mr. C——'s evil star led him on a week's visit to Highnam.

There he met Miss Collins, who, if less lovely than his intended wife, was much more captivating. The sequel of the visit was that Mr. C—— forgot his pledged troth so far as to fall in love with the daughter of his hostess.

Whether Miss Collins knew of his engagement, or whether she ever suspected his attachment to herself when he left Highnam, is uncertain, but certain it is that he did leave it in honourable silence; intending, as he solemnly declared subsequently, to marry the girl he had promised to make his wife. Up to the day before his wedding he adhered to his resolve, which would have been more to be commended if it had lasted a little longer; but on that day, when the pen was in his hand to sign his settlements, he flung it from him in disgust, and declared to an astonished group of hearers that he could "not marry Miss —— because he was in love with Miss Collins."

The marriage of course never took place, and Miss Collins, without, I am certain, a suspicion of her power, or an effort to exert it, left the track of her fatal fascinations on two ruined lives.

The unwelcome news of this incident reached Rotch in London through one of those mutual friends who love to set gunpowder alight, and was subsequently confirmed by others. Amongst the lost letters, which have made slight gaps here and there in the correspondence, was one to Mrs. Reilly on this subject, to which that lady replied either by throwing a doubt on the accuracy of Rotch's informant, or by trying to excuse Miss Collins. This appears evident from Mr. Rotch's next letter of Sept. 25, 1817, which is addressed from 15, South Molton Street, and commences "My very dear friend," and after regretting his inability to obey some behest of Mrs. Reilly's, takes up a jesting charge she had made against him of becoming foppish or fashionable, of which he says, "I must revert to that part of your last which styles me a man of fashion. Heaven forbid that I should ever be disgraced by that epithet! Oh! no, Mrs. Reilly; surely I am no fashionist. I declare this expression of yours will rumple my comb feathers for the next week at least. I cannot surely be classed among those '*Tripping tiptoe animalculæ of the times*,' as Stephens calls them. No, no; *my little pet* would not love me if it were so! *You* would not care for me if it were so. No, no; I have decided you only said it to torment me, and now my comb feathers are falling fast."

Then, as the feathers fall, he drops down from the loverly endearment of "my little pet," by which he has designated his lady-love a line or two above, to the cold decorum of "Miss Collins," when he begins to touch on the story of her flirtation with Mr. C——, for which, one gathers, the world has blamed her.

"Do not suppose," he says, "that what I heard of Miss Collins came from any person prejudiced except in her favour. It was from a married man who often sees her that I had the first hint, and the concurring testimony of one or two since that period excited my alarm for the truth of the assertion. I can conceive that you have not had an opportunity of judging for yourself,* and, therefore, let the matter rest; had you been able from your own observations to have given her a half-word of advice, I might have wished you, perhaps, to do so, knowing how very eagerly it would have been followed by her; but as it is so let it rest, and say no more about it. As to my writing to Miss R——t about it, all intercourse between us has long since ceased; and, moreover, I could not name it to any other living creature but yourself or Miss C——; you wrong my friendship for you if you think I could."

About this time Mr. and Mrs. Sheil were thinking of spending the coming Christmas at Bath (an idea, however, never carried out), where Mr. Rotch, it would seem, also designed going. He appears, however, a little perplexed whether Miss Collins would rejoice at even a chance glimpse of him, or whether, in the state of opposition her friends were to their meeting, a rencontre would embarrass her. To this difficulty the next paragraph of his letter points :—

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* Mrs. Reilly being still in Ireland.

"I scarcely know what to say with regard to your telling Miss Collins that I am going to Bath at Christmas ; and yet, on the whole, I think you had better tell her. If, on knowing that I shall be there, she still wishes her parents to visit Bath, the certainty of my being there will increase her pleasure in the anticipation of that visit ; and if, on the contrary, my being there would make her wish to relinquish the jaunt, she certainly ought to know it, that she may have an opportunity of making other arrangements ; or of communicating with me through you, that *I* may alter *my* arrangements for the winter. Yes, it certainly would be proper for her to know that I purpose being there, even if my presence would make no alteration in their plans, because then she would at least be prepared to meet me.

"I am delighted to find that Sheil has made an amicable arrangement with Guise*; for the time is fast slipping away which shall place me on the list of barristers on that circuit, and I must confess the removal of the present inhabitants from Highnam would greatly damp my ardour on the outset."

Then follows an allusion to one of the marvels of fifty years ago—the steam engine.

"You will, I am sure, be glad to hear," he continues, "that I am gradually getting into a *little* profitable practice, and that I yesterday took a *fifteen guinea fee.* You must know I have lately made the Law of Patents my principal study, and this, together with a general knowledge of mechanics, which I practised in my early youth [he was but twenty-four then], gives me a superiority in the drawing of specifications, which some engineers, who are concerned in a new steam engine, yesterday acknowledged by the fee I have just mentioned. I tell you this because I think it will give you pleasure to know of my success in any way, and trust to your sufficiently understanding my motive to save me from the imputation of conceit."

The letter closes with a rather amusing paragraph about stockings which my grandmother had evidently commissioned him to buy, and with which it would seem she was not satisfied.

"You seem to think that your stockings are no bargain.

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* The late Sir William Guise, from whom my uncle rented Highnam Court.

Bathersheen! as *we* say in Ireland, but I assure you I had the opinion of some learned stocking counsel, whose judgment (though they were not therefore actually *blue* stockings) may, I think, be relied on. The lace they pronounced to be *wonderfully cheap*, and the stockings very excellent ones. All I can say is if they are not well purchased you must be more explicit in your next order, for it is hardly fair to give a bachelor an order that is so much out of his line as that which you sent me, couched in such general words as yours was. To wit—'So many good cheap stockings and the rest in thread lace.'

"Adieu, my very dear friend. Present my kindest regards to Miss ——, of whom I hope most earnestly your suspicions are well founded.—Believe me, yours as ever, most gratefully and affectionately,

"B. Rotch."

A month later he writes again, still very eager to know if the Bath journey is yet determined on:—

"15, *South Molton Street, Nov. 20th*, 1817.

"My dear Mrs. Reilly,—I was about to write to you the beginning of this week, but remembering that to-day would be the birthday of my beloved Jemima, I deferred that pleasure for the sake of proving to her at some future period that I was not unmindful of the day that first breathed life into the bosom of that being to whose destinies I have now linked my own for ever. I need not say how long it is since I have heard of her. Yours is my only channel of communication. Nor need I add, I am sure, that my impatience to know *how* she is, *where* she is, and *whither she is going*, increases with your silence. I hope the Queen's going to Bath again will be an additional inducement for them to decide on their proposed journey. You promised to write to me when you should hear from Highnam, and I hope you will not forget your promise, indeed I know you will not. I am sure it will delight you to hear that I have already commenced to practise in one of the minor branches of my profession with very great success: it is the *Specifying of Patents*, or, in other words, the describing of all new inventions in those prescribed by law to secure the inventor from piracy. This branch of law, being closely connected with mechanics, is very entertaining, at the same time that it is very profitable." * * * *

"Whichever way I turn, fortune seems to smile upon me, and you may depend upon it the time will not be longer than you may fairly look forward to see that will place me on the woolsack.

"What stuff and nonsense I am filling my letter with, but the fact is I do not intend to commence business till I come to the other side of my sheet, so that if you wish to show what I write it may be independent of all this egotistical narrative."

This Bath journey, about which Mr. Rotch was so anxious, never took place. Rotch went down to Bath himself at Christmas, and watched in vain amongst the gay visitors who thronged there in Queen Charlotte's wake for the face he yearned to see. "The dear little feet," of which he tells us later on in a passionate effusion penned after a glimpse caught of her in Bond Street under stern watch and ward, were not seen treading amongst the promenaders in the then gay town, which the Court party of the day delighted to honour.

Over the splendours of Bath, and over the fevered throbbings of the lover's fears and hopes, Time has drawn his effacing hand. Thousands of eager feet have trodden the same road since then; thousands of eager hearts have snapped and parted—their story is old and faded, like the leaves on which its records are transcribed; yet in that year, 1817, now so far away in the past, their hearts beat as strong and warm as yours or mine beats now, and the tide of their loves ran as fast and high.

In the early part of 1818 Rotch was back in London, and Mrs. Reilly was at Highnam on a visit with her little girl, who had come there to spend her holidays. Near Highnam was a place called Beauchamp, the property of a naval officer, a Captain G——, which my grandmother had some idea of renting, although the arrangement was never carried through. This gentleman was an unsuccessful suitor of Miss Collins, and was seeking to let the place he had deserted upon his rejection by the lady—a rejection he resented fatally for himself by joining the late Lord Cochrane's Spanish expedition, through which rash proceeding he was obliged to quit the British service.

From Highnam Mrs. Reilly wrote to Rotch, whom her letter found in the full tide of business, being engaged in aiding some members to get a Parliamentary Bill passed, and in his answer we find him full of inflation and hurry. His letter, which is headed "House of Commons, Friday Eve," shows marks of haste in blurrs and effaced words.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—My head is so confused by Parliamentary business at this moment that I cannot answer your letter. I have been so pressed for time this week past, that I have deferred writing till the last moment, and now I am so bewildered by a word in one ear, and two words in the other, and a pull of the arm on this side, and a beckon of the finger on the other, that I can only say I will write to you this day week a Nillocs.

"I hardly dare to write this when I know my pages will meet the eye of one whose anxious look will seek in vain for something to rest her happiness and hopes upon, but I really could not write a letter such as she would wish now, and, therefore, I must not write at all."

Then, as if he fears that his brusque haste may offend Miss Collins, for whose eye, as we see, the letter is really meant, he adds beseechingly :—

"For heaven's sake do not let her suppose I can be thoughtless of her feelings in these moments, but bid her remember that all my hopes of possessing her depend on my steady attention to business now."

* * * * * * * *

"Good-bye, God bless her as I love her, and preserve your friendship for us both. "B. R."

It makes one marvel now to think what impossible amount of success he meant to attain, or by what magic he meant to attain it, to entitle him to demand the hand he coveted. Surely it was a lover's madness to think he could climb the legal ladder so fleetly as to touch some of its best prizes while his youth was in its early summer time. That her friends would give Miss Collins to him, even if he did, was but another delusion of his senses. They had high aims for her, and high ambitions, the dearest of which she thwarted by a stubborn refusal to marry where she might have married much better, both as to birth and fortune, than she ultimately did.

This last letter, which is the first of Rotch's that reached Highnam for a considerable time, was sent in the way before condemned and abandoned, being addressed to "Mrs. Nillocs, Post Office, Gloster.—To be kept till called for." The postmark bears the year 1818, but the month and day of the month are illegible. Soon after its receipt by Mrs. Reilly what was a heavy trouble to a young lady in love befell Miss Collins. She broke anew, and for the third time, the precious gift ring of her lover; and from the sentimental wish that he alone should have the fracture repaired, she sent it to town, together with a profile likeness of Mrs. Reilly, which she wished him to copy. To these two commissions Mr. Rotch's next letter refers, which, like the last, is written in much haste, accounted for by the plea of business, to which even ardent lovers must sometimes bow.

"The profile I really cannot contrive to do yet awhile, for it must be done by daylight, and really from nine o'clock in the morning till dusk my house is one scene of confusion. My brother and Dr. W——" [a Bath friend] "are both with me, and M.P.'s are popping in every minute about the said Bill, or the Cenotaph, or something or other. Next week I shut my doors against all intruders, for then I begin reading for the April Term, and in some of these secluded moments I will trace the lineaments of my kind friend for my beloved Jemima."

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"You will find my little pet's ring in the enclosed paper. Tell her its breaking was only ominous in the way I named in the few lines I wrote on the occasion. Bid her remember that she was more at ease after its first breaking than before it broke, and more composed and happy after its second than its first fracture."

'Tis but an emblem of the chain
  Which thinks to bind us slaves for ever,
But oh! the hostile hope, how vain!
  'Tis made of links that *soon must sever.*

In the paper along with Miss Collins's ring came a letter to her, obediently submitted to my grandmother for approval, through whose grace alone the lovers could communicate, for in the next paragraph of his letter Mr. Rotch allows her to return it for alteration if she sees fit:—

"*Thursday.*

"I hope you will approve of my letter," he proceeds; "if not, pray send it back and I will alter it as you please. Good-bye, my kind friend. It is with great difficulty I have been able to snatch a few moments to pen these badly-written lines, and now I must away to Westminster, having a cause to come on this morning.

"God bless you and *her* as you deserve! "B. R."

This eventful year 1818 was destined to witness the most stirring incidents of this forlorn love story. Through all the letters following the one I have last quoted there flows a more quickened longing for the end than the patient waiting characterising the earlier correspondence. Immured in Gloucestershire on the one side, and separated by long distance and the tedious travelling facilities of those days on the other, hope grew pale and patient while waiting and watching; but the time was fast moving on when over all this there came a startling change.

In the month of March, 1818, Miss Collins came to London, the first visit she had paid the capital since she met Mr. Rotch there nearly two years before. After all their long parting even a glance at each other must have been a delirious joy, and a day or two after her arrival we have a very long and not very coherent letter from her lover to Mrs. Reilly, a note from whom had told him of the projected journey.

In this letter, lover-like, he raves over her "plaintive smile" and "melancholy little figure," and greedy for more than stolen glimpses in the street—sometimes even, as he boasts, religiously abstained from—he wildly implores my grandmother to aid him in obtaining an interview. To this end he begs her to join her brother and sister-in-law in town and let him see his darling under the shadow of her wings. He almost threatens to die if the boon be denied; and the boon was denied him. Had it been granted the history of those two lives might have had a different close.

"*Tuesday Morning, March 17th.*

"My very dear Mrs. Reilly,—I have been so very nervous and ill for the last two days in consequence of parting with my brother, as I have every reason to fear, FOR EVER! that I have been wholly unable to take up my pen in any service, even to write to you, my dear friend, who are in this moment of distress my best comfort.

"That beloved fellow has been the companion of all my early days, the friend of all my matured years, and the confidant of all my dearest secrets.

"Till my separation from my family in 1816 I had never been separated from him more than two or three months at a time. The kindest of brothers, the gayest of companions, loving me far better than himself,—judge—judge, my dearest Mrs. Reilly, what I must suffer for his loss.

"But I must not indulge in this strain, for it quite unmans me. One blessed thought I have to console me—he saw my beloved J——a! Yes, he saw that blessed creature to whom my happy destinies are bound for ever, and she saw him; but whether she will remember the person whose curiosity so offended her or not I cannot say. I will tell how it was. The day your letter arrived we were out of town, and did not return till it was too late to go to Wimpole Street to see the arrival. I met S——* in Bond Street about six o'clock. I was going in a great hurry to the House of Lords, and could only shake hands and express my surprise at seeing him. He was with a party of men, and nothing more passed. The following day I was walking up Bond Street with Frank, and was lamenting that he had not seen OUR PET, when spirit-like she appeared before me. As you can well imagine, I was convulsed with a thousand sensations at the moment, and my heart and head seemed throbbing for the hardest. I went into a shop to recover myself for a moment, and then followed them up the street, but at a long distance behind them and on the other side of the way. Oh, Mrs. Reilly, then—then—indeed did I feel the full horrors of my situation. To see the girl I adore—the girl who *will*, *who* MUST one day be my wife, and yet not dare approach her—good God ! '*as if it were a sin to love a thing so sainted.*' "

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* Sheil.

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" I have a claim upon that girl's heart, indeed I have, that I know very few men indeed can boast. Yes, dear Mrs. Reilly, and she must be mine. Oh yes ! and YOU *must give her to me.*

" But I have wandered from my narration. In fact, my head is so confused I scarce know what I am writing. I have laid in so high a fever for the last two nights that I feel my mind is not quite as composed as it should be ; but you will, I know, like to hear my tale, confused as it will be, so I will e'en proceed.

"When I went into the shop to recover a little the first shock of so unexpected a *rencontre*, Frank followed them—for I should have said that they were going the same way with us when we first saw them. He took a careful survey of her back, looked at her dear little feet and ankles, and pronounced her to be a '*neat dresser*' and to have '*a sweet little figure.*' He then passed her. She was holding Mr. S——'s[*] *right* arm and Mrs. S——l his left. They were walking on the *right* side of the street, so that J——a was on the inside. F—— passed them some distance, and then turned into a printseller's shop that he knew, and standing in the doorway waited their approach. *She* being on the inside, he had as good a view of her face as a veil would permit. He looked steadfastly at her, and he fancies she caught his eye with a *little* emotion, as though the *likeness* to me struck her. He then passed her again some distance, and having turned at the top of the street expected to meet them once more, but they had disappeared. At four o'clock he went into Wimpole Street to see a friend, and when passing the house beheld J——a standing in *a pensive attitude* at an upper window. He says his heart fairly sank within him when he looked up at her little melancholy figure. Then, for the first time, he says, he felt the perfect misery of our situation. He looked at her till she perceived him; and, not in the least recognising him, turned suddenly away from the window as if offended at the impertinence of his stare.

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[*] Mr. Sheil.

"Poor dear love, how little did she know the deep interest she was at that moment exciting in the poor object of her indignation. He did not recover his spirits again for the day, and I was half crazed."

Now for the first time he adopts towards Mrs. Reilly the title of "Aunt," long before conferred on her by Miss Collins, and to which we find him adhering in many of his subsequent letters.

"Thus you see, *my beloved aunt*, heaven has so far favoured my prayers by giving my brother an opportunity of *seeing* at any rate, though not of knowing, the dear object of all my future views in life.

"And now, my dear Mrs. Reilly, do give me the credit due to my forbearance, when I assure you that I have carefully avoided throwing myself in their way on all occasions, and have not even seen S——l since Saturday. I was obliged to pass 21 yesterday, but I was on horseback and trotted quickly by, so that I do not think Our Pet would have known me even if she had seen me. I met Joseph* yesterday: he scarcely knew me, I am sure. He left your note the day after he arrived, but I was out. I told him yesterday to call the day before he left town and I would give him a packet for you."

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* One of the Highnam footmen.

(*To be continued.*)

TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

WE have all been talking and writing about Charles Lever and the loss that English literature sustains in the death of this brilliant and dashing Irishman. I suppose we shall have a biography of him in time, although the facts of his life, like the facts in the life of most men of letters, lie in a nutshell; and his conversation, "as generous as Burgundy," as one of his friends once pronounced it, "and as sparkling as Champagne," it will, I suppose, simply be impossible to preserve. Yet in all the sketches I have seen of Lever so far I have seen no account of the origin of his first novel and of its publication. Its germ-thought is, I believe, to be found in a series of sketches of the "Kilrush Petty Sessions" which appeared in the *Morning Herald* when Charles Lever was flitting about in the barrack yards and turf cabins of Clare in 1832 as a cholera surgeon; and it was in attempting to preserve his own recollections of Clare and its gentry, in imitation of these newspaper sketches, that the Irish Scott scribbled "Harry Lorrequer." He asked Lover to look through his MS. and to recommend it to a publisher. Lover recommended the young Irish surgeon to try his own publishers, but these gentlemen refused even to look at "Harry Lorrequer." "Charles Lever—who is Charles Lever?" this was their question; and as Lover could only say that he was a surgeon fresh from Gottingen, with a second degree and a Government appointment in Clare, they declined to publish his novel except upon one condition—that Lover should allow his name to appear on the title-page. Lover, of course, could not agree to this, and the MS. of "Harry Lorrequer" was tossed about from one publisher to another, like "Vanity Fair," till it fell into the hands of the editor of the *Dublin University Magazine*, and turned out almost as brilliant a success as "Pickwick."

NOW that Charles Lever is gone, Ireland, I believe, has not a single representative of mark left in the ranks of English literature. How is this? The Irish atmosphere is an atmosphere of poetry, of eloquence, and of romance, and yet Ireland hardly produces a poet or a novelist once in a generation, where England and Scotland produce a dozen each. All Irishmen of genius who have crossed St. George's Channel since the days of Queen Anne you may count upon the fingers of a single hand—Goldsmith, Sterne, Tom Moore, and Charles Lever—and Charles Lever exhausts the list. Irish orators, Irish statesmen, Irish soldiers, and Irish journalists are to be met with all over the world; but poets, novelists, historians, and metaphysicians are as rare as the three-leaved shamrock, and even Charles Lever, like Tom Moore, was an Irishman only by birth. His education and nearly all his associations were English.

THE Provis case was described in these pages some months ago as a trial that to some extent resembled, if not in results at least in interest and importance, the Tichborne romance. Some supplementary items that are curious reach me through "Anecdotage," a little volume of reminiscences by Mr. E. Austin, a west country reporter and "*Times* Bristol correspondent" in the days when such a position was one of dignity and responsibility. Mr. Austin reported the trial of "The Smyth Claimant" at the Gloucester Assizes. Like Serjeant Ballantyne's client, the plaintiff's orthography was very defective; he had been in trouble about a horse; and he had been shipwrecked. Mr. Provis also chafed under cross-examination. In reply to an early question he answered with much insolence, "I think your question irrelevant and improper." Soon afterwards, being pressed as to how often he saw Sir John or Sir Hugh Smyth, he said in a passion, "Don't bother me, sir; I can't say whether it was Sir John or Sir Hugh." On further pressure he said, "I can't explain what I mean. I don't know what I mean on this subject." The civil action was ended by the judge ordering Smyth, *alias* Provis, into custody on a charge of forgery and perjury, and the next day he was committed for trial at the assizes. Among the most important witnesses for the prosecution was "the Claimant's" sister. In cross-examining her the prisoner, looking fixedly at the woman, asked, "Do you mean to say I am your brother?" "Yes, I do, Thomas," said the witness. "Had your brother Thomas ever anything like this?" asked the prisoner, producing, amidst shouts of laughter, a pigtail from the back of his coat. "No, Thomas," said the sister; "when you were at home with us you never had anything like that." The Smyth family wore the pigtail, and Provis had cultivated one during his long career as "Claimant." Provis, it will be remembered, was sentenced to twenty years' transportation. I saw it stated somewhere that he is still alive; but he died within two years of his trial.

MR. AUSTIN recalls, in some notes on "The Bar and the Press," how short a time it is since the press really entered upon its present position of dignity and independence. Many years ago resolutions were passed by the members of the Oxford and Western Circuits declaring it to be incompatible with the status of a barrister to report proceedings for the public press. The resolution on the Oxford Circuit was aimed at Mr. Cooke Evans, who then represented the *Times*, and on the Western Circuit at Mr. H. T. Cole (now a Queen's Counsel), who then reported for the *Morning Chronicle*. The dictum of the Oxford and Western Circuits was warmly resented by the press. By way of retaliation the *Times* adopted a plan that was followed by many other journals, and which soon led to the rescinding of the obnoxious resolutions. The leading journal stated that it was of no importance to the general public, however important it might be to the legal gentlemen themselves, to know what particular counsel appeared in any case. Accordingly instructions were given to the *Times*' representatives on the Oxford and Western Circuits to suppress the names of all the barristers who appeared in cases reported in that paper. Hence for some time in the reports of these circuits, the public read that "the counsel for the plaintiff," "the counsel for the defendant," "the counsel for the prosecution," and "the counsel for the prisoner," said or did so and so. This was a serious matter for the bar, and no doubt materially hastened the withdrawal of the objectionable stigma sought to be cast upon the press.

PERHAPS all the readers of the *Gentleman's* have not come across the interesting little volume of Carlyle's letters which is just now in private circulation, and may not, therefore, have seen the pleasant and characteristic sketch which the Philosopher of Chelsea gives of his habits and tastes in a note to Sir George Sinclair, accepting an invitation to Thurso Castle in 1860 for a few weeks' rest and quiet after his hard spell at work upon the "History of Frederick the Great." The railway is Mr. Carlyle's aversion, and sea-voyaging, he says, is at all times much more supportable than the horrors of railwaying—vainly attempting sleep in inns, &c., &c. "For the rest," Mr. Carlyle goes on to say, "my domestic habits are all for simplicity and composure, and I live with clear preference, where possible, on rustic farm produce—'milk and meal,' eggs, chickens, poor mutton, white fish (salmon, veal, lamb—three things tabooed to me); reckon an innocent bread pudding the very acme of culinary art; am accustomed to say 'Can all the udes in Nature, with all the king's treasuries to back them, *make* anything so *good* as good cream?' and likewise that 'the cow is the friend of man and the French cook his enemy;' and not one day in ten drink beyond a single glass of wine." This is Carlyle all over—the Carlyle of our fancy—Carlyle at his own fireside—but when, to flatter his host, the author of "Sartor Resartus" tells Sir George Sinclair that his society and that of his wife is all he wants, with "the great song of the Everlasting Sea and the Silences of Earth and Sky," we feel once more that we are in the atmosphere of the workshop, and that Teufelsdrock must be close at hand behind the screen.

IN this practical age, when people know where to look for the real sources of prosperity and wealth, a good deal of honour is bestowed, in words at least, upon the skilled labourer. Every one is prepared to admit, without a moment's hesitation, that to be an industrious workman is to occupy a highly worthy and respectable position in society. The gentlemen who supply the public with newspaper-reading are among the foremost in impressing this truth upon the world. It is for these reasons, I suppose, that no one has arisen to challenge a statement recently made by Mr. Justice Grove, in addressing a jury. The plaintiff in the case was a reporter, who claimed damages against the Newspaper Press Association for wrongful dismissal, and the judge availed himself of the opportunity to define reporting as "a very high class of skilled labour." Mr. Grove is a man of science as well as a lawyer. His training has been calculated to render him apt at definitions. I trust the educated and intelligent body of gentlemen who supply their fellow countrymen with rescripts and condensed presentations of speeches are content with this description of their craft. Doubts have sometimes arisen as to the correct professional classification of the art of reporting. A physician is a professional man, and society agrees to recognise the author, the editor, and the artist as belonging to the same category. Shopkeepers and merchants are traders. Carpenters, printers, and the like are artisans. What are reporters? The usual way of solving the difficulty has been to speak of the newspaper press in general terms as a profession, to which the stenographer is attached. He is a "journalist," taking his place in the ranks of that profession a stage or two below the editor. But if, as Mr. Justice Grove informs him, he is a "skilled labourer," then in truth, though he is, no doubt, a journalist, he is so only in the sense in which the type-setter is a journalist. Like the compositor, the shorthand-writer is a skilled labourer, only of a higher class. I am neither approving nor disputing the learned judge's definition—I simply call attention to it, wondering a little that the reporters have not spoken on the subject, and trying to attribute their reticence to the respect which they feel for the whole order of skilled labourers with whom the judge has classed them.

CENTENARY, bicentenary, and tercentenary celebrations are now common occurrences. One of these events, likely to make more noise in the world than any other which this generation will experience, is the coming glorification of the centenary of American Independence, on the 4th of July, 1876. This will happen during the forthcoming presidential term. The fact can hardly fail to influence the aspirations of the candidates now in the field. The one hundredth anniversary of the freedom of that great country must be a proud day for him whose fortune it may be to occupy Washington's chair at the time.

I HAVE a suggestion to make to Canon Kingsley, which may be valuable to him the next time that he appeals to the people of England in favour of Australian preserved meat. This manufacturing nation has not been sufficiently awakened to certain collateral advantages attending the consumption of those viands from the antipodes. I will quote a few figures from the most recent Board of Trade statistics. In the first place it must be noted that we have imported Australian beef and mutton during the last six months to the value of nearly half a million sterling; and this is £225,000 more than we spent upon the same article of merchandise in the first half of last year. Now what have the colonists done with this two hundred and twenty-five thousands? I find that they have come into the British markets and spent more than that amount in articles of cotton manufactures and iron manufactures alone in excess of their speculations in the same wares in the corresponding six months of 1871, and their increased expenditure in the same period has been as much as £100,000 in worsted goods, £40,000 in linen goods, £20,000 in silk manufactures, and upwards of £10,000 in each case in boots and shoes, stationery, saddlery and harness, and carpets and rugs. So, if we will find employment for our New-World kindred in growing meat and preparing it for consumption in the old country we may count upon them, it seems, at the very least to square the account by large orders on the productions of British manufacture. It may be taken for granted that the Australian settlers, with all their vast possessions of uncultured lands, will not betake themselves to factory work so long as they can find buyers for agricultural produce. If, therefore, this great meat-eating country of ours can persuade itself to deal largely with the Australian butcher, it will by the very act be raising up beyond the seas an insatiable market for British merchandise.

THE
GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE
SEPTEMBER, 1872.

ISLES OF THE AMAZONS.

BY JOAQUIN MILLER.

PART I.

Primeval forests! Virgin sod!
That Saxon has not ravaged yet!
Lo! Peak on peak in column set,
In stepping stairs that reach to God!
Here we are free as sea or wind,
For here are pitched the snowy tents
In everlasting battlements,
Against the march of Saxon mind.

FAR up in the hush of the Amazon River,
And hid in the heart of the deep Andes,
There are isles as grand as the isles of seas;
The waves strike strophes, and the keen reeds quiver,
As the sudden canoe shoots past them and over
The strong, still tide to the opposite shore,
Where the blue-eyed men by the sycamore
Sit mending their nets in the vine-twined cover,

And are weaving their threads of bark and of grasses.
They wind and they spin, on the clumsy wheel,
Into hammocks hued with the cochineal,
To trade with the one white ship that passes,
Above and adown in the shade of the shore.

And the blue-eyed people that are mild as the dawns—
O, delicate dawns of the grand Andes!—
Lift up soft eyes that are deep like seas,
And mild, yet wild, as the red-white fawns',
And they gaze into yours, then they weave, then listen,
And look as in wonder, then again weave on,
Then again look and wonder that you are not gone,
While the keen reeds quiver and the bent waves glisten;
But they say no words while they weave and wonder,
Though they sometimes sing, voiced low like the dove,
And as deep and as rich as their tropical love,
As they weave their net-threads through and under.

Yea, a pure, true people you may trust are these;
And this is their tale of the Isles of the river,
And the why that their eyes are all blue like seas,
That is told you betimes by a quaint old crone,
Who sits on the rim of an island alone,
As she holds in her hands a strange green stone,
To the boatmen below where the long reeds quiver.

And the quaint old crone has a singular way
Of holding her venerable head askew,
And smoothing the stone in her palms all day,

As saying "I've nothing at all to say,"

Till you have tickled her palm, and you
Have touched on the delicate spring of a door
That silver has opened perhaps before.
This may be false and it may be true—
I give as I got it, and who can more?
If I have purchased a beautiful lie,
Have bought and paid for it, so have you,
And have done it a thousand times before
And have been content, and so have I.

And she tells, in her tale, of a troubadour knight—
Of a singer and knight of most singular worth—
Aback in the darlingest days of earth,
In the dear old days that are lost to sight.
When lovers could love, when maidens could die
But never deceive, and the song-maker sang
To the clashing of swords for a maiden's sweet sigh,
Nor measured for gold as if measuring tape
In the shelter of wall, in the shadow of grape,
In a temperate place where the tame fruits hang.

O, modern sweet singer! shrewd merchant of song!
Get gold and be glad, buy, sell, and be strong!
Sweet Cyprian, I kiss you, I pay you, we part:
Lo! you have my gold, but who has my heart?
So sing you of battles, with never a scar,
So sing you of heaven, with never a prayer,
And of hearts that are aching, with never a heart,
And of Nature, all girded and bridled by art,

And of sunlight, with never a soul for the noon.
Go, splendid-made singer, so finished, so fair:
Move cold and alone like a broken, bright moon,
And shimmer and shine, like a far, cold star.

Now this knight, you must know—says the quaint old crone,
With her head sidewise, as she smooths at the stone—
Had a splendid steed: he had golden spurs,
And blood that had come from crusaders down,
Yet a womanly face in a manly frown,
And a heart as tender and as true as hers.

And the truest in love and the bravest in war
Was the fair young knight of the brave old days,
Of all of the knights with their knightly ways
That had journeyed away to the world afar
In the name of Spain; of the splendid few
Who had borne her banner in the new-born world,
From the sea-rim up where the clouds are curled:
And to Cross and to King how faithfully true!

And blown from the banks of the Guadalquivir
And yet blue-eyed, with the Celts' soft hair,
With never a drop of the dark, deep river
Of Moorish blood that had swept through Spain,
And plashed the world with its tawny stain,
To the far Sierras, so white at noon,
And so white at night, and so silvery fair,
And as pure forever as a new-born moon.

He sat on his steed, and his sword was bloody
With heathen blood, for the battle was done.
Below on the plain, all wreathed and ruddy
And crowned in fire, lay the beautiful city,
With its antique temples built up to the sun;
And his heart rebelled and arose in pity,
As the heathen poured, in a helpless flood,
Through their gateways, wet with the pagan blood,
Without one wail and without one blow,
At the last, to even provoke a foe.

"Ho, forward! smite!" but the minstrel lingered,
Nor lifted a shield to the front again.
He reached his hand and he touched the rein,
And he hummed an air as he toyed and fingered
The arching neck and the glossy mane.
He rested the heel and he rested the hand,
Nor heeded at all to the hot command,
Though the thing was death to the man to dare
To question, to doubt, or to falter there.

He wiped his steel on his black steed's mane,
And he sheathed it deep in its place again,
And he counted his comrades, one by one,
Returning again from the pagan plain,
And laden with booty of gems and gold.
He lifted his shield of steel to the sun,
And he flung it away till it clanged and rang
On the granite rocks in the plain below;
Then lifted his face—as the saints have done—
In his knightly pride to the kingly sun,

And lifted his voice and sang and sang—
Sang loud and long in the long ago,
When a love endured though the days grew old.

And they heard his song, and the chief on the plain
Stood up in his stirrups, and, sword in hand,
He cursed and he called with a loud command
To the blue-eyed boy to return again,
To lift his shield again to the sky,
And come and surrender his sword or die.
But he wove his hand in the stormy mane,
He leaned him forward, he lifted the rein,
He struck the flank, and he wheeled and sprung,
And gaily rode in the face of the sun,
As he bared his sword and he bravely sung,
"Ho! come and take it;" but there came not one.

And so he sang with his face to the south:
"Now where, O where are the Incan Isles?
Now where, O where is the Amazon shore,
Where the curses of man they are heard no more,
And the kisses alone and the peaceful smiles
Shall embalm the brave and embrace the mouth?

"Now where, O where is that favoured land,
Where the ruthless foot and the reckless hand
Of man has never despoiled nor trod;
Where a woman's hand with a woman's heart
Has fashioned an Eden from man apart,
And she walks in her garden alone with God?

"I shall seek that Eden, and all my years
I shall sit and rest, I shall sing in the sun;
And the tides may rest or the tides may run,
And the years may come and the years may go,
And men make war, may slay and be slain,
May gather in gold and may give out tears;
But I not care, for I never shall know
Of cross or of creed, or of wrong or of pain,
Of man, or of aught that is man's again.

"The mellow rich moons they may ripen and fall,
The seasons of gold they may gather or go,
The partridge may whistle, the *mono* may call,
And who shall take heed, or take note, or shall know
If the Fates befriend, or if ill befall,
Of the world without, or of worlds at all?"

'Twas the song of a dream and the dream of a singer,
Drawn fine in its delicate fibres of gold,
And broken in two by the touch of a finger,
And blown as the winds blow, rent and rolled
In dust, and spent as a tale that is told.

And alas! for his dreams and the songs he sung:
The dunce lay ready; the tiger, awake,
And, black as the night and lithe like a snake,
Stood out before him; the serpents hung,
Red-tongued and terrible, over his head.
He clove and he thrust with his keen, quick steel,
He coaxed with his voice and urged with his heel,

Till his hands were torn and his raiment rent,
Till soul and body were well-nigh spent,
Till his steel was broken and his steed lay dead.

But he toiled to the river, and lorn and drear,
He stood all faint, with the wild beasts near,
And looked far out through the fringes of trees,
With an arm arched over, as one on seas,
For a sign; no sign or sound, and the knees
They smote together, and the thin lips pressed,
And the thin hands crossed on the helpless breast.

'Twas the king of rivers, and he knew at last
That the Isles were near and the wilds were passed;
Yet it moved so strange, so still, so strong,
So deep, so dreadful; wide like an ocean,
And much like a river, but more like a sea,
Save that there was naught of the turbulent motion
Of tides, nor aught of the sea-birds' song,
Or of sea-winds blowing abaft or a-lee.

Yea, strangely strong was the wave and slow,
And half-way hid in the dark, deep tide;
Great turtles they paddled them to and fro,
And away to the Isles and the opposite side.

Yea, stately it moved it, mile on mile,
Above and below and as still as the air,
The bank made slippery here and there
By the slushing slide of the crocodile.

The strong trees leant and bent to the tide,
And all seemed borne with its waters wide,
As though the great, lawless, unsatisfied seas
Had thrust up an arm through the tangle of trees,
  And clutched at the citrons that hung in the sun,
And clutched at the diamonds that hid in the sand,
And laid heavy hand on the gold, and a hand
On the ruddy red grapes, on the rubies-like wine,
And on stones like the stars when the stars are divine;
Had thrust through the rocks of the ribb'd Andes,
Had ploughed through the pampas and torn through the trees,
  And had wrested them terribly, every one,
Away from its place, and had left a waste,
And a way all strewn in precipitate haste,
As he bore them away to the buccaneer seas.

(To be continued.)

TROUT FISHING ON DARTMOOR.

PRINCE TOWN, since the resuscitation of the old prison, so memorable during the Peninsular war and before Waterloo, has become a flourishing colony, there being now a king there in the person of the governor, and officers of all sorts, in the shape of officials. There is a barrack, moreover, for the accommodation of such soldiers as may be on duty in the convict line, and there are numerous shops for the supply of provisions. But there is only one good hotel (the Duchy) where any sportsman can put up with a prospect of tolerable comfort and attention. The Duchy, so named in compliment to the Duke of Cornwall, better known in more civilised parts as the Prince of Wales, is a very tolerable affair for the district, though it must be admitted that some of its rooms are rather rackety and many of its frequenters very noisy. But it will do well enough for all but butterfly sportsmen, and the less that class has to do with Dartmoor the better. The landlord at the time of our visit was very obliging, always ready to lend his pony and trap to any reasonable customer; his wife was a good cook and an especial artist in the preparation of roast duck and green peas; and the cellar boasted ancient vintages and famous brands. What more could a man desire—except, indeed, tobacco? But, of course, your old sportsman never neglects to carry his own with him when on an expedition into foreign parts. Dartmoor mutton is a thing upon which the mind delights to dwell, and the cider sometimes to be had is of a very excellent order, brought generally from Tavistock or Moretonhampstead.

Our party consisted of three, but we were not equally adepts in the piscatorial art, one of our number being in fact a Frenchman. We engaged a miserable dog-cart at Plymouth, and were favoured with a very notorious hack which was known far and wide for his prodigious performances, and gloried in the name of "Stunning Joe Banks." This remarkable quadruped had performed a long journey the day before our engagement of him, and ought consequently never to have been permitted to leave his stable even if he had endured fatigue only. But it appears he had suffered very disgusting usage, and had sores on each shoulder. Having heard of Stunning Joe Banks's great excellence we thought ourselves in luck's way to get him at any price, and never dreamed of looking at his shoulders or of asking any questions regarding his general state of health. The consequence of this neglect was that on ascending the first hill leading out of Plymouth, and the harness getting out of order, the sores became exposed to the searching glance of an intelligent officer of the police force, who had rendered himself especially meritorious in various transactions in connection with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The ostler had had the stupidity to rub lamp black over the partially healed sores, and it being a damp morning the "establishment of a raw" was soon effected. The policeman was horrified on beholding what met his view when he lifted up the collar, and his high sense of duty would not allow him to witness any further compulsory progression on the part of Stunning Joe Banks.

"Very sorry, gentlemen," said he, "but I can't allow this horse to be driven any farther, and must take him and the driver to the station house."

"But what is to become of the trap?"

"Oh, I have nothing to do with the trap; I don't want that."

And the trap accordingly was laid up by the side of the road, with all our fishing apparatus and other articles exposed to the vulgar stare and ridicule of street urchins. There was nothing for it but to leave a man in charge and proceed to the station house. The magistrates had not yet assembled, and we had to wait their arrival for three or four hours before our interesting case could be inquired into. The magistrates' clerk being an obliging personage, and seeing at a glance how matters stood, had our affair postponed for a week; and then, finding that the ostler at the livery stable was the real delinquent, fined that functionary in the mitigated penalty of ten shillings. We had no difficulty in procuring a fresh horse, but our unfortunate delay did not allow us to arrive at Prince Town until late in the evening, when fishing for that day at least was not to be thought of.

The Duchy was in high feather in the sporting way, there being three or four fly-fishing gentlemen of considerable renown in their own counties sojourning there, and enjoying a reputation of no mean order among the experienced Zebedees of the moor. One of them, a gallant captain and a fine stalwart fellow to boot, was what the natives designated "a rum 'un to look at, but a good 'un to go," standing indeed a good six feet two in his stocking feet, and able to stalk over the heather like a giraffe. With the addition of our party the landlord was enabled to start a sort of *table d'hôte* on the "first come first serve" plan, with a strict though implied rule that no one was to be kept waiting whatever might be upon the table, and no matter how many guests might be behind time. This was a very comfortable arrangement, which suited the views of all parties, and its rules were obeyed in a manner that reflected honour equally upon the appetite and punctuality of all. Not a man during our brief visit but fell to work with a will the moment dinner was ready, and with a semblance of forgetfulness of absent friends that proved to us all a subject of consolatory contemplation. My friends had laboriously consulted all the piscatory authorities from Izaak Walton downwards, but not with very satisfactory results, and they had laid in a stock of flies from Farlow's that one might have imagined sufficient to ensure success in any district where trout were ordinarily plentiful. There are some flies, such as Palmers and Carpenters, that will generally prove good on any trout streams, but Dartmoor trout are proverbially capricious, and it is always best to consult an experienced native as to the most killing flies in particular weather and on various rivers. Mr. G. W. Soltau published a little treatise on fly-fishing some years ago, and the flies he recommends from a long experience on western waters will be found highly serviceable to the stranger. Except an old moorland fisherman himself, no better guide, philosopher, and friend can be had than this practical little book. It is a singular fact that a little smoky blue gnat is a deadly killer on such rapid streams as are to be found on Dartmoor, but it is true. A fly we used to call the Soldier Spinner, too, was another famous bait after a flood and when the waters were discoloured. The captain was well up in most of the "wrinkles" of the moor, and was not above resorting to ground bait rather than go home with an empty creel. He was an adept in the use of the fern web, for instance, but that most deadly of all Devonshire baits was not to be had at the season of which I am writing. The brandling, however, was, and he had not studied W. C. Stewart's admirable instructions for making an effective use of that worm in clear water with stained gut, and when artificial baits were of no use whatever, to no purpose. But in a general way we were supposed to scorn the use of anything but the artificial fly, whether of our own manufacture or of some London professional maker.

Years ago there used to live on the moor an old fisherman named Tom French, than whom a better sportsman never threw a fly or followed a pack of foxhounds. It was his habit in his old age to maintain himself by fly-fishing during the summer months and—all honour to the Nimrods and Zebedees of the neighbourhood—to go into the workhouse during the winter. It was well known that Tom always fished with nothing but flies of his own manufacture, and that he had a celebrated one of his own "mixing," as he called it, which was a certain killer in all weathers. It had been the ambition of all frequenters of the moor for years to become possessed of the original recipe for the composition of this tremendous fly; but it was reserved for the writer of this article to discover the not very inscrutable secret by means which, if not strictly honourable, were decidedly cheap. Mr. French had left behind him, to uphold the ancient honours of his house, name, and fame, an unworthy and degenerate son, whom I found one day cutting turf instead of following the ennobling avocations of his father. His "mug" was not to be mistaken, and his laugh was of a kind calculated to terrify rather than exhilarate a polished visitor to the moor—for, as Darby McKeown remarked, "there was a screech in it might plaze an owl." The scene of this gentleman's labours was near Two Bridges, and he expressed his willingness for a temporary withdrawal to the Saracen's Head in that halting place—by no effort of imagination or strain of civility can it be converted into a village—in order to discuss a quart or so of cider. Under the influence of the beverage he proudly acknowledged his parentage—and, what was much more to the purpose, confessed to having in his possession some of his father's "mixing" apparatus employed in fly-making.

"You tie flies yourself, I suppose?" said I.

"Never could make a vly nohow. My vingers be too thick and clumsy; I could never manage one vitty."

"Should you know the fly your father used to kill so many fish with if you saw it?"

"I should think so. I'll step down home and fetch the dubbing and feathers, and your honour shall tie a vly or two if you like."

I liked; Tom stepped down home, returned, and a "vly" was manufactured "in a brace of shakes," as he phrased it. It was a very primitive looking affair, and was composed of nothing more than a body of cow's or rat's fur with a wing of the wild mallard and without any hackle. No doubt it was intended to represent the grey "horse-fly," that pestiferous blood-sucker so troublesome to horses during hot weather.

"How will that do for the article?"

"That's the very thing. Father hisself couldn't make a better. If I could tie a vly like unto that I'd never do a day's work no more."

By this declaration Mr. French probably meant to assert that, if he could be perfected in the art of fly-tying, he would eschew turf-cutting and sheep-shearing for the future, and pursue the more refined vocation of professional trout-fly purveyor to "the gents as visited the moor." In consideration of my presenting him with half a dozen flies which I presently manufactured, Mr. French had the generosity to hand me over the entire collection of fur, feathers, "hare's-lug" and dubbing, and I was from that happy moment, to use his own expressive phraseology, "a man a-made." It is true he somewhat spoiled the magnanimity of the transaction by remarking after the conclusion of business: "That's right; you might so well have given 'em to me at onst, for if you hadn't I should have stolen 'em."

The tributary streams are always better fishing than the main river early in the season, and this for the most obvious of reasons. Cherrybrook is about the best tributary on the moor. If you follow it to its source you may almost always kill a dish of fish, and more especially likely are you to do so if you try the worm, or resort to "dapping" with natural flies when throwing an artificial one becomes an impossibility. In fact, if killing trout be your object on Dartmoor, you had better discard your Byron, and prefer the wiser precepts of Soltau. I do not think that Byron ever understood fly-fishing, and I have a shrewd suspicion that he had attempted the more vulgar method of entrapping the "wily trout" before penning that vicious stanza in "Don Juan":—

> And angling, too, that solitary vice,
>   Whatever Izaak Walton sings or says:
> The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb, in his gullet
> Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it.

In a footnote to this stanza Byron further stigmatises Izaak: "It would have taught him humanity at least. This sentimental savage, whom it is a mode to quote (amongst the novelists), to show their sympathy for innocent sports and old songs, teaches how to sew up frogs and break their legs by way of experiment, in addition to the art of angling, the cruellest, the coldest, and the stupidest of pretended sports. They may talk about the beauties of nature, but the angler merely thinks of his dish of fish; he has no leisure to take his eyes from off the streams, and a single *bite* is worth to him more than all the scenery around. Besides, some fish bite but on a rainy day. The whale, the shark, and the tunny fishery have somewhat of noble and perilous in them; even net-fishing, trawling, &c., are more humane and useful! No angler can be a good man." One might fairly imagine from this remarkable and fortunately little known passage that Byron's experience of angling was gained from watching the performers in that art upon the Serpentine.

Tom French's fly was a real nonpareil, and one day on Cherrybrook I managed to kill six dozen fine fish with it, after two distinguished fishermen had passed up stream before me. When at the powder works, at the top, I tried the natural fly of which Tom French's was an imperfect representation, and by that means discovered how knowingly the old fellow had studied his business. One day, having occasion to cross the moor, intending to wend my way to Post Bridge, I stopped to test the virtues of a very small stream emptying itself into Cherrybrook, and there I killed some of the largest fish caught during our visit. The stream—or rather, gutter—though very narrow, was very deep, and was as full of trout as its banks of rushes were of snakes. It was solitary work.

> Nothing that has life
> Is visible ;—no solitary flock,
> At will wide ranging through the silent moor,
> Breaks the deep-felt monotony ; and all
> Is motionless, save where the giant shades,
> Flung by the passing cloud, glide slowly o'er
> The grey and gloomy wild.

The captain and I had been about equally successful in our efforts for some days, and had come to regard one another as born rivals whom nothing short of declared superiority in favour of one or the other would satisfy. On our last day of fishing our rival claims were to be decided, and each felt, though neither of us acknowledged it, that "for one or both of us the time was come." The landlord had been bantering the captain upon his unwillingness to back himself against me, and they had arranged that if the last day proved an auspicious one, we should test our powers in a competition worthy of being recorded.

The landlord was to pit me against the captain for a sum of money to be laid out in the promotion of the general conviviality of the party. The only intimation I received of this remarkable wager was a whispered communication from the landlord, through the keyhole of my bedroom door, "to be sure and do my best to-morrow, as the captain was getting bumptious." I returned for answer that I would take the shine out of him if possible. "Right you are," says the landlord, which is a familiar form of expressing perfect approbation common among the inhabitants of Prince Town.

On our start in the morning, to our general disgust—to mine especially, the landlord so far forgot the dignity of his position and the character of his house as to throw up the bar window and exclaim, in a moment of irrepressible enthusiasm, "I'll back that gentleman to lick the lot." No fisherman, I am sure, after such a flattering distinction, could fail to do his uttermost, and I felt nerved for "deeds of derring do," whatever that may mean. In passing the grounds at the back of the prison I had observed some fine trout disporting themselves in a stream known as Blackabrook, and saw no harm in attempting their transference to my creel if I could manage it. I had often fished the spot in my school-boy days, and had never met with any hindrance or molestation. On this occasion I entirely failed to see a large board containing an intimation that all trespassers on this consecrated ground would be prosecuted with the utmost rigour of the law, and commenced my attack upon the trout with the feeling and courage of a very Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche.* The wily trout had discovered that a quantity of offal from the prison bakehouse found its way into this portion of Blackabrook, and battened accordingly. I did not walk more than three or four miles the whole time of fishing, and filled my creel to overflowing with the finest kill of the whole week. On my return to the Duchy, the first arrival of the entire party, I called for the largest dish in the establishment, turned out my capture, and triumphantly awaited the result of the captain's adventures. That warrior arrived late for dinner, but with a rare catch of fish, in number fairly outrivalling mine.

"Put 'em in the scales," says the landlord. This done, the weight of my kill told with undeniable effect, and I was gloriously hailed as the undisputed victor of the fishing tournament, and the captain declared mulcted of the expense of the evening's entertainment.

"Where did you kill them, now?" I was asked, and—*nemo omnibus horis sapit*, and especially is this the case after a day's fishing and a good dinner—in scornful repudiation of the insinuation that I had resorted to the "silver hook," I very injudiciously divulged the secret of my success.

"What! caught those fish on prison grounds?"

"At the back of the prison, and on the stream Blackabrook."

"Brought back your rod and your clothes, too, sir! Well, I'm not afraid of most things and men, but blow me," exclaimed the landlord, "if I'd 'a trusted myself where you have been to-day with anything valuable for the best fifty pound note that ever was manufactured."

Here was a pretty kettle of fish! I had had abundant experience of the loquacity of a Dartmoor populace in other matters than mere recitals of convict conversation, and sagely opined that the tale of my adventure would be all over the village by the morning. Slipping quietly away from my companions, therefore, I packed the trout carefully up in the largest creel I could find, and having written a polite note, in which I acknowledged my delinquency and begged his acceptance of them, took them over to the governor of the prison. That official was graciously pleased to accept my present, and to communicate to me, in the morning, the gratifying information that I was the only gentleman who had ever had the civility to send him a dish of trout, fish of which he was particularly fond, and that I, individually, was at liberty to whip Blackabrook whenever I liked, trespass boards notwithstanding. This piece of generalship on my part was not unattended with beneficial results, such as an acquaintance with the governor, and a view of the prison and prisoners afterwards, altogether making a grand wind-up to a fishing tour on Dartmoor.

SIRIUS.

ALGIERS AS IT IS.

TO the man who is tired of Bond Street and the Park, of the Paris Boulevards, of the Corso at Rome, of the Prado at Madrid, the Promenade des Anglais at Nice, and the other fashionable European lounges; to him who has contemplated the artistic beauties and picturesque sights of every tourist resort in Europe, from the Highlands of Scotland to the toe of the Italian boot, and who sets out for Algeria in search of fresh sights and scenes, the first impression of Algiers will convey anything but feelings of pleasure or admiration.

The tourist who has never visited Africa previously often lands in a feverish state of excitement. He is eager to see a living Moor, an Arab, a Moorish woman, a Jewess; to visit the famous Kasbah, the mosques, to penetrate within a Moorish house, and lose himself in the labyrinth of quaint old streets which he has so often seen represented on paper and canvas, but which as yet he has never beheld in bricks and mortar. On reaching his hotel he takes a bath, changes his dress, and, after satisfying the cravings of the inner man, sallies forth into the streets. Great is his surprise and considerable his disappointment on finding himself in a miniature Rue de Rivoli, bordered by colonnades and houses four stories high. He has hardly taken half a dozen steps outside his hotel before he is surrounded by a gang of ragged Arab shoeblacks, who pursue him with their blacking boxes and caper round him, pestering him with greater perseverance to have his freshly polished shoes blacked than would the red bloused *protégés* of the Marquis Townshend in the Strand. He passes by shops where the various articles of attire, and the thousand and one superfluities which are considered necessary to civilised life, are laid out in as tasteful and tempting a manner as they would be on the Boulevard des Italiens or in Bond Street. He reaches the Place du Gouvernement, once the site of the Palace Djenina, or Little Garden, which was inhabited by the pachas and deys of Algiers during a period of 300 years, until Ali-ben-Ahmed left for the Kasbah fortress, on a certain night in November, 1817, carrying along with him the treasures of the Deylik under the escort of a faithful guard, in order to escape the resentment of his subjects, whom he had exasperated by his cruelties and his exactions; but here—in lieu of the palace and its janissaries, its mutes and eunuchs, its lovely female slaves buried amidst the luxuries of a harem, its marble courts and corridors, fragrant with the perfume of roses and jasmine mingled with orange and lemon trees, and its crystal fountains showering forth continual jets of sparkling waters amongst all kinds of exotic plants,—are European houses, *cafés*, cabs, omnibuses, kiosks for the sale of newspapers, young Jews with baskets of Algerian knick-knacks, beggars, French soldiers, and the famous *marchands de coco* immortalised by Gavarni. There is hardly a devotee shuffling lazily to the mosque, or a Jewess on her way to the bake-house, or a Moorish woman hurrying to the baths followed by a negress servant; but, *en revanche*, there are ladies attired in the most novel Parisian costumes, with the requisite amount of *pouff* and the correct number of *jupes* and *ruches*, with *Louis Quinze* shoes protecting the traditional small foot, and elegant *chapeaux* placed daintily upon the fashionable form of chignon; there are *petits crevés* dressed as they would be by Poole or Dusautoy, looking as if they had just been carefully removed from so many band-boxes; but the only vestiges that remain of bygone Turkish splendour, and in fact the only things that remind the wanderer that he is in Africa, are the whitewashed walls of a mosque and a cluster of sickly looking palm trees which once flourished in the gardens of the Djenina. The visitor passes along the Boulevard de la République, but only to find houses similar to those on the Boulevard de Sébastopol in Paris or in Victoria Street in London. There is a post office that would place that of the Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau in the shade, a bank which, in architectural beauty if not in size, would bear comparison with that of the mother country, and an hotel which might stand in the first rank in any capital in Europe. After the first few days, however, he will get reconciled to the idea that wherever a Frenchman goes it is necessary that stone buildings six stories high and *cafés* should follow him; he will gaze without being shocked upon the stall of a European fishmonger standing beside a mosque, facing in its turn the shop of a *blanchisseuse de fin;* his sight will become familiar with Jews dressed half like Moors and half like Europeans, with Arab shoeblacks and Mahomedans attired in blue French cotton stuffs, with Moorish *cafés* where the cups and trays are of European manufacture, and with women wearing silks and satins fashioned by Parisian dressmakers, while others are in Oriental garments; and when he is used to this agglomeration of Eastern and European life he will find that although Algiers is no longer an Oriental town, and has consequently lost many of its attractions, although its old gates, its fortifications, and a great many of its curious Moorish buildings have been replaced by modern constructions, although its native population has in a certain measure become Europeanised, it is nevertheless one of the most delightful places in the world, either as a residence or as a tourist resort.

At the foot of the hill upon the slope of which Algiers is built lies the modern or European portion of the town. It presents nothing of any particular interest—spacious, well-paved, macadamised streets, bordered with houses many stories high; large open squares, a public garden, mosques turned into Roman Catholic churches or barracks, others still used for the Mussulman creed; here and there a portion of an old wall or an ancient Moorish building, diminished on one side, made larger on another, with European windows substituted for the small iron-barred casements, and sometimes with a slated roof occupying the place of the terrace where the women came of an evening to inhale the fresh sea breeze. A structure which perhaps in days gone by belonged to the Beylik, or maybe it was the palace of a wealthy pirate chief, but which has since been patched up and altered so as to accommodate a branch of the French Government without the slightest attention having been paid to the style of its architecture. Wandering through the streets one occasionally comes across an hotel, and can hardly walk ten yards without passing a *café* swarming with French officers and soldiers, tourists from all parts of the world, colonists from the interior of the country, and the polyglot population of the town; then there are ordinary European shops intermixed with open tobacco stores, kept for the most part by Moors and Jews. Old curiosity shops, too, may occasionally be found, generally hidden away in the back streets. There is one of them opposite the Mosque Djedid, at the corner of the Place Mahon, where, previous to the French invasion, the Europeans captured by the Algerian galleys and the negroes brought from the interior by the caravans were exposed for sale. Here, completely covering the walls and windows, are samples of almost every article that is manufactured by Mahomedans in Northern Africa, from Morocco to Tunis. There are the long flint-lock rifles and pistols from these towns, as well as those from Kabylia—some so frail, with the thin barrels fastened to the wood by tin bands, that they look almost like toys; others more stoutly constructed, with the woodwork richly encrusted with gold and silver and precious stones—there are massive briar-root pipe-heads, inlaid with brass, from Mostaganem, and branches of coral from La Calle, hly-fashioned jewellery from Kabylia, and costly wearing apparel from Tunis; Moorish looking-glasses and many-coloured glass lamps, musical instruments, and the various implements and weapons used by the tribes in the interior, from the Kabyle's terrible *flissa*, his ploughshare and crockery-ware, to the richly-embroidered saddle and harness, the long-pointed spurs, the curiously-shaped stirrups, the rifle, the camel's saddle and harness, the shields and long spears of the different tribes of the Sahara.

Not far from the Mosque Djedid, on the eastern side of the Place du Gouvernement, is the fruit, flower, and vegetable market, held daily from early morning until within an hour of noon. Standing at seven o'clock in summer at the top of the flight of steps leading from the Rue Bab-Azzoun to the Place de Chartres—beside the house which is built on the spot formerly occupied by the prison where the European slaves were lodged—the scene before us is most picturesque. A large square, crowded with temporary stalls trembling beneath heavy loads of almost every kind of fruit and vegetable the country produces; the many shades of green blended with purple and gold, the different colours of the vegetables and the varied hues of the bouquets of flowers, the whole broken up by the figures of the Maltese and Spanish market-women—easily distinguished by the bright red and yellow handkerchiefs bound round their heads—and the crowds of early customers, both Christian and Mussulman, who come trooping in on every side. A stranger would be an exceedingly bad purchaser to send to market there; for to him or her, as the case might be, everything would appear cheap. When you are asked five sous a pound for beautiful bunches of Mascarra grapes, a penny for half a dozen large green figs, a few sous for a melon, and threepence or fourpence for a bouquet which would cost you five shillings in Covent Garden, you dare not bargain. I have often visited the market on the Place de Chartres, and have purchased for a franc as much fruit and as many flowers as I could carry, and it has as often happened to me on reaching home to learn that I had been charged a *prix d'Anglais*.

Any of the streets ascending the hill from the Place de Chartres—which may almost be considered as the extreme limit of the European town—will lead immediately to the Mahomedan quarter. Here will be found obscure and frequently vaulted narrow thoroughfares, resembling alleys, bordered by houses, where the monotony of the bare plaster walls is only broken at wide intervals by small casements crossed with iron bars, and low arched doorways. There are no gardens or verdure, and hardly a foot of even sickly looking vine or fig tree dying amidst the rubbish of its crossways; there are mosques so surrounded by buildings that they can hardly be seen, vapour baths whither people go mysteriously, the men at night, the women in the day time. In a word, the Mahomedan quarter of Algiers is a compact and confused mass of masonry, where almost every vestige of life is hidden, and where it seems as if it were forbidden that gaiety should be heard. The doors of the houses are never opened but half way, and they then close again by their own weight. Everything looks suspicious about these curious buildings, which are admirably adapted for their masters' love of secresy. The small casements looking on to the street are barred, and every kind of precaution is taken against curiosity from without and indiscretion from within. Inside these bare, dismal-looking walls and massive doors, resembling the gates of citadels, are the two great mysteries of the country—namely, the personal fortune of its inhabitants, and its women, of neither of which much is known. Money hardly circulates. It is only seen passing from the hand of an Arab to an Arab hand, and is only used to purchase the ordinary daily necessities of life, and jewellery. The women go out but seldom. In public they are invariably closely veiled, and the baths which are their usual places of resort are inviolable. Passing along these lonely alleys, beside these silent dwellings, one hears noises which are almost imperceptible to the human ear, and whispers which might be mistaken for sighs. At times it is the sound of a voice coming through an aperture in the wall, or descending from the terrace on the roof of the house; at others it is the whimpering of a child, complaining in a strange tongue, whose lisp mingled with sobs has no signification for a foreign ear; at others again it is the strain of an instrument, whose unique note, slowly marking the measure of an unheard song, seems to accompany a dream. It is thus that the captive consoles herself, dreaming of a liberty which she has never had, and which she cannot understand. There is an Arab proverb which says: "When a woman has seen the guest she cares no more for her husband," and upon this precept the whole system of conjugal life among Mahomedans is based. Their houses, whether they be agreeable or not to those by whom they are inhabited, whether their interiors be luxurious or poor, are prisons. They are like iron safes, of which the avaricious masters have the keys, and within which they lock up all their secrets, so that no one may know what they possess.

At times you come upon a Moorish *café*, where Arabs are squatted on wooden benches resembling shelves, smoking long pipes or cigarettes and sipping coffee, while others are engaged in games of draughts or lie sleeping on the floor; or a barber's shop with its small looking-glasses in frames of many colours, where one of the "faithful" is having his head shaved, leaving only a tuft on the crown, which is for the Prophet to hold him by when taking him to Paradise; or you find yourself gazing into an open shop, where the goods are piled up in disorderly heaps, as if the seller, who is dozing in their midst, were afraid of their being seen; or, where a couple of men, squatted on the ground in front of a little stove, are engaged in setting precious stones into rudely fashioned jewellery. A few steps farther on the warbling of nightingales, confined in little porcupine-quill cages hanging from the slanting roof, breaks the death-like silence of the neighbourhood, while beneath them, seated side by side on grass mats, are Moorish youths, with pieces of embroidered leather on their knees and skeins of gold thread and silk of various hues behind their ears, occupied in embroidering those costly saddles and sets of harness which are the admiration of every foreigner who visits the country. These youths have an exceedingly effeminate look about them, and were it not for their masculine attire might easily be mistaken for women, with their languid looking eyes, their pencilled eye-brows and lashes, and their round beardless faces, showing handsome but perfectly inexpressive features, without a shadow of anything resembling resolution in them. They are gifted with a kind of baby beauty which is never manly until they reach an age when youth itself has become effaced by the gravity of years. Then there are the dealers in pots and pans, with their many kinds of curiously shaped pottery-ware grouped together on the ground. There are pans wherein a French cook would boil her *pot-au-feu*, pitchers which are used by the Arab women to fetch water from the public fountains, antique looking Kabyle jars, little charcoal and incense burners, utensils for cooking *couscousson*, terra-cotta water coolers, and the bottomless earthenware vases over one end of which the Arabs stretch a skin and thus make the *tarbouka*, an instrument which is something between a drum and a tambourine, and upon which Mussulman musicians beat the measure with their fingers at every *fête* or religious ceremony, producing that peculiar *tum-tum* which never fails to attract one's attention while strolling through the town in the cool of the evening. You may stand in front of any of these open shops—which are never more than twelve feet deep by six feet broad, with the whitewashed walls either bare or partially covered with the tenant's produce—and watch what is going on within without any fear of being disturbed, for unless you happen to be standing in the light of any of the inmates not one of them will even raise his head. They appear, and possibly are, ignorant of your presence. They work in an indolent kind of manner, without any attempt at rapidity, chanting from time to time a verse or two from the Koran, watching the evolutions of the gold fish in a glass globe before them, or listening to the warbling of the nightingales above their heads.

Such is Algiers of the present day; a place where the invalid, or the man who is fond of a wandering life, may for a time live cheaper and more agreeably than on the northern shore of the Mediterranean; a spot where the tourist will find a deal to amuse and interest him; but if he wishes to study the native away from all the luxuries of European civilisation, he must take up his abode in the hills of Kabylia and wander amidst the oases of the Sahara.

EDWARD HENRY VIZETELLY.

TWO IRISH SONGS.

I.

OCHONE! Patrick Blake,
You're off up to Dublin,
And sure for your sake
I'm the terrible trouble in;
For I thought that I knew
What my "Yes" and my "No" meant,
Till I tried it on you
That misfortunate moment.
But somehow I find,
Since I sent Pat away,
Must be in my mind
I was wishful he'd stay.

While ago the young rogue
Came and softly stooped over,
And gave me a pogue
As I stretched in the clover:
How I boxed his two ears,
And axed him "How dare he?"
Now I'd let him for years—
'Tis the way women vary;
For somehow I find, &c.

Oh, why wouldn't he wait,
To put his *comether*
Upon me complete,
When we both were together?
But no! Patrick, no;
You must have me consenting
Too early, and so
Kitty's late for repenting.
For somehow I find,
Since I've sent Pat away,
Must be in my mind
I was wishful he'd stay.

II.

Oh! Kitty O'Hea,
I'm the terrible trouble in,
For you're at Rossbeh
And myself is in Dublin,
Through mistaking, bedad!
Your blushes and that trick
Of sighing you had
Showed a softness for Patrick;
And yet from my mind
A voice seems to speak:—
"*Go back, and you'll find*
That she's fond of you, Blake!"

Oh! Dublin is grand,
As all must acknowledge,
With the Bank on one hand,
On the other the College.
I'd be proud to be Mayor
Of so splendid a city,
But I'd far sooner share
A cabin with Kitty;
And I may so some day,
For that voice in my mind
Keeps seeming to say:—
"*After all she'll be kind.*"

Oh! Dublin is fine
With her ships on the river,
And her elegant line
Of bridges for ever.
But, Kitty, my dear,
I'd exchange them this minute
For our small little pier
And my boat, and you in it.
And I may so some day, &c.

Here you've beautiful squares
For all to be gay in,
Promenading in pairs,
With the band music playing;

But if I'd my choice,
  Where our green hollies glisten,
To Kitty's sweet voice
  I'd much rather listen.
      And I may so some day, &c.

Here's a wonderful park,
  Where the wild beasts are feeding,
For the world like Noah's Ark
  Or the Garden of Eden!
But, faix! of the two,
  I'd rather be sitting
Manœuv'ring, aroo!
  With your comical kitten.
      And I may so some day, &c.

Yes, Dublin's a Queen,
  With her gardens and waters,
And her buildings between,
  For her sons and her daughters;
In learning so great,
  So lovely and witty;
But she isn't complete
  At all without Kitty.
      And that voice in my mind—
        Go back to the South!—
      So I will then and find
        What you mean from her mouth.

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES.

OUR NATIONAL COAL CELLAR.

THERE could scarcely be a more alarming circumstance, even in these sensational times, than for Britannia to wake up some fine day and discover that her coal cellar was empty, and that she had worked away at it so recklessly and carelessly that there were not enough "black diamonds" to light the fire with, much less to set her factories and railways going. It is bad enough for the householder to be told when he comes down in the morning that the coals are out, and that he will, consequently, have to breakfast without a fire, even if he should be lucky enough to have one in the kitchen wherewith to boil the water and make the toast; but it would be infinitely worse for the millowner to find that his mill cannot be started—for the traveller to discover that no train or steamboat will take its departure—for the millions of hands which earn their bread by manufacturing and mechanical industry to hear that there will be no bread for them that day,—all for the lack of coals. People seldom think how utterly England depends upon her primeval forests for everything that makes up national life; and that if the alarm which has been raised of late years were a true one, it would be equivalent to saying that her star was set for ever; that not all the patriotism or the expediency of the wisest statesman that ever lived—not all the genius of the greatest inventor—not all the talk of the most garrulous reformers could ever set her right again, or be worth to her as much as a single acre of black, smudgy coal. There can be no doubt about it that England's true greatness lies, like Daniel Lambert's, in her inside; and once a vacuum is there, she may take her name off the roll of nations.

When we come to think of the interests involved in such a possibility, we cannot be surprised to find that the subject has more or less occupied the attention of scientific men for several years past, or that the results of their calculations have not altogether tallied with each other. Still, though the inconsistencies have been so great as to cause people to pooh-pooh the whole thing, everybody has come to the same conclusion—that we are working away at our coal in an exceedingly wasteful fashion, that unless we alter our ways the duration of our coal supplies will be very considerably curtailed, and that we may even feel the restriction in our own generation. It may, indeed, be said that when Londoners are paying nearly 40s. per ton for their coals in the summer season the restriction has already commenced; but as these unprecedented prices do not arise so much from any real scarcity, as from the disturbed state of the labour market, it does not apply to the present article. When we are gone, too, there are our heirs to be thought of; and we are bound as an honest nation to remember our posterity, although there are, unfortunately, too many people whose motto is "After me, the deluge."

Although this coal question has been a favourite subject with many geologists and physicists, it scarcely took a definite shape until Mr. Hull, the present Director of the Irish Geological Survey, wrote his very interesting little work on the Coalfields of Great Britain, in which he fixed the probable duration of our supplies at 450 years.

Sir Wm. Armstrong, the President of the British Association, during its session at Newcastle-on-Tyne, in 1863, made a great point of this question, and argued it at considerable length in his opening address; and this was followed up two years afterwards in an exhaustive treatise by Prof. Jevons, of Owens College, Manchester. So far the subject had only reached the stage of ordinary scientific discussion, in which each man thought and spoke as was right in his own eyes; and as there were no strictly elaborated data upon which calculations could be founded, it is no wonder that the figures differed from each other most amazingly, as we see by the following table of the results of various observers:—

Author.	Date.	Duration of Supply.
MacNab	1792	360
Bailey	1801	200
Thomson	1814	1,000
Bakewell	—	350
Taylor	1830	1,727
Buckland	1830	400
Greenwell	1846	331
Hall	1854	365
Hull	1861	450
Jevons	1865	110

Soon after the date of this last author, it speedily became of national importance for us to know as definitely as possible how much coal was left in the cellar, and the rate at which we could afford to take it away; and a Royal Commission was appointed in 1866, with powers to fully investigate the subject in all its bearings, and to take such ulterior steps as might seem best.

Blue Books are unfortunately so verbose and diffusive, and indeed most scientific writings of this class are so technical, that the general reader is seldom able or willing to pick out the practical and interesting points from what may be called the professional portion; and I propose to show in this article as plainly as possible the working and results of this momentous inquiry, so that we may ascertain, with some degree of precision, how long we may expect to enjoy that eminently British institution—our fireside.

The Commission, with due regard to the many collateral points that were certain to crop up, commenced their inquiries under four principal heads, which were:—

1st. How much coal does the United Kingdom contain altogether, and how much of it is available?

2nd. Does coal exist under other strata, where we may reasonably expect to get at it?

3rd. At what rate are we using our coal?

4th. How can we improve our mode of working, and thus economise it?

Each one of these questions opened up a large and interesting field in the various sciences of geology, political economy, mechanics, and statistics, and necessitated the most elaborate arrangement of divisional labour; for with regard to the first question alone, there were thirty-seven coalfields to be examined. Some of these, it is true, were insignificant in area and, geologically considered, were mere outliers of other larger basins. The latter, however, were so important that they demanded careful sub-division, assisted by the paid services of professional experts.

Before going into the results of these inquiries, my readers may like to know how the process is arrived at of estimating the quantity of coal which is hidden in the bowels of the earth, and which we cannot of course measure by actual rule and line. Land can easily be measured, and the purchaser can verify for himself the statements of the seller; but it is quite different with a coal property, which, for the time it lasts, is even more valuable. But in reality it is a matter of very simple calculation, in which the area under which the coals lie is first of all computed—an easy task, seeing that the progress of geological knowledge enables us to define with the utmost exactness the boundaries of all our coalfields. The next point is to ascertain the number of seams of coal and their respective thicknesses; and here we may meet with a difficulty, for it seldom happens that the same seam maintains exactly the same thickness in its course through the whole basin—sometimes it thins away to almost nothing, while on the other hand it may become very much thicker. But the difficulty is met by taking one seam with another and averaging them. Given, therefore, a certain area *above* ground and so many seams *below*, it is easy to compute how many acres of coal there are, and to reduce them to tons according to the average thickness of the seams. Occasionally it happens that the calculation is abruptly interfered with by what is known as a fault, in which, owing to certain physical disturbances, the seam of coal may be displaced. Sometimes a seam which is all right on one side the fault is not to be found at all upon the other, while the displacement may vary from a yard or two to 1,000 ft. But, fortunately, all these faults are now so well known by our mining engineers that no practical difficulty arises on this score. What, therefore, is done every day on a small coal property was applied to the whole country by the Commission, and the extent of the labour may be imagined when I mention that the South Wales coalfield (one of our largest) required twenty-six separate plans or sub-divisions, which, with the accompanying vertical sections and summaries, represented a pile of figures sufficient to have driven even the calculating boy into a paroxysm of despair.

The result of the combined inquiries on question 1 was that Great Britain possesses, more or less, 146,480,000,000 tons of coal, of which 90,207,000,000 tons are immediately available. I will deal with this latter amount first, because it is the material that is actually to hand, and at which we are now working. Theoretically, however, we may add to it 7,320,840,722 tons, which are known to exist in the same collieries, but too deep for us to reach them in our present state of mining knowledge; and this fact opens up a discussion of the greatest possible interest—viz., how deep can we work?—or, in other words, what is the greatest depth at which human life can exist for a certain length of time? It is believed that 4,000 ft. may be reached, though at present there is no colliery in Britain deeper than 2,058 ft. (at Dukinfield in Cheshire), and no metalliferous mine deeper than that of Gwennap in Cornwall, which is 1,740 ft., so that even on this point we are still rather theoretical, and are founding our calculations completely on past experience.

The difficulty is almost entirely one of temperature, which at 50 ft. deep is usually 50° Fahrenheit, but after that point increases at the rate of 1° to every 60 ft. The depth at which the temperature would be at blood heat, or 98°, is nearly 3,000 ft., and Dr. Sanderson, who has paid much attention to these matters, is of opinion that it is not practicable to work at a temperature above blood heat, except at very short intervals. At 4,000 ft., therefore, the temperature would be 116°, at which work would be impossible. It is true that men can exist and work, under certain conditions, at even greater heat, such as is found in glass-houses, stoke-holes, or in tropical countries; but the air in these cases is dry, and can be borne much more readily than when it is humid or moist. It is true, also, that in a copper mine in Cornwall of great depth, where also a hot spring existed, the temperature near the spring was 117°, and the air, moreover, was moist; but in this particular instance the workmen could retire instantly into fresh air, though even with this advantage they could only work for three hours out of the twenty-four. Even supposing a parallel case to exist in a coal mine of this depth, I should like to know at what price we should get our coals, if the colliers could only work for this brief spell of time. Again, when pits are not of very great depth, it is common to find two or more shafts sunk on the same property, by which a better system of ventilation is secured; but in a case of a depth of 3,000 or more feet, the expense would forbid more than one shaft, and consequently a large coal area, which from the increased depth and temperature demands the maximum of ventilation, would be more likely on account of this expense to obtain the minimum. Every colliery owner knows that the deeper is his pit and the more extensive are the workings, the greater are the risks of danger and the cost of bringing out the coals. There is certainly this to be said, that in general we find that the deepest pits are the driest, and therefore the high temperature can be better put up with in them than in shallower pits, where the air is moister; but even making allowance for this, I fear that we must for the present dismiss the 7,320,840,722 tons which lie below 4,000 ft., as utterly impracticable, and also a good share of that which lies between 3,000 ft. and 4,000 ft.

Still it was by no means unreasonable of the Commission to include these depths within a practicable possibility, for our scientific means of application increase so fast that there is no saying whether, by the time that we want these coals, we shall not be in a position to work them economically, and with due regard to life. It seems to me that the coal-cutting machine will be the principal means to this end, by doing away with the necessity of employing so many colliers, and by introducing the most complete form of ventilation, through the compressed air with which the machine is worked. He would indeed be a rash man who would dare to predict what the next hundred years may bring forth in the way of technical inventions; and, fortunately for us, that date comes within the period during which even the greatest alarmists allow us full use of our present supplies.

To solve the difficulty of ascertaining that there were 56,273,000,000 tons of coal lying under *other* strata than those of the coal-bearing era, was entrusted to four of our most eminent geologists: Professors Ramsay, Jukes, and Geikie, and Mr. Prestwich—Mr. Hull taking Mr. Jukes's place at his death—this part of the question being one of pure science rather than of mining experience. There is no occasion for me in the present article to go into the many theories about the deposition of coal (on which, after all, geologists are tolerably well agreed), but it will suffice to state briefly that when the coalfields were originally formed, each seam was laid horizontally over its predecessor, separated by a varying mass of what was afterwards sandstone and slate. Disturbances eventually arose in the interior of the earth, and the once smooth and horizontal beds were shaken up in all sorts of curves and rolls, like a series of billows at sea. Then, in course of ages, another element came into play, which sadly interfered with the regular shape and outline of what I may call these coal waves, viz., the element of denudation, by which the highest and most exposed portion of the seams, which were of course the tops of the waves, were wasted, ground down, and carried away by the action of water or ice to help form the material for the new worlds that were to succeed; and the result of all this naturally was that a "solution of continuity" (in medical language) occurred, by the destruction of the top of the curve, leaving the lower or protected portion untouched; each of these portions, therefore, became a separate coal basin.

In the course of geological ages the strata of the new worlds called the Permian and New Red Sandstone were afterwards deposited horizontally on the upturned edges of the coal basin, or, as geologists call it, unconformably. Some of these newer rocks have themselves been carried away by denudation, while others have been left, and it is therefore easy to see how a considerable tract of Permian or New Red Sandstone may overlie and conceal a valuable coalfield.

It becomes, therefore, a simple question of geological measurement as to the thickness of these superficial coverings, and of calculation as to whether the game is worth the candle—or, in other words, whether it will pay to sink through them to the coal beneath. It is, of course, an expensive proceeding, according to the amount of rock to be bored through; but it has already been done successfully by the Duke of Newcastle at Shireoaks in Nottinghamshire, where the top hard measure of coal was reached in 515 yards; and also by Earl Granville on his coal property in Shropshire. The value of this geological knowledge is therefore completely demonstrated by our ascertaining that there are 56,273,000,000 tons lying under these newer rocks, to be won some day or other. Professor Ramsay, in a recent address to the Dudley Geological Society, declared that more coal lay at workable depths than appeared in the fields. The South Staffordshire field was supposed to contain 3,201,672,216 tons, but beneath the Permian beds adjoining were 10,380,000,000 tons; the Warwickshire field contained 458,652,714 tons, but the concealed area 2,494,000,000 tons; the Leicestershire field held 836,799,734 tons, while beneath the Permian were 1,790,000,000 tons. But geologists have been bolder than even this, and have argued from collateral signs and appearances in other places that coal may exist in districts which have hitherto been considered perfectly guiltless of it. What should we say if we were told that a productive coalpit might possibly be sunk near London? And yet this is held out to us in sober earnest by Mr. Godwen Austen, who, reasoning from the fact that coal is found under the chalk in France, within thirty miles of Calais, argues that the seams probably set in again nearer Calais, and are prolonged up the line of the Thames valley parallel with the North Downs—in fact, that the Belgian, French, and English coalfields were all once continuous, and that our present basins are mere fragments of them. Mr. Prestwich also agrees with this view, and believes that coal may be found in the south of England at a depth of from 1,000 to 1,200 feet. It is fair to state, on the other hand, that the late Sir Roderick Murchison dissented from this view; but the statements of the eminent geologists to whom I have referred are so well reasoned out, that I consider them to be at least possible, if not altogether probable; and if there ever was a case where a certain sum of national money might be devoted to a speculation in consideration of the possible enormous value to be realised, I think we have one here, in the shape of half a dozen trial shafts in certain localities to be indicated by these geologists. Perhaps the Channel tunnel scheme may give us something more than a tunnel—it may give us indications of a coalfield; although, as the cuttings are to be made entirely through the grey chalk, they are not likely to be deep enough for any other purpose. What a godsend to Londoners would a coal-pit be within thirty or forty miles of London! and what a thrill of terror it would strike into the hearts of the coal owners and coal merchants, who at present have us entirely at their mercy and fatten upon us!

Question 3 is a most important one, viz.—At what rate are we working our coal? or, in other words, the question of waste. This, again, necessitates a division of inquiry: into the waste of working and the waste in using. The former of these two points is strictly professional, and I shall therefore be brief with it; but in the other we are all interested, and most of us have to cry *Peccavi:* from the great millionaire who employs ten thousand men in his iron furnaces, down to Paterfamilias, who determines, come what will, that he will have a good fire after dinner and make himself comfortable. With regard to waste in working, all collieries are not worked on the same method, but the different coalfields have different systems, and so sometimes have neighbouring collieries in the same field, according to the thickness and character of the coals. Speaking broadly, the two systems most commonly in use in Great Britain are those of the "pillar and stall" and the "longwall." In the pillar and stall method, the coal is excavated from a certain area, pillars or props of coal being left pretty freely to keep the roof from falling in, thus securing the safety of the colliers, and preventing the coal itself from being crushed. This system is prevalent mostly in the Newcastle and the northern basins. On the longwall system the coal is worked systematically in one open face, with little galleries or "headings" run into it, the propping up of the roof being performed by timber, so that no coal is obliged to be left behind. This is considered the most economical and safest method of working, as the task of extracting the coal that forms the pillars is so exceedingly dangerous that it is generally a Hobson's choice to leave them where they are, thus creating an unavoidable waste. Again, in consequence of neglect of sufficient propping, whether it be by coal or timber, an immense quantity of small coal is made underground and left there; while, above ground, the waste in small by careless handpicking and screening is something enormous. At the mouths of most pits small coal was until very lately a perfect nuisance, and was scarcely thought worth the loading; but colliery owners have begun to find out that there are means of utilising it and making it pay, just as they do the large coal. Various plans are now in use for mixing the small with some bituminous substance and then compressing it by machinery into blocks, by which it is made portable and worth its carriage. This is the origin of most of the "patent fuels" now in the market. There are also other technical reasons for the waste of coal in the working. Sometimes two colliery owners cannot agree upon a joint course of action to keep the water out of their respective properties, as has lately been the case to a great extent in North Staffordshire. Here the coal owners have been such jealous idiots that they have allowed acres upon acres of coal to be flooded and pit after pit to be stopped rather than put their hands in their pockets at once and establish a systematic process of pumping and draining. The subscription of a few hundreds from each coal owner involved would have prevented the loss of some hundreds of thousands of pounds, that must infallibly take place before the North Staffordshire field is dry again. It is not requisite for me to pursue this subject of waste in working, but the value of the question is evident from the report of the Commission, which says :—" At present, under favourable systems of working the ordinary and unavoidable loss is about ten per cent., whilst, in a larger number of instances, when the system of working practised is not suited to the peculiarities of the seams, the ordinary waste and loss amount to sometimes as much as forty per cent."

Waste in the use of coal is, unhappily, almost universal ; and here it would seem that theory is very far in advance of practice, for, theoretically, a pound of pure coal is equal to the power of lifting 10,800,000 lb. one foot high, and should evaporate 13 lb. of water; whereas in practice it has never lifted above 1,200,000 lb., or evaporated 4 lb. of water, and this under the most favourable conditions. As regards our manufacturing waste, the ironmasters until recently have been the greatest defaulters, and from ignorance of the economy of fuel, and carelessness engendered by having such immense supplies at their disposal, they have wasted millions and millions of tons. But the science of metallurgy is now better understood, and great reforms have taken place within the last few years. Hot air has been introduced into the blast furnaces instead of cold air, and, still more recently, the waste gases which escaped from the top of the furnace and lighted up the country for miles round have been intercepted by a kind of extinguisher and conveyed beneath the boiler, where they are made to do duty instead of coal in heating it. Most of the furnaces in South Wales are now heated in this manner, but in South Staffordshire the old system is still much in vogue, and the Black Country, which is so intensely dreary by day, is lighted up grandly at night, though at a very considerable expense. The size and shape of the furnaces, too, are matters which are better understood, and it is stated that within the last ten years a saving of twenty per cent. in the consumption of coal has taken place, combined, too, with an increase in the make of iron. In the puddling forges and rolling mills there is still much room for improvement, for Mr. Menelaus, the manager of the Dowlais Works in South Wales, tells us that by allowing the heated gases to leave the furnaces at nearly the temperature of melting iron, sufficient heating power is wasted to produce all the steam required, without any additional coal, and that in this district alone a quarter of a million of tons is annually used in these forges which ought all to be saved. Considering, therefore, that of the 6,243 puddling furnaces at work in 1869, a very few only had adopted any arrangement for utilising this heat, it will be at once seen that a terrific waste is here represented. Mechanical invention, however, is now fully at work, and what with the improvements in furnaces, so as to secure more perfect combustion, and the adoption of Dank's or Dormoy's new mechanical puddling forges, which is likely to take place, the whole of this branch of the iron trade may be said to be in a state of transition for the better. The same may be said of the steel manufacture, in which Siemens's regenerating gas furnace is playing an important part; or the glass and pottery trades, where great economy is introduced by Hoffman's kilns, a model of which was in last year's exhibition at South Kensington. On our railways, too, great saving has been effected by the use of coal instead of coke, and it is said that the coal bill of the South Western Company is £30,000 a year less in consequence of this. I believe, by the way, that the Act which obliges railway companies to burn coke only is still in force, although in such a case as this one would scarcely wish the law to be respected. The iron trade alone consumes about 35,000,000 tons of coal every year, and the quantity used in domestic and other manufacturing purposes is upwards of 60,000,000 tons; and if we can save 25 or 30 per cent. without interfering with the results, the national importance of this investigation can scarcely be overrated. To come nearer home, nearly every English householder is a coal waster, and will continue to be so until he is freed from the thraldom of the ignorant builder, and is himself educated to know that the ordinary open fireplace is wrong in principle, as a matter of health, and utterly wasteful in its construction. Dr. Arnott showed long ago that the true way was to light the fire at the top, and gradually raise the coal as it burns down, so that the coal below, being heated by the lighted coal above, distils its vapour through it, and thus adds to the heat instead of giving forth smoke—for smoke, it cannot be too widely known, is heat and power in the wrong place. But an Englishman has been brought up to believe that unless he has a broad, open fireplace, with plenty of smoke going up the chimney, and sufficient room for him to stand in his favourite attitude and bask in the heat *a tergo*, he is deprived of his birthright, and it will take a great many Dr. Arnotts to convince him that he is wrong, and double that number to induce him to alter his ways even after conviction.

In conclusion, I must briefly touch on the duration of time which may possibly elapse before that fatal day arrives when our coal cellars are declared to be empty. Professor Jevons's computation of 110 years is happily discarded as that of an alarmist, and an elaborate series has been constructed for the Commission by Mr. Price Williams, on the principle of diminishing rates of increase in the consumption according to the population, for he considers that during the last few years the annual increase has passed through a maximum point, and that it is now diminishing, and is likely to do so. On this calculation he is enabled to fix the date of exhaustion at 360 years. According to another or arithmetical computation the coal will only last 276 years, though it may equally happen that the population and the consumption of coal may remain constant, or only oscillate, and in this case we have coal enough for 1,273 years. The Commissioners very properly observe that "whatever views may be taken of the question of duration of coal, the results will be subject to contingencies which cannot in any degree be foreseen. On the one hand the rate of consumption may be thrown back to any extent by adverse circumstances affecting our national prosperity; and, on the other hand, new discoveries and developments in new directions may arise to produce a contrary effect upon the consumption of coal. Every hypothesis must be speculative, but it is certain that if the present rate of increase in the consumption be indefinitely continued, even in an approximate degree, the progress towards the exhaustion of our coal will be very rapid, though the *absolute* exhaustion is a stage which will probably never be reached." In one sense the "adverse circumstances" have already happened, although they cannot be said to be as yet affecting our national prosperity; but in the month of July last so small was the output of our northern collieries, from strikes and disinclination of the highly-paid colliers to work, that the traffic on the South Durham and North Yorkshire lines was less by 14,000 tons a week than in the corresponding week of the year before.* Now, though the sentence just quoted from the Report of the Commission is only another way of saying scientifically that we know very little of what is going to happen, no one can deny that a great national duty has been performed in drawing attention to the subject, even as a preventive measure. It is not likely that we shall ever come to grief for want of coal, for when our own is done there are the inexhaustible fields of Nova Scotia and North America to fall back upon, even supposing we have not learnt to do without coal by substituting electricity, magnetism, psychic force, or, more simple still, abstracting some glowing hydrogen vapour from the sun. Who knows?

PHILLIPS BEVAN, F.G.S.

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* See *Times*, July 30, 1872.

GREAT YARMOUTH.*

THERE is, perhaps, in all the eastern counties of England, no place more worthy of a visit from the classic antiquary than Yarmouth. Its eccentric growth and formation upon a sandy delta at the mouth of three rivers—the Waveney, the Wansum, and the Bure; its connection in turn with Roman, Danish, and Saxon history; the curious disposition of its narrow streets or "rows," as they are termed, at right angles to each other, with the houses planted so closely that in many of them it is almost possible to shake hands out of the upper windows; its herring fishery, its herring-curing industry, and the quaint old habits and customs which still survive in these ancient "rows"—all combine to invest the fair town of "Yermuthe" with an interest peculiarly its own, and to render it worthy of a solemn "perlustration" by a local antiquary of high attainments, such as it has found in Mr. Palmer.

We are not about to give an epitome of the history and antiquities of Yarmouth, for which, indeed, we have neither space nor time; but, taking Mr. Palmer's "Perlustration" as our guide, we will endeavour to give our readers a brief description of this ancient place, and of

> The things of fame
> Which do renown this borough.

Our readers will see at once that the historical associations of Great Yarmouth are neither few nor poor.

Mr. Palmer, following the best authorities, identifies Burgh Castle with the Garianonum of the Romans, who had also their *æstiva*, or summer camp, at Caistor. Almost halfway between the two places, as years rolled on, the three rivers began to deposit large heaps of sand and other *débris* at the entrance of the estuary where they debouched; and as these ridges of sand formed a convenient spot for the hardy fishermen to dry their nets upon, there gradually sprang up a town, whose inhabitants were of the old Saxon stock, planted there by Cerdic and his followers, with a strong infusion of the Danish element also. It was not very long before the date of the Norman

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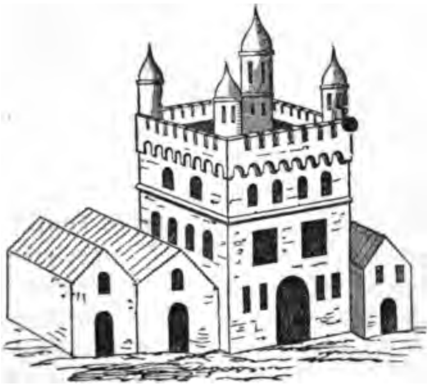
* The Perlustration of Great Yarmouth, with Gorleston and Southtown. By C. J. Palmer, F.S.A. (Great Yarmouth: G. Nall, 1872.)

Conquest that the first houses came to be erected on the sandy strip of beach between the rivers already mentioned and the sea; and the result was that in the days of Edward the Confessor the town reckoned "seventy burgesses." In the next century Herbert de Losinga, Bishop of Norwich, built, for the benefit of the fishermen and burgesses, a church dedicated to their patron saint, St. Nicholas; and shortly afterwards the religious orders of the day came to settle there. They appear to have divided the town between them: the Dominicans or Black Friars taking the south, the Franciscans or Grey Friars the centre, the Cistercians or White Friars the north; while the Augustinians settled in the suburbs of Gorleston and Southtown.

In consequence of the concourse of fishermen from different parts of England—especially, as stated in the records of the borough, from the Cinque Ports—the barons of the latter towns gradually contrived to establish and to exercise a jurisdiction of their own, sending their "bailiffs" to attend the fishery for forty days in each year during the herring season. The good town of Yarmouth, however, was too spirited and independent to "play second fiddle" to the men of Kent and Sussex; and, at the request of its inhabitants, Henry I. was graciously pleased to invest one of the residents with the authority of provost or mayor, the choice of the officer lying with the burgesses. Under this *régime* the town continued to exist and to flourish until the reign of King John, who, with all his follies, was wise enough to see the advantage of incorporating the rising towns in his dominions, and especially the seaports. He accordingly granted to the burgesses of Yarmouth a charter, the original of which is still kept in the Guildhall, and exhibited with pride. As an immediate consequence of this charter, the good town speedily rose in the tonnage of its vessels and in independence of character, so that in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it became the most important seaport between the Thames and the Humber.

The next step in the history of the town is the licence which its burgesses obtained from Henry III. to fortify it with walls and towers and a moat. The moat has long since been filled up; but of its ten gates and sixteen towers, and 2,200 yards of walls, several portions are standing, more or less entire. Upon the intervening space between the eastern wall and the sea—a piece of ground about a quarter of a mile in width, rendered bare by the receding of the waves—the modern town of Yarmouth is built, its noble marine drive stretching for some mile and a half pleasantly along by the seashore.

In the middle of the town, as our author tells, upon the authority of Manship, there was formerly "a castle or military forefence." It stood near Row No. 99 (which still bears the name of The Castle Row), and consisted of a square building or keep, having a turret or watch-tower at each corner, of which the subjoined is an illustration. The castle was in a very ruinous condition towards the middle of the sixteenth century, when it was conveyed to the corporation, who were desirous of converting it into a gaol, and proposed holding their courts there. To this end it was partially rebuilt and strengthened, but it seems to have been in too ruinous a state to be converted to the purposes intended; and, after serving for some time as a beacon-tower, it was finally demolished about the year 1620.



YARMOUTH CASTLE (16TH CENTURY).

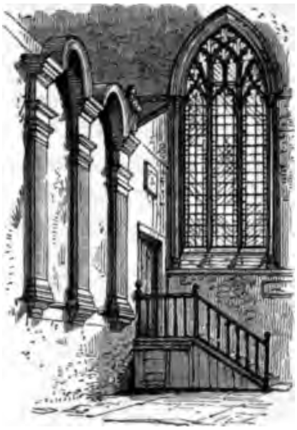
Prior to the introduction of gunpowder, the walls of the town, as they then stood, were deemed a sufficient protection to the inhabitants from all assaults that were likely to befall them; but upon the declaration of war against France and Scotland by Henry VIII., it was considered advisable to strengthen the fortification by the erection of several additional outworks, the walls of the east side being ramparted up, and backed with earth. These works were brought to a state of completion by Queen Elizabeth shortly before the coming of the Spanish Armada. After the alarm occasioned by the Spanish Armada had subsided, the burgesses of Yarmouth raised a huge mound of earth outside the southern gate to command the river and the South Denes, crowning it with large pieces of ordnance: the place is still known as South Mount. It was by this southern gate that William III. entered, when he landed at Yarmouth in 1692, on which occasion he was sumptuously entertained by the municipal authorities.

Along the broad esplanade known as the South Quay stand many of the mansions of the more wealthy inhabitants, and among them one formerly tenanted by Ireton or Bradshaw, which has a special interest on account of its large drawing-room having been the room in which the execution of Charles I. was resolved upon. This house, which was restored to its original condition a few years since, was until lately occupied by Mr. Charles J. Palmer, F.S.A., the accomplished author of the book which forms the subject of this notice, who is well known as an antiquary, and as a man of great taste and public spirit; and to whose influence is mainly due the preservation of many antiquities relating to the borough and its immediate neighbourhood. Another building worthy of mention on the South Quay is the Star Hotel, which contains some very fine oak carving, affording evidence—if any were wanted—of the wealth of the town a century or so ago, when these mansions were occupied by the merchant princes of Yarmouth.

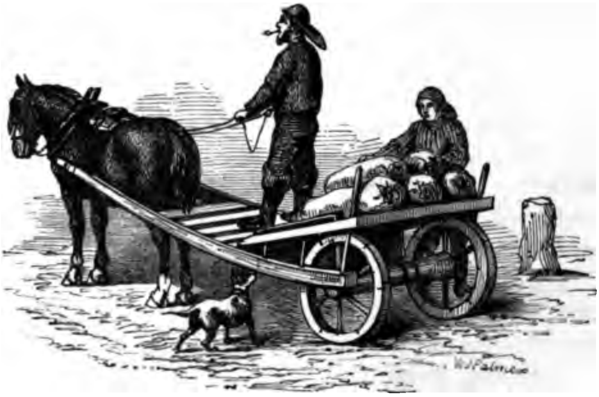
The Town Hall, which also stands upon the South Quay, was built in 1716, and the Naval Hospital (now occupied as a Naval Lunatic Asylum) was erected in 1809-11, at a cost of £120,000. Among the other public buildings of Yarmouth we may mention the Armoury and Naval Arsenal, built under Wyatt in 1806, when Yarmouth Roads were the head-quarters of the British fleet. The place was calculated to hold stores for six ships and six sloops, and 10,000 stand of arms; but the establishment was broken up about ten years ago, when the place was turned into a militia barrack. Then there are the Theatre, built in 1778; the Baths and Public Rooms adjoining; and the Custom House, a handsome building on the South Quay, formerly the residence of the Sayers family.

The parish church, dedicated to St. Nicholas, is a fine cross-shaped building, of unusually large dimensions, and formerly contained sixteen chapels. Before the Reformation this church was rich in its decorations, and celebrated for the "Miracle Plays" performed within its walls; but judging from the items entered in the church muniments still preserved, the chief glory of St. Nicholas's Church seemed to be a certain "Miraculous Star." One of the items in these accounts mentions the "leading in" of the Miraculous Star, and the making of a new one; and another, the making of a "thread line" and a new "forelock" for the "Paschal." This church is said to have been formerly rich in monumental brasses; but these relics of other days were all removed in 1551, and "sent up to London to be cast into weights for the use of the town." Within the last few years the church has been to a very great extent restored.

The vestry of the old unrestored Church of St. Nicholas was removed in 1846; it stood at the north-west corner of the north aisle, and was approached by stairs as in the annexed engraving. The library belonging to the church was kept in this vestry, and was a very extensive and valuable one. The garden ground adjoining the church-yard of St. Nicholas once formed part of the monastic demesne—a priory and church for monks of the Benedictine order, founded here in 1100 by Bishop Herbert de Losinga. In these grounds are still standing many a pear and mulberry tree planted by the monks of old,—and one of the latter is said to be the largest in the east of England. Towards the end of the last and beginning of the present century a considerable addition was made to the importance of Yarmouth: for it became the chief rendezvous for the fleet, and Nelson (himself a Norfolk man) was frequently staying there. In honour of the great naval hero a column was erected on the South Denes in 1817-18, by a public subscription in the county of Norfolk.

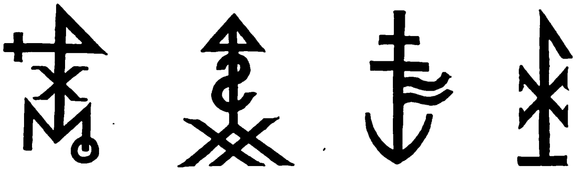


The narrow lanes, or "rows," which form the greater part of Yarmouth, are upwards of 150 in number, and very many of them have a particularly foreign appearance. They are mostly unpaved, and so narrow that common waggons and carts cannot go up or down them; but the people use instead a curious vehicle, called a Yarmouth cart, consisting of a narrow frame, of which the front part constitutes the shafts, while the hinder part rests upon a single pair of wheels. One of these vehicles is here represented; the cut being kindly lent to us by Mr. Palmer.

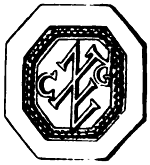


A YARMOUTH CART.

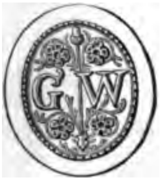
Mr. Palmer tells us in a foot-note to his notice of the merchant princes of Yarmouth that it was the practice during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries for the principal merchants to adopt a peculiar mark, by which their respective goods were distinguished, and with which they sealed them, as with a coat of arms, after the manner of the trade-marks of our own time. These devices were generally a combination of a cross and the user's initials, thus serving as monograms. Amongst others, Mr. Palmer gives representations of the merchants' marks used by the families of Bartilmew, Smith, Ellis, and Fen, which we here reproduce.



Some of the merchants' marks appear to have been more elaborately worked out, as the accompanying device will show; it is engraved on a ring found at Yarmouth, and bears the merchant's mark, with the initials, "C. G.," and is supposed to have been the signet of Charles Gooch, who died in 1650. The monogram used by George Ward, another merchant, and apparently a man of some note in Yarmouth, was also engraved and used as a seal: a representation of it is here given.



It is unnecessary in this brief notice of the town of Yarmouth to do more than give a passing allusion to its fisheries, which are of ancient celebrity; suffice it to say that the mackerel fishery realises many thousands annually, and employs a large number of vessels; whilst the herring fishery is even a greater source of profit to the town, as nearly double the number of boats and hands are engaged in it.



Just now, when people are trying to make up their minds where to go, let one who knows the Yarmouth waters advise a tour through this most interesting district.

OLD LOVES AND OLD LETTERS.

A REMARKABLE FAMILY HISTORY.

BY A LADY OF QUALITY.

THEN follows the passionate prayer I have referred to, for an interview with his "beloved," and to that end he invokes my grandmother's presence in London. This question of her coming to town had been mooted before, simply for the variety of the trip, and not in any way in connection with Miss Collins; but now Rotch not only seeks to hasten her movements, but to turn them to his own account.

"But now, my dear aunt," he proceeds, "about your visit to London. You must come before my beloved leaves London. If I do not see her to have some little conversation with her before she leaves London I am certain my feelings will prove fatal to my intellects.

"Indeed I am serious when I say so—I knew not how susceptible they were till I saw my pet in Bond Street last Saturday; and the perfect derangement of my ideas that followed on that glimpse (for I can call it no more) convinces me that I cannot long continue in the state I am at present.

"Could I have but one hour's *uninterrupted conversation* with J——a (an opportunity which has never but once occurred through the whole course of our acquaintance) I feel confident neither *her* health nor *mine* would be affected as it now is; but if matters are suffered to continue as they now are, *without our having such an interview*, *much indeed* have you *to dread for* BOTH OF US. If we could only have such an interview everything might stand as it now does, and we should still be happy and *in health!* *To* YOU, *my dear*, *dear aunt*, I look for this *necessary bliss!* I have not the beseeching countenance of my adored Jemima to place before you; but, if there be any language of entreaty more urgent than another, let me use it for this end. There are a thousand channels of appeal open to a tender heart like yours, but I will refrain from using them to your distress if you will only grant me this one request without it—*an interview with my Jemima!* This I must have! indeed I must! and if you do not assist me to it I shall really dread the consequences. I am not rash;

I am not thoughtless; but at this moment I see it so very possible that I must entreat it from you again and again.

"She has permission to speak to me if she meets me. I will carefully avoid this meeting till it can occur under your blessed auspices, and then indeed I will promise to profit by it only under your direction for the happiness of all parties.

"I do not wish to propose any alteration in present plans, but only to commune with that sainted spirit—indeed, *I cannot live without it!*

"Frank tells me she is looking very pale and unhappy. God knows she may well look thus! But God knows also she would not look thus could she but have one short hour's confab with the man of her choice. Oh, no, no, no! We must meet, dear Mrs. Reilly, indeed we must; and it only remains for you to say how!"

This meeting, however, Mrs. Reilly persistently declined to further. To come to London and escort Miss Collins, under the guise of a shopping expedition or some other such device, to a rendezvous with this passionate young lover—to whose ardently expressed desire for an elopement she almost yielded three or four months later—would have been, to say the least of it, a very hazardous adventure; so Mrs. Reilly remained at Highnam, and the meeting—like that so eagerly hoped-for Bath excursion—never took place.

In Mr. Rotch's next letter, which is postmarked the 6th of April, 1818, he alludes to a scolding he received from his correspondent, most probably in answer to his daring demand, and tells of how he had nearly, but not altogether, succeeded in snatching stolen converse with his lady-love; but the chance eluded him.

Alas for these lovers! Friends were stern and vigilant, and opportunities were scarce.

"*Sunday Evening.*

"My very dear Aunt,—I have just seen my beloved in the park. I scarcely dared to meet her eyes as she sat in the carriage; but we saw each other, and I know this was a mutual delight. After they had left the park, I rode home by their hotel. She was standing in the window, and blessed me as I passed with one of those plaintive smiles which have so often beamed upon me at H——m. She is, *thank Heaven!* LOOKING *well*, and God knows I hope she is so! I had a long confab with S——l on Friday afternoon, and he told me she was better in health than she had been for a long time, but I cannot place much reliance on his report. Oh, how anxiously do I wait a letter from you, which I hope I shall receive very soon after their arrival at home. Again and again have I seen my beloved since I last wrote to you, but never yet have met her in such a manner as to be able to speak to her. She has ever been in a carriage and I on foot, or vice versa, I on horseback and she on foot. A most cruel occurrence took place one day this week. I was on horseback and saw her drive in a carriage to the hotel door with another lady. I did not know if it was her mother or not, but at any rate her companion got out, and the carriage door was shut again with her alone in it. Thinking she was of course going to Wimpole Street, and not liking to be seen waiting about in so conspicuous a spot, I proceeded by some back streets which led to a distant part of Wimpole Street, meaning to meet the carriage before it reached 21, and stop it. I walked my horse slowly to the end of the street, and when I again reached the hotel could see nothing of the carriage. I thought it might have gone down Bond Street. I bent my way thither, and had the inexpressible mortification, just as I again arrived within sight of the hotel, to see her dear form just stepping from the carriage. Now, was not this too much for any man in love, my dear aunt, to bear patiently? It was the only opportunity I had ever had within my power of knowing she was alone, and yet I could not embrace it. Oh, dear! oh, dear! Mortified, disappointed, and heart-sick, I went home and wrote to you, but on reperusing my letter the following morning I thought I should get another scolding from you if I sent it, and therefore committed it to the flames instead of to the post office."

The next paragraph speaks of a letter of Miss Collins to her, which Mrs. Reilly had sent on for the perusal of the disappointed lover, probably to soften her refusal to obey his rash desire for the interview; which letter, it would seem, raised one of those tormenting hopes, roused only to be frustrated, so frequently the fate of separated lovers. He even seems, despite the prohibition of her friends, to have sent letters for her somewhere, which by some mistake or mischance she did not or could not call for.

"Every morning for a week after I got her note to you I paced Wimpole Street from half-past ten till half-past eleven in the hope of seeing her, but in vain. Oh, yes, you may scold me if you please. I could not help it, and as I did not see her after all there is no harm done at any rate. I wonder how it was she never went for letters after writing that note. But I must not begin to conjecture, or I shall write volumes to seek explanations of all the seeming unaccountabilities which have attended their stay here."

Then, as if the glimpses he had had of her, though frequent, were not enough, he goes on—

"I should have had many more opportunities of seeing and meeting my beloved girl had I not been most deeply engaged in very important business during her whole stay in town, and I would not pay either her love or her good sense so poor a compliment as to neglect it on her account. It is by the steadiness with which a young man pursues the business he has in hand that he makes new friends and secures the continuance of old friendships in professional pursuits; and, as all our hopes of future happiness must depend on my present success in these, I am sure I shall stand forgiven by her for all my apparent want of attention.

"S——l told me on Friday they should leave town on Tuesday, so I have deferred writing to you till the last moment, in order that you may receive the latest possible intelligence of me that I could send to H——m!"

In April Miss Collins left town, accompanied only by her mother, without Rotch being able to gain even a moment's speech of her. The day of her departure her lover fell ill, it might be of disappointment and chagrin. He speaks of his illness in his next letter, in which he tells that it brought him almost to the point of death, although this extreme state of things was probably a lover's fiction.

"*27th April,* 1818.

"It is always hazardous to send me a letter requiring an answer by return of post," he writes, "as I am often out of town for a day or two at a time; in the present instance you are most particularly fortunate, for a carriage was at the door to take me into the country for a week, and had the postman delayed five minutes longer, I should have been off.

"You must know the day × × × × × × left town—[Here come in six crosses, signifying the six letters of the Christian name of Miss Collins, with, as it seems to me, most unnecessary mystery]—I was taken ill and confined to my bed. The first week no hopes were entertained of my recovery, and I was obliged to send for my father, who stayed with me until I was pronounced out of danger.

"It is a *little singular* that my complaint should have been *spasms of the heart!*

"I took the air three days ago for the first time, and was this day to have gone into the country for a week, but have deferred my jaunt till to-morrow, having been too much agitated by the receipt of your letter to undergo the fatigue to-day."

The agitation in question was caused by the intelligence that Mrs. Reilly and Miss Collins would probably come to London together shortly—the former to pay her projected visit; the latter under her charge for safe depositing at Harrington House, where she was engaged to pay a visit early in the season. This unexpected chance of seeing his darling again so soon, and under guardianship which gave him at least a chance of the longed for interview, appears in his weak state to have thrown him off his balance completely. Still, with loverly inconsistency, he says in the next sentence:—

"Do not suppose I am very ill now, for my recovery has been as rapid as my decline, and though as pale as a ghost and thin as a skeleton, I am in good spirits and quite free from all pain.

"I should not have told you of this had I not feared the effect it might have on a certain person if she should by accident see me thus altered, though by the time you arrive I hope I shall be myself again.

"You will of course let me hear from you when you arrive." And then he adds obediently, "as I shall do nothing without your concurrence. I shall be at Blackheath on Thursday and the following days in this week, so if you write to me make a + in one corner of your letter and I will give my servant orders to bring me such a letter immediately; but then you must calculate for some delay in the reply. Remember, I can return to town at a day's notice any time, but perhaps it will be as well that I should be out of town till S——l[*] leaves town. I understand all your hieroglyphics. My kindest love where it belongs, and believe me most sincerely your nephew

"B. R."

In due time the travellers reached London. Mrs. Reilly took up her quarters in Chapel Place, Vere Street, then a more fashionable locality than it is now; Miss Collins went to Harrington House; while Mr. Sheil remained where he was when they came up—at Long's Hotel, Bond Street.

Rotch was back from Blackheath, watching for the advent of his lady-love in his old rooms in South Molton Street, but closely on his guard while Mr. Sheil remained in town.

During the month of May no incident of any moment occurred, and we hear only of the courtship of the Duke of Leinster and Miss

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[*] Sheil.

Collins's cousin, Lady Charlotte Augusta Stanhope (the second of Lady Harrington's daughters destined to wear the strawberry leaves), and at whose wedding she was a guest the following month of June; and of a *déjeuner* at Knightsbridge Barracks, enlivened by the full band of the Life Guards, given by Colonel C——, their commanding officer, in compliment to my grandmother.

This Colonel C—— was an intimate friend of Tom Moore, and it was when on a visit with him in the county Wicklow that the poet wrote his celebrated lines, "The Meeting of the Waters."

The *déjeuner* was given on a Sunday, which, strange as it may seem to us, was then the fashionable day for lounging and driving in the Park; and from the windows of Knightsbridge Barracks, now so soon destined to demolition, those gay but vanished guests looked out on the moving diorama beneath them.

But from *déjeuner* and promenade Rotch was always absent—always cunningly away from the ken of Mr. Sheil's observation, whose vigilance must have been strangely lulled to sleep by the lover's cunning, for he clearly left no injunction against him or gave no hint whatever to Lady Harrington, who later on, when the sheepdog had departed, allowed his calls upon her young visitor without fear or suspicion. At the Opera only the lovers met, if that can be called a meeting which was but a glance from box to pit. Here Mr. Rotch stole to get a glimpse of his darling, who in her visits to the Opera—sometimes accompanied by Lady Harrington, sometimes by my uncle and grandmother—always occupied the box of the Duke of B——d, whose son, the Marquis of T——h, was married to Lady Harrington's eldest daughter, and in this box one night one of those *contretemps* which sometimes ruffle the course of true love almost occurred.

In the Duke's box, accompanying Miss Collins's party, was a Mr. M——n, heir to between thirty and forty thousand a year, with whom, after her fashion, Miss Collins amused herself by flirtation—very serious on his part, and not in the least degree earnest upon hers. In the box with her that night were Mr. Sheil, Mrs. Reilly, and a young lady who had accompanied her to town. Rotch was to all appearances not in the house, and unrestrained by his presence Miss Collins was about to resign herself to her favourite pastime, to fill up the vacancy caused by his absence, when her friend, sharper of vision than herself, espied Rotch amongst the sea of faces below. In an instant she threw a significant look at Miss Collins, and rubbing her fan with seeming carelessness against her cheek, pointed it in the direction in which he sat, and from thenceforth Miss Collins, save when she glanced stealthily at her lover, fixed her eyes with a demure intentness on the stage, which Mr. M——n in vain essayed to disturb.

That was in May, 1818, but in June, 1818, we find this Mr. M——n's name appearing in a letter of Rotch's to Mrs. Reilly as one whom in some fit of caprice or despair Miss Collins had professed herself determined to marry.

At the end of May Mrs. Reilly and her brother left town, and into the six weeks which followed their departure were crowded all the closing scenes of this long and rash entanglement. A day or two after Mr. Sheil quitted London, Mr. Rotch and Miss Collins met at a review. The meeting, one of chance upon her part, was undoubtedly one of design upon his. They met under the eyes of Lady Harrington, and to all appearance the meeting was a most ordinary and innocent affair; that which lay beneath the surface of it the young lady's unsuspicious *chaperone* never guessed. After the review Rotch ventured to write to Miss Collins, and after writing he called at Harrington House. By the 4th of June—so swiftly did this daring young man pursue the advantage given him by Mr. Sheil's absence—they had met twice, and at least as many letters had passed between them, for under that date we find him writing to Mrs. Reilly as though it were a marvel they had not heard of each other since the previous day.

"We have had no communication of any importance since I wrote to you yesterday. By the bye, I had better say that a Nillocs is waiting for you with the ring in it, or perhaps you will not think of sending to look for it, supposing I shall, of course, have ceased this method of sending to you; but the fact is I had not your letter by me, and could not, therefore, remember Davies's address——"

(A new mode of communication proposed by Mr. Rotch; which Mrs. Reilly subsequently objects to.)

"I have only time to repeat those assurances of affection and gratitude which I am sure you know my heart is too sincere not to feel on the present occasion.

"Adieu, my dear creature! Give my kindest love to Eliza, and tell her I wished much for her the other night, at a party where a scene occurred that we should have enjoyed amazingly together. Once more adieu, and believe the sincere regard of your

"NEPHEW."

Then follows a rather incoherent postscript, in which he beseeches Mrs. Reilly to write to his "distracted Pet," who was sorely agitated by her disobedience in seeing Rotch without her mother's knowledge, although the strength of the temptation made her admit the tempter.

"Do, for Heaven's sake, write something to my litt'e distracted Pet, to make her satisfied with the step she has taken, and to soothe her more agitated soul.

"Oh, Mrs. R——, how much I shall owe her for all this."

Between the 4th and the 17th of June, which is the date of Rotch's next letter to Gloucester, Rotch continued to call at intervals of a few days at Harrington House, but these visits brought but small gain to either party, they being mere afternoon calls, paid under the eyes of such of Lord Harrington's family as might chance to be in the drawing-room. Once only were they fortunate enough to see each other alone, and with such greed did they seize upon the opportunity that Rotch's horse was kept walking before Lord Harrington's door for an hour, while the lovers enjoyed the dangerous delirium of their long desired interview. More meetings followed. Having broken the ice once, they went on breaking it with a vengeance. Interviews alone, impossible of repetition beneath the decorous roof of Harrington House, were had elsewhere. Guided by Rotch's eager counsel, Miss Collins drove out to see an imaginary acquaintance. Rotch introduced her to a friend of his own, one Mrs. E——y, a lady of some wealth and a great deal of good nature; but whose broad vulgarities and lost h's shocked the elegant, high-bred girl, whom he most unwisely introduced into her society. At Mrs. E——y's house they met often. Having once given the rein to these meetings, the desire for them increased with their facility.

Oh, these dead and gone loves of fifty years ago! How many passionate vows, how many passionate caresses, were exchanged in those unwitnessed interviews in Mrs. E——y's drawing-room!

Looking over the yellow lines of these old letters, turning over the faded records of these dead lovers, it seems strange to think that over all this passion and pathos, all the going to and fro, the eager meetings, the unwilling partings, the grave has closed in silence long ago. She married, and died at nine-and-twenty. He went out into the world and married likewise; but, no doubt, to the woman he made his wife his lips were sealed concerning the fire and the fever of this sad romance.

During that month of June Mr. Rotch's mind was torn by alternate promises of marriage, and what he calls the capriciousness and indecision of his lady love. On the 4th of June we find him entreating Mrs. Reilly to soothe his "Pet" for the step she has taken in seeing him at all, although a week or so later he writes again an ardent, triumphant letter, in which he tells that Miss Collins has consented to be his wife. To this letter we find an allusion in Rotch's next, written under date of the 17th of June.

"*Wednesday, June 17th.*

"My very dear Aunt,—With what different feelings do I sit down to pen this letter to what agitated me when last I addressed you. I then thought the die of my future happiness was cast. We had met, we had been together three hours, and the result of that three hours' interview was an earnest and most impressive promise to BE MINE. 'Tis true no time was fixed. She wrote to you to that effect. To Mrs. E——y she owned that she was to be mine, and had thus abandoned her duty to her mother to her love. Neither her confession to you or Mrs. E——y was made at the moment she gave me that promise, in which I then thought centred all my happiness. Days elapsed and *we all* believed her, no doubt. Heaven knows I did. Heaven only knows how welcome to my worn spirits was that dear belief."

Then the letter goes on to tell of another meeting, at which, with girlish variableness, she talks of retracting her promise and marrying Mr. M., her admirer of the Opera.

"Again we met," he continues, "to decide the point next dearest to our interests (the time of our union). All promises forgotten, she talked of becoming the wife of another. Spoke with horror of M——N, as though she had already fixed upon him as the shrine on which to immolate her *virtue.* For in such a light I must consider *her union with another* while she professes to *love me.* She then told me we must not think of marriage, and, what was more extraordinary than all, refused to make any effort whatever to gain her mother's consent, even with your assistance. Still she vowed she loved me, and still I believed her.

"Yes, Mrs. Reilly, she loves me—I know she does—but she is determined never to become my wife. Why, God only knows! She *says* she would if her parents would consent, but how can I believe this when she refuses to obtain that consent?"

At the close of his strong complaining peeps out the then unseen cause which a few days later virtually, if not at the moment, confessedly brought this old, old love story to an end. Miss Collins was to be of age the following November, and in allusion to it he says:—

"Unless we marry the moment she comes of age our income will be but £600 per annum, for the disposition her guardians will make of her money will only produce £300 per ann. income; whereas if I had the disposal of it I should place it out in small annuities in such a way as to bring in £480 per ann. with £4,000, reserving £2,000 for emergencies, furniture, &c., &c., and thus we might live at the rate of £700 per ann. at the least."

Then, having let it slip that the warm lover, like to go to death's door about a desired interview, is sufficiently cool to contemplate waiting for a marriage till November, when the lady would be of age and sufficiently alive to his own interest to plan the irresponsible control of her fortune, he takes up the next paragraph as though he had never said anything of the sort, and says:—

"In your letter to J——a you say that an immediate union would involve me in difficulties which it would be a long time before I could recover, but you are mistaken."

This letter of Mrs. Reilly's was written after his of the 4th of June asking my grandmother to console his "distracted Pet."

"I have £300 coming to me the day *I am married*, which would surely keep us till November. However, all this is idle talk if she be determined to forsake me. I only name it to you to assure you that I am doing nothing inconsiderately to involve either her or myself—I had even engaged a house of a friend for three years, ready furnished with elegant furniture, in Harley Street, for only paying the ground-rent—£30 per annum, if I had run off with little Pet; so that I should at once have put her into a house of her own; and this low rent for three years would have set us upon our legs capitally. I know you will smile at all this now; but I love to write of what might have been. Oh, yes! she might have been happy if she would, INDEED SHE MIGHT!"

The letter then alludes to a visit to Highnam that had been planned to take place after Miss Collins's return home, but which, as originally designed, Mr. Rotch declines to carry out; and goes on as though he wished despairingly to avoid a fresh rencontre with his delightful but wavering ladylove.

"You talk of our *all* meeting. No, no! I shall go to Bath in a few days after Jemima returns, and most gladly will I go by the way of Glo'ster, for the sake of seeing you, my beloved aunt; but it must only be on the condition that J——a knows not of our meeting till it is over, for I cannot again be made the sport of her caprice. Letters are most unsatisfactory media of communication on these occasions, and I will give you a meeting how and when you please, even if it be at *midnight* under the *oak tree*."

The oak tree was one of the old trysting places of the lovers during Mr. Rotch's short stay at Highnam.

"God bless you, my dear creature. How I love your warm heart!"

Then his letter goes on to express a fear that somehow or other a suspicion of the lovers' proceedings may reach Highnam before Miss Collins, a fear very likely to be fulfilled, as Mr. Sheil was expected in town to carry her back to Gloucestershire; although, ultimately, at the earnest request of Lady Harrington, she remained at Harrington House until far into July.

"I shall, of course, be most anxious to hear how the poor dear girl is received at H——m on her return; and for this purpose shall make a point of giving you a meeting in Glo'ster, on my way to Bath."

* * * * * *

"I shall send you a parcel by J——a, which will contain what you so earnestly wish for. She, of course, shall not know what it is, for fear her refined notions on these matters should be shocked beyond recovery by the knowledge that she was the bearer of such a nameless article of dress.* I shall send the '*Forget-me-not*' by her also, and a large packet of letters for your future governance—or, rather I should say, a long letter for your future governance.

"Except when excess of sorrow or sudden agitation overtakes her, the little Jemima looks remarkably well. I was at the Opera with her last week."

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* Another packet of stockings.

And then he adds, as if what passed between them was too dear to him to name to another:—

"I dare not tell you of our interviews. Had she intended to keep her late promise to me sacred—and which, God knows, I thought she did—there could have been no impropriety in our meeting, as we have done twice since I last wrote to you; but I know you will blame her for having placed herself so unreservedly as she has done in the power of any man whom she did not intend for her future protector."

Here the mask drops off again, and the sympathy which followed him through this, his forlorn love story, seems to shrink from a man who, even under bitter anger or disappointment, could give a stab to the woman who trusted him so wholly and loved him so long.

"I own I led her into the error, for she confided *all* to me; but if ever she should tell you the history of our adventures, I must beg you to bear in mind that I induced her to act as she did in the full conviction that in the eye of Heaven and her own heart she was my wife. If I was to blame under this conviction, then be the blame mine and only mine, for I induced her to do what she did, knowing I had *her full confidence.*

"I do not like the parcel plan of sending letters to Davies at all, and I wish you would still let Nillocs be the channel. You shall find a letter from me to that address every Saturday till we meet if you wish, and no other days, which will secure you against disappointment; but of course I shall wait your orders before I proceed.

"I had a note from that dear little soul dated three o'clock this morning, telling me she shall send me a letter to forward to you; so I shall keep my parcel open as late as I can in hopes of getting it.

"She made me promise the other night that I would not leave London while she remained, or I should be in Bath now—that is why I say I shall be in Bath soon after she leaves London.

"I have sent to her to-day to ask her to let me go to Bath directly, and if she will I shall not lose a day, for I am horribly nervous and wish much to get out of town. In this case I will come over from Bath at any time to see you, and very probably may do so while Sheil is in town waiting for J——a, who tells me she shall not quit H—— House before the 1st of July."

Then, when her caprice and denial seem to have driven him ill and to be driving him from London, he bursts out afresh about his marriage.

"Oh! Mrs. Reilly, I am certain if our little pet chose she might obtain her mother's consent, and never so well as with your assistance; but if she lets you leave Highnam without moving heaven and earth to get it, I shall beg and entreat that you will never again be the means of bringing my name before her. Your interests shall not indeed be endangered any longer as they have been. Say what you will—LOVE HER I MUST! but you I must love dearly—yes, most dearly too, and you must not sacrifice more to your devoted and grateful nephew for the sake of your capricious niece."

It is more than probable that Rotch had no real desire to leave town, but that the wish to do so was merely expressed to bring his capricious mistress to her senses. Certain it is he did not leave, and between the 17th of June and the date of his next letter, the 26th of the same month, the lovers met again at Mrs. E——y's. Of the two who met together for that almost last interview neither remains alive to record what took place, and there is no precise account of it extant. But certain it is, out of strong love on the one side and the soft voice of the tempter on the other, this poor bewildered girl consented to fly northwards with her lover, and dare, for his sake, the sorrowing anger of her mother and the dismayed surprise of her friends.

About eleven o'clock one night somewhere about the 20th of June, 1818, a plain hackney coach with a pair of fleet horses took Miss Collins up from a house in —— Square, the residence of Mr. M——n's father, where she had dined in the ball dress in which she was to join Lady Harrington at an assembly at the Duchess of ——'s. Young M——n himself brought her out upon his arm and put her into the carriage, which had no occupant save herself. The carriage whirled round the corner to a confectioner's shop close at hand, where Rotch, who was *en rapport* with the driver, whose conveyance he had himself engaged, only waited its appearance to spring in beside the trembling girl, who no doubt awaited him half in joy, half in fear. They had something to say yet before starting on that northern journey, and the man was desired to drive round the square until further orders. For two hours no orders came, and the patient Jehu, no doubt wondering within himself what it was all about, went round and round, now and again passing Mr. M——n's house, where the lights were still burning brightly.

At the end of those two hours unexpected orders reached him. He was desired to drive to —— House. The lady was about to rejoin her friends, and the journey northwards was given up. The while agone warm lover had come to his tryst with cooler counsels, and instead of carrying out the dashing exploit which would have set Harrington House aflame, talked of the nearness of November, when the lady would be her own mistress, and her money in her own power. Whether the love was all his and the wisdom some one else's older and colder than himself matters but little now. He missed his chance, and the tide which he hesitated to take at the flood never rose for him again.

Rotch's next letter, written immediately after the elopement was abandoned, has been lost, but in the succeeding one, dated "London, June 26th, 1818, Friday," he alludes to an "inconsistent" letter he had written, in which it would seem he laid all the blame of change and defection upon his lady-love, and to have cast some doubt, whether intended or not, on Mrs. Reilly's good faith, for he writes :—

"My very dear Aunt,—Your last, though dated on a Wednesday, did not reach me until Monday morning. This delay, I suppose, arose from some difficulty in forwarding it, but of course precluded the possibility of my writing to you on Saturday last.

"I am more than I can tell you distressed and mortified that you should for a moment suppose I could doubt your sincerity or think that if I did I should adopt any underhand means of trying it. Indeed, indeed, my dear aunt, you greatly wrong me; but I must not wonder at your thinking anything from my last letter, which I frankly confess was as inconsistent as the fair object of its principal contents."

He then goes on to express an earnest wish to see her before she leaves Highnam, hoping perhaps that she would set matters straight with his lady-love, and secure the prize for him in November.

"My present motive for writing is to say that I much wish to see you before you leave Highnam. I understand from J——s that your departure is fixed for the 6th. Now, the only time I can spare for an interview is the beginning of next week, on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. I could leave town and run down to Glo'ster if you will only say how you will see me. Had I not better send a public letter to you to say I am going to Wales, and should wish much to see you *en passant* at Glo'ster? Or shall I go to Glo'ster and then send over to H——m a note to that purpose?

"I think a public meeting would be the best, for I am sure all that has been going on in town must soon be found out.

"Why, what do you think of Fleming's meeting us quietly walking arm-in-arm through Hanover Square?"

This "Fleming" was a Major Fleming, an intimate friend of my granduncle's.

"She does not know it was Fleming who bowed to me, for he was in a carriage, and I would not distress her by telling her.

"At all events, my dearest aunt, I must see you. You know what time I can command, and will I know arrange for the best; only let me hear from you as soon as possible; for *she* thinks I am out of town at this moment, and I dread her meeting me whenever I am obliged to go out. You said you thought it would be better for *her sake* if I were out of town; and, as I thought so myself also, I gave her to understand I was to leave town yesterday, which, in fact, I did, but returned this morning. This latter movement she knows not of, and is now *fancying* herself miserable because I am out of town.

"She is a dear, affectionate, undecided, provoking little pet, and if I would let her would positively kill me with fretting; but I am really a philosopher now, and am determined not to be tormented by her. Her happiness is entirely in her own hands—she *knows* it is; but she will not make *any sacrifice for me.* She must be actually *forced* into marrying me by the *solicitations* of her MAMMA, or I am sure she never will.

"She pretends to love me far better than either her mamma or Mr. Sheil, and yet she will not sacrifice their happiness for mine. One moment she says she confides all to me, and that I shall decide for her how she shall act, and the next moment she rejects all my propositions. In fact, with her happiness and mine entirely in her own hands, she chooses to be miserable and to make me so. What, then, am I to think of her love for me?

"I have by this sort of reasoning at last woke up to the truth that her sorrows are the acme of romance, and under this conviction I have been able to resign her to their influence without killing myself by sharing them with her."

Then, after this bitter tirade against a woman whose only fault was that she began to doubt where once she had trusted wholly, and his influence with whom he felt in his soul to be on the wane, he softens a little, perhaps lest he should lose his friend as he had almost lost his love, and adds :—

"She thinks me very unkind, I know she does, but time will remove this impression I am convinced, and she will respect me the more hereafter for this line of conduct, which she has at last forced me to pursue."

And here again comes in the cloven foot, the burden of his song in their midnight drive; the one thing which ruined his cause and left his ambition stranded on the beach :—

"Heretofore, when her income I thought was only half what I now find it will be on her coming of age, and when I was not quite so well known as a professional man as I now am, prudence forbade our union; but now that she might possess an income of seven or even eight hundred a year by uniting our fortunes in November, and nothing but her consent is necessary to its being effected, it is folly to talk of being wretched and being separated for a longer time.

"The fact is, perfectly secure in my constancy and love, she knows not what real misery is, and, while she talks of her pale cheeks and altered countenance, she is positively looking in better health, has a sweeter bloom on her dear countenance, and looks more saint-like than ever!

"God only knows how dearly I love her. BLESS HER!!

"Adieu, my beloved aunt. I must not scribble any more. Do write to me without delay, if you can.

"Your very affectionate
"NEPHEW."

(*To be concluded next month.*)

NICARAGUA N. WALKER.

HIS ADVENTURES AND OPINIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

MY adventures fix themselves in all parts of the world. My opinions are equally numerous. I have induced Mr. Urban, who is the oldest Literary Man living, to let me give him some of the newest styles of composition going. I have overcome his scruples by references to the triumphs of Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Josh Billings, and other transatlantic cusses, not to omit my bosom friend in life, A. Ward. I hope to be as successful as these in my various writings; if not more so.

You are not obliged to read these opinions and adventures. What is pain to one man is laughter to another, especially if that other be a woman. You have paid your money—you can take your choice. I am independent, though poor. If you doubt me, I refer you to my connection with *The Sierras Bugle*, which is the trump of freedom to this day among the miners of the refulgent West. I say I am independent and free. I have a vote. It is a grand thing to have a voice in the government of your country—*ergo*, I am a grand thing. I have also a voice; list, oh list, to its melodious strains!

My name is Walker. You have heard the name before, no doubt. I heard that name behind when I left the land of the bugle and the bowie-knife. They shouted it as I ran, with many opprobrious epithets. It is a common name; so is Smith. When I first went to the States I gave sound and character to my name by a prefix of power. Nicaragua is sonorous; so am I at night, when the evening sun is low.

America is a free country. You can do what you please in America. I do not like to do what I please. I therefore left the mighty land of the Indirects. Whenever I do what I please I get into trouble. I do not, therefore, do what I please.

That is my reason for writing this work, which is edited by an English author. He has an eagle eye; I love him. He has a voice to threaten and command; his eagle eye will unfix bad spelling and Americanisms. "How doth the little eagle eye improve each shining hour." His opinion is that there is no humour in vulgarity, and no fun in bad spelling. He undertakes to correct this preface and to see the remainder through the press. I hope to see it through the shop-windows; also at Smith's bookstalls. If not more so. Josh Billings was an auctioneer down West. I have a higher descent; why then shall I not become famous?

I am not avaricious. If I make my fortune by this work I shall write another. I am happiest when I am rich; I prefer to be happy; therefore I strive to be rich. Some people are rich and not happy—that is the consolation of the poor. I represent the poor. When they return me to Parliament I shall give the wealth of the unhappy rich to the unhappy poor. I shall give myself the summest large—I mean the largest sum. I am a patriot. And something more; my name shall be great in the universe, and nothing less.

My first adventure will make you laugh. It made me laugh when I saw it through the press. When the potter puts his plates in the kiln they sometimes come out saucers. Such is potting! I once saw a plate come out with a grin on its rim. I wrote my first adventure serious. It has come out comic—there is a grin in it. I knew it not.

Let us laugh!

Let us hold our sides!

There is a time to laugh. The time is when you can do it. I never laugh. I will hold your sides, however, if you wish it.

I am English to the backbone, though slightly Welsh on my mother's side. My native place is not America. The *New York Herald* says the States are indebted to me for it. If they are, let them pay the same to my bankers in London.

I AM CALLED TO THE BAR.

It was a lovely evening in June. The sun was in its meridian splendour. So was I; if not more so. All nature smiled. For once in my life I nearly laughed.

"What are you grinning at me for?" a policeman asked.

"I am not," I said.

"You are," said he.

"I ain't," said I.

"Move on," said he.

"Never!" said I.

"Oh!" said he.

The sun tinged the earth with its glorious rays. The sparrows twittered in the eaves.

When suddenly as the lightning flash I found myself hurried through the heated streets amidst shouts and yells that awoke the evening echoes and shed a halo on the dying day.

Night came upon me in a dreary cell. No matter that I said I had a vote. I was a prisoner in the land of the brave and the free.

On the morrow I was called to the Bar.

"On duty last night," said the Officer of the Law, "met this person very drunk. He said I was a scoundrel. And then he assaulted me. After a desperate struggle I took him to the Station House."

"Sir," I said, "it is false."

"Very likely," said the magistrate. "You are fined Two Pounds, or a month."

The audience laughed. I did not; I never do. I paid the money. Never argue with the police: there is a moral to all my adventures.

AN EXTRAORDINARY INCIDENT.

When I lived in Dublin—it is now many years ago—I was seized with an illness. My doctor said I needed for a short time a hot and even temperature. "Keep your shop at a high rate," he said. If I had been a humourist, like Mr. J. L. Toole, I should have made a joke about the high rates which I already paid. I was not a professed humourist; I was only an egg merchant. I kept my place very warm according to the doctor's suggestion. One morning early I was aroused by a strange noise in the warehouse. I arose. The first grey streaks of the day were resting dim and shadowy upon the features of the wooden Scotchman at the tobacconist's over the way. I listened. There were strange noises in the warehouse; whispering, tapping, scratching. "Thieves!" I said. I crept back to my room. A blunderbuss is an old-fashioned instrument, and the shot it holds—well, Twain's frog was a fool to it. I cautiously slid over the upper part of the warehouse door. I said "Speak and surrender" three times. There was no speaking, and no surrendering. The thieves were going on packing all the time. I fired! A dead silence!! I listened. I flung open the door; morning with her orient smile flung a ray of light into the warehouse at the same moment. What did I see? No thieves lying weltering in their gore, caught red handed at their crime. Three chickens hopping about opened their mouths at me as I entered. Two hundred others lay dead upon the floor among a litter of eggshells. I had slain them.

How came they there? The high rate of temperature had hatched two hundred eggs!

Some of my Political Opinions.

Self is the first law of Politics. Ask Mr. Disraeli. He will tell you it is the Asian mystery; but you are wise, and will understand this reply. Ask Mr. Gladstone. He will refer you to Homer, but it is all the same. Self is the first law. I have studied the subject.

Punch draws Pakington with a big nose; *Judy* draws Gladstone with a bigger. The *Standard* sees a rowdy bandit in Bright; the *Telegraph* sees round his head the radiating glory of an angel. I am above the flattery or satire of all. Even *Fun* cannot influence me. "I cannot put off my opinions so easily." I lunch with Hamber; I dine with Godfrey T——; I sup at the Saville, dine at the Savage, get my letters at the Junior ——; I have been blackballed at the Reform and pilled at the Carlton. Thus is my impartiality established.

I know the world. "Nicaragua N. Walker for the people," when N. N. W. is poor. "N. N. W. and the Constitution" when N. N. W. is rich. Such is my platform.

I shall get into the House of Commons. It is the thing to be there; Jemima says so. She wants to go into Society; she shall. I will buy a borough. The ballot will make this easy. So much to local agent if I win, so little if I don't. I will buy the borough, the whip shall buy me—according to the first law; "if not more so." J. L. Toole can have this new phrase for a consideration. In the meantime it is copyright.

It is a mistake to be true to your party. I knew a man who did so. He came to grief. There is no gratitude in politics.

Go with the age and stick to the winner. That is the nineteenth century motto.

Church and Queen is a sentiment of the *past;* Bradlaugh for President is a sentiment of the *last.*

"Native land, my native land" is the chorus to a ballad sung at Evans's. It is an example of an early period. That era closed when they gilded the old supper-rooms and wiped out the spot where Thackeray played "Pendennis."

If you wish to know the strongholds of political prejudice seek out remote provincial towns. Dependence on one hand, assumption on the other. I have lived in Devonshire. The labourer is worthy of his hire; but what about his shire?

Legislation, like steam, is in its infancy; I wish I were. Details upset legislation. They swallow up principles. Except the first law.

When I am a candidate it will be "Vote for N. N. W." When I am a member I shall follow the example of those who elected me.

The House of Commons is a club. (Several modern writers have made the same observation, but no matter.) You have dinner in the dining-room; smoke in the smoke-room; lounge on the terrace; vote when the bell rings. And get your son into the Post Office. Sometimes into the Customs. Sometimes it is the War Office. It all depends if the division is an important one. Look out for Nicaragua N. Walker, Esq., M.P.

The present Government is whatever my constituents please to command. If it is their wish to charge them with the small pox, the cattle plague, and the price of coals, so be it; providing that wins my election. On the other hand, if Ayrton is to be considered a high-falutin' creature of art and sentiment; Lowe a heaven-born Chancellor too good for this sublunary sphere and only fit to dwell 'mong Eden's roses, let them stand at that; my object is to sit with my hat on under the illuminated roof of the great and glorious, the grand and inimitable legislature of this my native land. Oh, my country, my country! what would I not sacrifice for thee!

I shall watch that magistrate who fined a certain independent coming statesman one lovely morning in June. When I take my seat under the refulgent dome of St. Stephen's that magistrate will hear again of N. N. W. That magistrate will find that after all the only person he has committed is himself. What is five pounds compared to disrespect? Nothing! What is fifty? I have accepted Bills for fifty times fifty; but I will not accept Dishonour.

AMONG THE POETS.

Some modern writers seem to think it a great achievement when they have imitated some one else. I do not. All kinds of literature come easy to a man of genius. (I call myself one.) As per example:—

Fillet of a penny snake
Come and eat your currant cake,
Learn to sew and learn to bake,
Fillet of a penny snake.—*Shakespeare.*

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
  When the sun had gone to sleep
In his new cane-bottomed chair
  Down he tumbled in the deep;
But you need not weep for him,
For the sun knows how to swim.—(To Cynthia)—*Ben Jonson.*

Withering,
Shivering,
Yellow and sere,
The leaves fall down
By the lonely mere;
And never a word
Says the midnight bird
In the ruin'd hall hard by;
Though some murd'rous slave
Is digging a grave!
List! To the deadman's cry.
Withering,
Shivering,
Yellow and sere,
The leaves fall down
By the lonely mere.—*Tom Hood.*

To be or not to be,
I can but say this protestation over,
For Death he is a fearful thing
That hath a mint of phrases in his brain;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
Do hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
And thunder when the clouds in autumn crack
Like morning roses newly washed with dew.
Mistake me not, I speak but as I find,
For I have seen when after execution
That currants in a pie prove indigestion sour
And lose the name of action. But what of that?
Thieves for their robbery have authority
When great men jest with saints, and I have seen
A brick a toy withal, a kneaded clod
Safe in the office and affairs of love,
And blown with restless violence round about
The jaws of darkness, where the elves for fear
Crept into acorn cups and hid them there.

Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale,
But he that stands upon a slippery place
To seek out sorrow that dwells everywhere
Is a double damned villain and a fool,
A faithless coward, a dishonest wretch;
Give me a man whose heart is in his mouth
To whisper music in mine ears, and play
Something like the murder of my father,
And take away my stomach that I love more
Than twenty seas if all their sands were pearl,
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold.

O that I had a dagger of the mind,
A false creation signifying nothing,
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The undiscovered country, whose bourne
Is sicklied o'er with a pale cast of thought,
Whereby to trade in curiosities,
Then could I snore upon the flint,
To sleep, perchance to dream, ay, there's the rub;
For then a traveller might return,
And with a bodkin my quietus make
To take away the means whereby I live,
And leave me poor indeed, and like to one
Whose soul is dead, whose occupation's gone.

But the adventure to which I alluded in the preface cannot be published this month. Look for it in my next. Meanwhile it may be well to state for the benefit of advertisers who desire to bring their announcements before the intelligent and well-to-do middle classes of a great and opulent district, that I shall devote the back of my election address to their service. I am always ready to sacrifice myself on the commercial altar of this enterprising and advertising age. The charge will be at the rate of £2 per inch. Special positions by arrangement.

PLAYERS OF OUR DAY.

XX.—MR. PHELPS.

ENGLISH actors have varied merits and different styles, and it might seem impossible, owing to the want of any common standard of comparison, to decide who is the best player now existing. Unfortunately, from the shifting conditions of all things theatrical, and from the precarious footing of actors at theatres—each being obliged to prove himself something of a "handy man" (witness Mr. Compton)—there is no such common spectacle as is seen on the French stage, of one striking and complete character being entirely identified with one actor and with no other. Actor and character in such a case become inseparable and make one whole. They fit together by some happy coincidence like two broken fragments that have been joined again. Another may attempt the part, and with success; but the recollection of the first confuses and jars upon us. To those, as Lamb says, who saw the first cast of "The School for Scandal," the inferior successors would have been intolerable. It would be another "School for Scandal" altogether. We have none of these happy unions. An actor, indeed, will play some trumpery piece, say a couple of hundred nights, and then "take it into the country," as it is called in stage slang; but here there is no "character" properly speaking—he has been merely successful in the part, and his name is "up." Here, by the way, occurs a reflection, in reply to what is urged, that these runs of two hundred nights, now so common, prove that at present pieces are more keenly enjoyed than the vaunted old comedies which only "ran" for thirty or forty nights at most. It is curious how these extravagantly successful modern pieces literally "run until they drop"—until all life and substance is worn out of them in the process. It will be noted that when it is attempted to revive them, as in the case of "Black-Eyed Susan," which was styled "the most successful burlesque of modern times," they fall perfectly flat—the humour of the thing has fled, and people listen with a stupid astonishment. So with the famous "Grande Duchesse," which, with all the attractions of the "Great Schneider" and all her antics, was listened to last season with vacant ears. But one of "the good old comedies," or one of the stock pieces of the Théâtre Français, had its fixed, steady, honourable place in the *répertoire:* it was above the overdone enthusiasm of "a run," and secure against the contempt of neglect. Every season it was certain of being played a great many times, and should the actors on whose lives it seemed to depend for its interest disappear from the scene, there were others in training storing up the tradition and ready to step into their places. The part thus lives by the actor: the actor by the part. And as we think of this healthy state of things, which is really the foundation of all prosperity for the stage, our thoughts at once revert to Mr. Phelps, who, in connection with his one character, alone answers these happy conditions of the Théâtre Français, and may be accepted as the most satisfactory if not the best actor on the English stage.

When he controlled Sadler's Wells Theatre, and drew, as if from some stiff and creaking pump, the hard utterances of "Ingomar, the Barbarian," and of various Shakespearian heroes, we must own to having small sympathy with him. His dry, unmusical accent—highly seasoned with his native provincialism—his Crummles-like mannerism, his thoroughly stagey style, which copied a corruption of the Kemble school, the absence of true feeling and nature, made those various performances uninviting. He evidently had all the old school traditions at fifth or sixth hand. The license a manager-actor can extend to himself deprives him of the advantage of a sound and wholesome criticism. Mr. Phelps comes back on us as the most painstaking but the most uninteresting of actors. Latterly, when tolerably advanced in life, he finds a home at Drury Lane Theatre, where he figures invariably in Mr. Halliday's pieces as the old Jew, or the old drivelling Parent of some pattern, exposed to the buffetings and spoliations of unprincipled men. These presentations are invariably of the same kind—quavering voice, bent head, shrunken shoulders, and tottering steps. Such are wholly unworthy of his powers, but still an easy haven is welcome, and the maxim "Solve senescentem, &c.," may apply. But the applause that greeted these rather indifferent exertions seemed worthy of the peculiar level of an average audience of Drury Lane, though it might have been directed more to the man than to the character.

But it is very different when we come to speak of Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, "the man of the world;" that wonderful performance, really unique on the English stage at present. There is of course an enormous advantage in the part itself, which is amazing as a picture of human character worked out with the profoundest skill and knowledge of human nature. There is no play, so to speak, and almost no story, but the progress of this one character; its manifestation, its advance and repulse, *is* a story and has all the interest of one. Macklin's was a rude and powerful mind, but to read his life no one would suppose that he was capable of such a performance. There are touches in it, dealing with the mean side of human nature, worthy of La Rochefoucauld, and the variety and vivacity and *spontaneousness* of the various turns and changes make it like a piece of real life. Mr. Phelps is worthy of this character, and it fits him like the old-fashioned Georgian suit which he wears. From long practice and a native instinct he has ceased to think of it as a thing got by heart—it is *himself*, and for the time being he is the character. His face, always shrewd and eminently Caledonian, has been trained by the exercise of canny Scotch expressions to become pregnant with "sageecious" meaning; his motions, carriage, all are significant. The energy, unflagging zeal with which the whole is sustained is perfectly marvellous; indeed, it may be said that the only time when the attention of the audience flags at all is when he is absent from the stage. It would take long to sum up the points of this admirable performance, but it may be said there are passages to be preferred even to that famous account of the means by which he rose in the world and effected a suitable marriage. One of them is the scene where he tries to wheedle the clergyman into a very disreputable plan by which he hoped to save his son, and the snarling rage, fury, and contempt with which he turns on him when he rejects these proposals with scorn. This is really fine, and worthy, as indeed is the whole performance, of the Français. Any one who has lost faith in the stage—who from many weary nights spent at the theatre has come to believe the stage the dullest of existing entertainments—would infallibly have his old faith restored by witnessing the performance of Mr. Phelps. Long may he continue to repeat it, delighting many an audience. It may be said that provincial audiences show a far more racy appreciation of this part than do London ones, and the present writer has never seen it greeted with such roars of boisterous delight as in the New Gaiety Theatre at Dublin—one of the prettiest of the new theatres of the kingdom.

XXI.—MR. FECHTER.

The spectacle of a foreign actor on the English stage, speaking the language with difficulty and with a strange accent, has lately become so common that even the most unfrequent playgoer finds himself listening with all gravity to the curious series of incongruities evolved by the practice. Since the reign of opera bouffe began a number of French actors and actresses have come before us, who, though in many cases unintelligible in what they were saying, still supplied meaning by a certain native vivacity or pantomime which is never wanting to the foreign artist. The practice is simply ridiculous and undramatic, and a little reflection will show that there is no histrionic profit in the matter. In the case of extraordinary ability, like that of a Ristori or of some of the great German artists, there is something to be gained in the shape of a lesson, or admiration and curiosity are to be gratified, but as a dramatic spectacle the result is faulty, discordant, and unmeaning. Such exhibitions as the leading characters playing in one language and the minor ones in another are simply grotesque, and really amount to nothing more than a show—something that people go to see and enjoy as they would the prodigy Tom Thumb. But to see, as we have lately seen, M. Hervé and M. Marius, Mdlle. Clary and Mdlle. Cornelie d'Anka, nodding and smiling and exhibiting gorgeous dresses, "tights," spangles, &c., may be conducive to the material business of burlesque, where sense and meaning are not asked for, but does not help forward intelligence.

In respect to Mr. Fechter, Mr. Bandmann, and Mdlle. Beatrice the case is different. Mr. Fechter was one of the foremost *jeunes premiers* in Paris, and created the hero in the notorious "Dame aux Camellias." Five-and-twenty years ago he was one of the most graceful and interesting of young actors, his figure and bearing were elegant, his voice was captivating. To say that these perfections are not so strong as they were is to say that every artist, like every one else on earth, must advance in life and leave behind as he goes some of the choice treasures that belong to youth alone. His figure is now a little unsuited to characters where love or love-making is concerned, and his peculiar style, which he brought with him from Paris, has long since lost the bloom that made it so attractive and has become hard and dry. It is curious to lock back to the excitement, the discussions, the elaborate dissection and critiques which heralded his first appearance. The critics themselves must read with wonder their solemn discussions on every turn and inflection of the new actor, and votaries of pleasure will recall with surprise the excited "going to see Fechter," the eager dinner-table and ball discussions on his merits. The truth is, under the direction of the penny newspapers we have become an impulsive and ardent race. These organs, for some mysterious purpose, work up a subject and stimulate the public as the bull-fighters do the bull. What thousands of these nine days' wonders have we had during the last twenty years! What matchless singers, actors, dancers, tight-rope dancers and walkers, speakers, beauties, pictures, poems, novels—what not? The news that the great French actor was about to play Hamlet after quite a new fashion aroused the greatest excitement. A Bill to be introduced into the House of Commons did not produce nearly the ferment. A cloud of rumours went forth beforehand; speculation was rife. It was to be such a Hamlet as no one had yet seen, and was to be played on new principles. What is the point best remembered of that performance? Perhaps *the flaxen wig!* It is really amusing now to turn over the regular essays that were written on "the Scandinavian air" and "the fair-haired Prince of Denmark"—the truly "Danish figure." Numbers went to see this figure merely. The performance itself excited equal rapture—it was so new. There was abundance of "readings" and points, which the critics gravely noted and discussed; and the conclusion to which any one turning over the old critiques would now arrive at, is that a remarkable Shakespearian interpretation had been added to the few already existing of the great play. Nay, some seemed to hint that the old pedantic reading of the Kemble and Garrick school had been overthrown for ever, and that this free and natural interpretation would in future be the only one tolerable. Yet the whole, it is plain, was but one of those fits or "spurts" of enthusiasm to which the English public is as periodically subject as it is to those fits of morality so amusingly described by Macaulay. A calm and quiet criticism would now dismiss the reading as a mere ingenious exercise—one that owes its effect to mere surprise—that is, to violent contrast. Expecting the old gravity and scholastic declamation, the audience were greeted with an almost everyday familiarity and a conversational fluency. This, it may be said, is a wholly false idea of Shakespeare, whose thought and philosophy require a stately declamation to give them effect and dignity. Above all, the character of Hamlet and the almost awful events of which he is the centre, to have their proper effect must be placed in an atmosphere beyond the conventional tone of everyday life. As for the "flaxen wig," it only furnishes one more curious illustration of the danger of giving undue prominence to the material element on the stage. But apart from this "rendering"—to use the legitimate word—being unsatisfactory, there is always a curious blemish observed when the native of one country speaks or declaims in the language of another—he imports the inflections of his own tongue, which belong exclusively to it. In the case of French they seem to be almost reversed when compared with those of English—ascending when the latter descend, and *vice versa.* This failing Mr. Fechter (whose pronunciation of his own name, by the way, is not "Feyhter," but roundly "Fetchter") has found it impossible to get rid of, though his knowledge of English is wonderful. The French cadence consists in a sort of expostulating strain of emotional passages—a hurried burst of words, with a sharp rise and fall at the end. This is very different from the sober and deliberate notes of English declamation, and thus when foreign tones and English words are presented together the effect is something unnatural, odd, and fantastic. No amount of elaborate criticism or praise can exalt this inappropriate junction of discordant elements, and therefore a French actor reciting English or an English actor reciting French will always be no more than a *tour de force.* Mr. Toole occasionally gives a very clever series of imitations, in which he represents Mr. Buckstone, Mr. Compton, Mr. Webster, and Mr. Fechter, reciting the passage, "Seems good mother, nay it is; 'tis not my inky cloak," which is really of a high order, for he, of course, has never heard the facetious actor performing Hamlet, but the hearer feels that it must be after some such fashion that the recitation of the passage would take place. The imitation of Mr. Fechter brings into a burlesque point the objections thus made to foreign pronunciation, and the hearer cannot fail to be struck with its grotesque character.

But it is in pieces like "Ruy Blas"—pieces of a romantic, dashing, chivalrous complexion, that Mr. Fechter excels, or, perhaps, used to excel; for of course the dash and freedom must wear off from familiarity and repetition. The actor, after a number of years playing in the same character, must find his energies chilled by the feeling that so many in the audience have seen what he is doing, and know what is coming. In a romantic ardour and devotion, in the protestation of fidelity, and in self sacrifice, no one on the English stage approaches him. And in this view Ruy Blas is perhaps his best character. This sort of romantic devotion is common enough in French real life, and is genuine, perhaps, for the time; but it is not very deep or lasting. For this reason it has always seemed that there was a want of truth in Mr. Fechter's passionate passages, and that with great intensity of tone and fervency of gesture real feeling was wanting. His acting, in short, reflected the traditional character of his countrymen. There can be no doubt, however, that his example has done good, and that his love-making scenes have had great effect in forming the style of some of our promising young stage lovers. Over all he flung a tone of rapturous devotion, a knightly grace, an eager and seductive enthusiasm—a rapture even, which was perfectly new to the English stage. The play itself, even with the emasculation undergone to fit it for the English audience, was wonderful for its romance and true dramatic situations. We are all borne along, in some defiance of probability, by the passionate torrent of both actor and play.

On the other hand, see Mr. Fechter in several successive parts of this description, and a sense of monotony arises. He wants originality and variety. This also arises from his French training in romantic melodrama, where the chivalrous lover is always drawn on the same pattern, and where an exciting story being the main object, lovers and other characters are generally of a conventional sort. The English public at last began to find this out, and after the "Duke's Motto," though piece after piece was tried, began to flag in their attendance. All the romantic and chivalrous parts that he attempted were Ruy Blas or Henri de Lagardère over again. His absence in America has given him a new lease of popularity; for one of the most ludicrous features in stage affairs is this renewal of histrionic youth by being "boiled down," *i.e.*, going on a foreign tour for a year, to be welcomed like a bran new and successful actor on returning. To know Mr. Fechter is a pleasant privilege, and not the least of his titles to respect was the enthusiastic friendship and affection entertained for him by Charles Dickens.

XXII.—MR. BUCKSTONE.

Mr. Buckstone has perhaps the most expressively humorous face that actor has ever enjoyed since Liston's day. This gift is, of course, one of Nature's; but the true actor can operate with such intelligence and industry on this little capital as to make it worth at least double what it was when it came to him. Seen in the shop windows, that roguish countenance attracts irresistibly: the eyes twinkle with a boundless slyness, while about the mouth lurk in unctuous ambuscade all the laughing satyrs. His voice, too, as playgoers need not be reminded, glides with amazing flexibility through all the cadences, high and low, of fun and frolic; it has queer twists and turns of its own, and has a special quaintness and oddity when projected from that comical corner on the left hand side of the mouth—a kind of horny, half nasal twang. Mouth, eyes, voice, muscles, all have the most amazing mobility, and work as smoothly as though anointed with oil. Passing him in the street every one must be attracted by that quaint air of luscious enjoyment of some inward joke. This true comedian's face is very rare; none of the existing low comedians are fortunate enough to possess it. Mr. Lionel Brough is grave and reflective; Mr. Toole bright and intelligent, but business-like. Mr. Belmore has a quiet expression. Mr. David James and Mr. Thorne have an almost sad earnestness. Mr. Compton, indeed, has the true twinkle, but his expression is of the dry and arid sort. When Mr. Buckstone shall have passed away the stage will have sustained a genuine loss, and the public stock of pleasure be seriously impoverished—for he represents a sort of dramatic principle—a species of humour that somehow reaches beyond the bounds of the Haymarket Theatre. The recollections of his old humour have become part of the dramatic portion of ourselves, and though the days of his triumphs are long passed by, we feel that at any moment we have power to vivify and rekindle our own old memories, even by witnessing such faint reproductions of those older powers. So long as the inspirer of the old entertainment is in the flesh his powers, even in decay, will have a strange potency for the old admirer. And it is this curious feeling that helps to make veterans tolerable on the stage long after their powers have departed, and who, when seen by those who have never seen them in their hey-day, would have no effect. It is only in this view that much could be said of his acting, which has lost its old spirit and variety, but which has still left a peculiar flavour which gives it piquancy. This is one of the incidents of genius; as Byron said of Sheridan, the very lees of his wit were superior to the sprightly runnings of more pretentious merit. Mr. Buckstone has easy good humour—unlike the forced and laboriously extorted article—*force-pumped* upwards—which we find in so many of our painstaking *soi-disant* "funny" actors, but who have in truth no fun in them. Indeed, as was shown in previous articles, the average low comedian is a mere mechanist—the most hardworking of his profession—who "slaves" minutely to carry all through, and, with prodigious industry, makes up and copies with great accuracy all the tricks and devices of the most popular comedians. His acquisition of these arts is very much akin to the process of "grinding" at universities. Any one who has attended provincial theatres will recall the comedian who does characters of the "Box and Cox" pattern—the dapper cockney young man, who makes smart, pert speeches in a glib rapid manner. This is a mere knack, which is acquired by practice, and it is utterly foreign to genuine talent. How Munden, or Suett, or Bannister, or Harley, or any of the old comedians would stare, if placed in a stall to listen to some of these funny men in pieces like "Slasher and Crasher," "Done on Both Sides;" repeating in a pert fashion a monologue of this kind:—"As I took my seat in the omnibus who should I see sitting opposite but a ravishing red and blue petticoat on a charming young creature. No; I mean a ravishing young petticoat on a charming red and blue creature. But next her was a dragon! Yes; positively, and distinctly, and emphatically a drag-on! Her eyes were dee-cidedly of the genus gimlet; her nose belonged to the large human family, snub." This sort of narrative goes on for, say ten minutes, delivered in a free, rapid, and familiar style, and is considered highly comic. But there is no humour in either matter or delivery, and, as we have said, Suett or Munden would stare to hear such a thing styled comic acting, or acting at all.

It has been Mr. Buckstone's lot to play in many pieces of this character; but he always imparted to them a certain unctuous humour of his own. One of his best parts in this style was the well known Mr. Golightly in "Lend Me Five Shillings." Playgoers will recall the extraordinary vivacity, spirit, and humour, the helplessness, and persecuted helplessness, with which he invested the part—the restlessness and the unflagging energy of the whole. The picture of the actor rushing wildly in the ragged old great coat and battered hat—the only ones left after the guests had departed—we will venture to say still lingers in the memory of all who have seen him. Even his present treatment of this farcical incident shows what a different style of humour obtained twenty or thirty years ago. The comic man of our day would probably have devised some extraordinary and fantastic garment, like a harlequin's, out of which he would have extracted endless "business," getting it on wrong side out, or upside down. But Mr. Buckstone with true instinct went through the situation as if unconscious of, or careless about, the ridiculous figure he presented. His emotion and excitement arising from the awkward and perplexing situation were too serious to allow him to think of such a thing; and his air of indignation and conscious dignity, while arrayed in such garments, imparted an irresistibly ludicrous effect. This surely is the true and the natural principle—and the actor who turns aside for grotesque antics, though he may produce laughter, ceases for the moment to be an actor, and becomes a clown.

The piece itself is an excellent one, and though extravagantly farcical, is not improbable, and has indeed a very natural air. As it was cast at the Haymarket many years ago, nothing more entertaining could be conceived. There was a gathering absurdity, or deepening complication, without being too far strained, that was most amusing. The Haymarket is sadly changed. There are too many veterans, who have lost at least spirit, though not their old cunning. But still this cruel reproach suggests itself—

> Superfluous lags the vet'ran on the stage.

Worse than this is the persistent clinging to certain mouldy pieces, which have nothing to recommend them but their old fashion, and whose effect is pretty much that of entering the dining-room of some ancient and disused country house, where we see lanky sideboards on spiky limbs, horse-hair chairs, and twisted old candlesticks. Some years ago "No Song, no Supper" was revived, and its feeble rustic merriment, antiquated and laborious humour, joined to produce the most dismal evenings that could be conceived.

Mr. Gilbert's pieces, however, have restored the waning fortunes of the house in the most triumphant fashion. Though Mr. Buckstone is sufficiently comic in "King Phanor" and the "Art Critic," still it is more the old "Buckstonian" flavour that "arrides the midriff." And, indeed, that quaint countenance and more quaint voice would impart a certain drollery to any part that he would undertake. But as was before hinted, it is the old recollection—old chords of humour retouched when we see him play—that evokes the laugh. His "Box and Cox" is not very droll now, and cannot be compared with the minute and highly comic interpretations of Mr. German Reed, an admirable actor in his way.

But on the whole the memory of Buckstone will always be held in esteem, and his humour will be looked back to with something of the same feeling with which old playgoers talk of Liston.

A FANCY.

BY MRS. M. A. BAINES.

THERE is a keen perception in some minds,
That catch at trifles, lighter still than air;
And fairy fancies weave by magic touch
From veriest flimsy nothings as they fly;
Pure essences of thought, those subtle things,
Which coarser minds pass by, and never heed.

I *knew* not that thy feet had touched these shores,
To gladden with thy presence all around:
And yet, though seeing not, I felt thee near,
So near that I could fancy thou did'st speak.
'Twas thus:—as I went forth, the ev'ning air
Seem'd perfum'd with thy breath, and fann'd my cheek
More sweetly, softly, than it did before.
The stars with borrow'd brightness from thine eyes
Look'd twinkling down, to tell me thou wert near.
While the shrubs and flowers with lissom stems
Obedient to the breath of Heav'n did bow
Their grateful heads at thy approach that night,
To do thy presence homage like the rest.
The moon, too, which had hid her face till then
Behind a misty veil, ashamed to show
Her sadden'd looks while thou wert still away,
Shone forth again, with all her wonted light;
And lent her silv'ry beams to cheer thy path.

Three moons have full'd and waned since thou wert here,
And each one kept a gloomy aspect still
Till thy return; but now the mists have gone,
And with bright smiles the Queen of Night comes forth,
To bid thee welcome;—mark these omens well!
All nature teems with wisdom from on high.

When next thou think'st to give a sweet surprise,
Remember first that "tell tales" are around;
For zephyrs waft love's tidings on their wings
To those whose minds are to such things attuned.

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLANTS OF BARTON," "THE VALLEY OF POPPIES," &c.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN THE HANDS OF THE PHILISTINES.

JACOB had a long and sad interview with his father, who was seriously and dangerously ill. Aunt Keziah came in and out of the sick room while Jacob was there. His father said she had been very good and very considerate.

"I took cold in London," said Jacob's father. "But I shall soon be well; I am getting on nicely now."

Jacob's heart sank at sight of the thin hands, the pale cheeks, and the lustreless eyes.

"I am not so ill as you were," said the sick man; "not so ill as you were; no, not so ill as you were when I carried you into the garden. I could not do it now, Jacob; you have grown a fine manly fellow now."

"Aunt said you were not to talk much, father dear," said Jacob.

"I am only talking very quietly," said Mr. Martyn; "only very quietly. Come closer, my boy. I have been thinking a great deal about your letters, Jacob. You are a good fellow, and I will see what can be done in the way of starting you in life. But I shall sell this newspaper. It is killing work, Jacob. Don't be afraid of my talking. I am only whispering; come closer."

Jacob took his father's hand. It was very thin. He laid his head on the pillow by his father, who continued in a low whisper to unburthen his poor breaking heart to his only son.

"Have nothing to do with newspapers, Jacob. It is the tread-wheel in another shape. You are always toiling upwards, but you don't progress; your work is never finished. And as for the influence of the press, it is not worth having; it is only a perpetual worry; you make enemies under any circumstances; if you are independent and honest you lose your money; if you belong to a political party your own friends don't support you. When I am about again, Jacob, we will live at our ease, and cultivate the garden. You will not grow tired of such a life as that."

"Tired, father. No!" said Jacob.

"Then you must think about it, my boy; we will talk it over to-morrow; we will talk——," and the sick man dropped into a troubled sleep.

Mrs. Gompson explained to Jacob in a hard, matter-of-fact manner, that there were some papers under her brother's pillow which she thought he wished to speak about.

"He had them in his hand one day," she said; "but he put them out of the way hurriedly, as if he did not wish me to see them; they are under his pillow."

"I will not disturb them," said Jacob.

Mr. Martyn continued to sleep during the greater part of the day, which was regarded by Mrs. Titsy as a very hopeful and good sign of improvement.

In the evening Jacob went into the little counting-house, and saw Mr. Julius Jennings.

Wiping his pen upon his coat-sleeve, and descending from a high stool, Jennings looked round as if to satisfy himself that Jacob was alone. Without any further greeting than a nod, he motioned Jacob to a chair.

Jennings was greatly changed. His hair was grey. He had a watchful, suspicious look. His shoulders were getting up into his neck. His chin had elongated. His elbows were more pointed than usual, and his hair had grown lower down upon his wrinkled forehead. His voice, which had once had a little of the roundness of the canting preacher in it, was now harsh and grating. He was like a man in continual fear of some threatened danger.

"You have heard all?" said Julius, rubbing his hands nervously.

"I have."

"You know who the fellow in the kitchen is?"

"Yes."

"Good," said Julius promptly, as if anxious to clear the ground and come to the point which he had in his mind.

"You are prepared to look into things in a business-like way?"

"I am."

"Good—you have grown into a man, sir, since we last met."

Jacob nodded. He had never liked Jennings, and his pride resented the power which Jennings seemed to wield.

"You know we are entirely done up?"

"Pray tell me all there is to tell, sir," said Jacob.

Jennings took up a sheet of note-paper from his desk, and looking at some rough figures, frowned at the paper, thrust his bony hands deep into his pockets, and in a sententious manner gave Jacob a description of the financial position of the house.

"Debts £3,500, assets £3,500; assets not available, consisting of money spent in buildings, alterations, machinery, and organisation. Your father had £3,000 in cash when he began this new business. Meeting of creditors on Mr. Martyn's return from London. Offered to assign everything on condition that the *Star* should be carried on for another six months, with option of re-purchase to vendor. I advised going into bankruptcy; father would not; concern went on. £1,500 of debts secured by bill of sale; there's the rub. Mrs. Gompson has told you, no doubt, of the papers under your father's pillow—copy of bill of sale, that's all—it is killing him, wearing his life out. Worst of it is, Magar has the bill of sale. Magar has been puffed in the paper for his benevolence, but lately has been trying to swindle the public, and he has been pitched into—honest but bad policy; he and some other corporation swells have sworn to stop the paper. Your father had an editor from Brighton, or somewhere—a sort of half and half Londoner, clever no doubt, but indiscreet; has taken a mortal hatred to Magar, and vowed he would expose the schemes of Magar and a little clique of speculators who are in power here. Magar has seized—the man in possession is Magar's man, and before the week is over we shall all go to the wall."

It was a brief story, but no item was left out. Jennings expressed no regret; nor did he exult. He omitted to use a single scriptural quotation. He treated the matter in a business light. When he had concluded he looked at Jacob curiously, withdrew his hands from his pockets, took a pinch of snuff, and resumed his seat at the desk.

"Are you not a friend of Mr. Magar?" asked Jacob calmly.

"Not particularly," said Jennings; "why?"

"Have you no influence over him?"

"A little," said Jennings, looking straight at Jacob.

"Not sufficient to put an end to this seizure?"

"I fear not," said Jennings.

"You would if you could?"

"I would; your father has always been good to me. Magar is a stubborn man. He has risen swiftly to wealth and position. When men shoot up like that they are apt to forget old friends. It is an infernal world, sir; a sneaking, blood-sucking, fool of a world; a blind, time-serving world; but no matter—every dog has his day."

Jennings rocked himself to and fro as he spoke, and seemed to be talking to himself.

"And you think there is no chance of settling this affair?" said Jacob, with an effort at business *nonchalance*, but with a sickly sensation at his heart.

"I fear not. Bonsall has behaved like a thief. He promised £2,000 whenever it was required. That was before he became M.P. Now he is a swell; they say he is to be a Cabinet Minister; he has kicked the ladder down; he got up through your father's energy and hard work; he does not answer our letters now; he is a fool as well as a knave."

"Heaven's will be done," said Jacob.

"Amen," said Jennings. "You had better go and look round the place, if you have not done so. Have you seen the new office?"

"No."

"I wish I never had."

"Where is it?"

"At the top of the garden. The men work late to-night; you may not have another opportunity. Meanwhile if it is possible to influence Magar I will do it."

"Thank you," said Jacob, and as he left the counting house Mr. Ephraim Magar was ushered into it.

"I began to think you were not coming," said Jennings, carefully closing the door.

"What! not keep my promise?"

"Promises are easily made and broken nowadays," said Jennings, drily.

"Oh, that's the game, is it? You are in one of your growling moods, eh?"

"No," said Jennings. "I don't feel over well satisfied with myself, that is all."

"Oh, it's all right, then, so far as I am concerned?" said Magar, standing with his back to the fire. "You're only out of temper with yourself."

"You know what I want," said Jennings, fidgeting with his snuff-box.

"Me and my friends to clear out of this?"

"Yes; it is not very much to ask, considering all things," said Jennings.

"What do you mean by all things?" asked Magar, his anger perceptibly rising.

"I leave that to your imagination," said Jennings, with irritating deliberation.

"Always some damned threat in your mouth, Jennings—something underhand; you don't speak out and give it breath."

"You ought to be grateful to me on that account," said Jennings.

Magar clenched his big hard fist, and ground his teeth with rage. Jennings glanced to see where the ruler was lying. The ruler was a formidable weapon. Jennings never used a ruler, especially one with a string through it, like an officer's staff; but he kept such an instrument constantly on his desk.

"Say you will do what I wish in this matter, and we are friends for ever; I will ask no more favours," said Jennings, in a conciliatory tone.

"I tell you I can't do it," exclaimed Magar, striding across the room. "If it were my own affair I would give way at once. They are determined to wipe the paper out, and I think the town will be the better for it. When a fellow's lost his money he shouldn't set others at defiance. They've never forgiven that attack about the accounts, and there's lots of other scores to settle; and what is more, there is no chance, I hear, of Martyn's getting better, and we don't mean his party to buy the paper, and we don't want it ourselves, because we have one—so that's the straightforward truth; and as I always like to be fair and above board——"

"Very well," said Jennings, leaving his stool and confronting his friend. "Now, hear what I have to say. You are aware that I never had much money, and that what I had I put into this business when it was much needed, on the understanding that at Mr. Martyn's death I stood joint heir with his son. Now I know that the concern will pay, and you know that there is more than twenty shillings in the pound now, if the property were fairly realised, to say nothing of Martyn's original capital, which we will regard as altogether gone. Now, if you sell hastily, as you contemplate, you will make that twenty shillings no more than five, and destroy the copyright, which, in my opinion, would make the twenty shillings forty. It is against my interest that you should do this."

"I said you should find £1,000 put to your credit at the Cartown Bank," said Magar.

"It is also against my wish," continued Jennings, without noticing Magar's remark. "Martyn has suffered undeservedly, and Bonsall has behaved like a sneak and a thief."

"This is something new," said Magar. "Getting sympathetic in your old age, eh? Why, Jennings, you are a very queer fellow."

Magar thought it best to try and meet his friend's attack with banter, though he was boiling over with rage.

"I owe a little gratitude to Martyn," said Jennings.

"Gratitude," said Magar, with a sneer; "humbug!"

"It is not humbug," said Jennings, fiercely, and at the same moment softening his voice and repeating "it is not humbug, Magar," in a more deferential tone. "I am in earnest."

"And so am I," said Magar, buttoning his shining black coat over his chest and looking defiance at his friend. "And so am I. Let us drop this palaver and talk business. I've given way to your whims too often; I make a stand here, so there, damn me!"

"Very well," said Jennings, putting his tall stool between himself and Magar, "to business, then. I forbid this forcible removal to-morrow."

Jennings spoke with a threatening deliberation, and his thin face was pallid.

Magar received the reply as if it were a blow. He shook himself together, and his eye flashed angrily.

"I command you to dismiss the bailiff to-night; I have pleaded, and begged, and humbled myself; I now command; I say you shall do it, Ephraim Magar; you shall do it."

Jennings stamped his foot, and hissed his commands, and crouched as he hissed.

Magar deliberately walked to the door, opened it, looked out, and then, locking the door on the inside, put the key in his pocket. Jennings looked on with a sudden expression of fear.

"We want no eavesdroppers," said Magar, "that's all—no witnesses. Now, what do you mean? Once for all, what do you mean?"

Jennings shuddered as Magar approached him, and looked at the ruler.

"I mean what I say," said Jennings.

"It can't be done. What then?" said Magar.

"It must."

"It won't," shouted Magar, striking the desk with his clenched hand.

"Then beware," hissed Jennings, his little eyes flashing fire, his nostrils distended, his long fingers stretched out; "beware, Ephraim the honest and outspoken."

"You damned villain," shrieked Magar, unable to control his passion.

In a moment he had seized Jennings by the throat, and pinned him up, choking, against the desk. The ruler dropped upon the ground.

"I'll teach you to threaten, you miserable devil," said Magar, shaking him like a dog; "I'll put you in Cartown Gaol before the night is over."

He flung Jennings from him with a curse, and walked about the room like a caged hyena. Jennings crouched and trembled on the floor. He had been attacked too fiercely for retaliation. Then for a moment there was a dead silence.

"Get up, you fool," at length said Magar; "what an ass you must be to aggravate me; you know what a passionate devil I am."

Jennings made no reply. He adjusted his collar.

"It's all over. Don't be afraid. I'm sorry I did it. But you shouldn't have egged me on. Give me a pen."

Jennings handed his friend a pen, and solaced himself with a pinch of snuff.

Magar took a cheque-book from his pocket and wrote out a cheque for five hundred pounds.

"There, when you have cashed that I will give you another; it is payable a week from this."

Magar laid the cheque upon the desk.

"Will that do?" he asked.

Jennings nodded.

"Come, we must be friends, you and me, Jennings; it is damned nonsense to think we are not to be. I ask your pardon and offer you my hand. Come, no more sulks."

Jennings put his hand in Magar's, and said, "All right—good night, Magar."

"Are we friends?" asked Magar.

"We are," said Jennings.

"Then good night," said Magar, taking the key from his pocket, unlocking the door, and disappearing.

"Friends!" said Jennings, when he was once more alone, "friends! yes, as tigers in a cage are friends when the weaker of the two is afraid to show his teeth. But there shall be a settling for this," he continued, shaking his fist at the door. "Physical strength is nowhere against cunning, you horrid brute, you shall see."

Jennings paced the room, crouching in his anger, shaking his fist, and muttering curses. He went on apostrophising Magar as he walked to and fro.

"You everlasting scoundrel! I wish you could have lived the life I have endured. What a punishment!—what a punishment! Look at my grey hair, my sunken eyes, my bones ready to come through my skin. I suffer the tortures of the damned before my time. You!—you! You gross, thick, rhinoceros-hided beast! Only physical pain touches you, and that must be something more than ordinary pain. But the day will come, Magar. It will come, depend on it! There must be a reckoning."

Jennings sat down before the fire and took several pinches of snuff.

"Why do I stay here? I am a fool. My place is beyond the seas, with a new name. Patience, patience! Always on the watch—I shall be prepared."

He got up and went to his desk, stared vacantly about the office, folded up Magar's cheque, put it into his pocket, closed his ledgers and placed them in his desk; locked his desk, lighted a candle, changed his coat for one that hung on a set of pegs, extinguished the gas, and went out at the door which had just closed upon the burly form of Ephraim Magar, twice Mayor of Middleton-in-the-Water, and a permanent magistrate of that notorious borough.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN WHICH JACOB MAKES THE ACQUAINTANCE OF MR. WINDGATE WILLIAMS.

THE garden was destroyed. Jacob did not require daylight to reveal this. It was dark everywhere except near the old favourite flower beds, and there stood his father's printing office glaring at him through a dozen lighted windows. The violets were gone, his mother's seat also; he was glad he had not come here in the daytime. He heard the distant roar of the river as it rolled over the weir, and he thought of the days when he went imaginary voyages to the Indies. What changes had occurred since then, and were occurring! They would not bear thinking of. He went up to the printing office. The door was open. He ascended a flight of steps, and found himself in a spacious room, the atmosphere of which reminded him of one of Mr. Bonsall's pine houses. A number of men in their shirt-sleeves were actively engaged in setting up type, from copy of various descriptions. Tom Titsy was not in the room. A boy asked Jacob if he wanted the editor. Jacob, replying in the negative, entered an adjoining apartment, which was strewn with scraps of paper and mutilated newspapers. There was a table in the centre of the room, upon which the litter on the floor was repeated, with the variation of a few stray books, several quill pens, a bottle, and a jar. A shaded gas-light burnt dimly over the table, and left in shadow two busts which occupied brackets, one on each side of the fire-place.

While Jacob was contemplating this journalistic chaos, some one rushed in and turned on the gas. Before Jacob had time to look round a voice said,

"Good evening, sir—good evening; what can I do for you?"

The speaker assumed a somewhat theatrical attitude, throwing his head back, dashing aside the collar of a loose coat, and disclosing a light waistcoat, a low collar, and a loose neckerchief. It was altogether a curious and striking figure; it had a head covered with a profusion of dark hair, two piercing eyes, and a wide mouth, indicative of considerable humour.

Jacob bowed to the stranger and said, "Good evening."

"Who have I the pleasure of addressing?" asked the stranger, coming down from the imaginary pedestal upon which he had posed himself; coming down and taking from his pocket an eye-glass, which he rubbed carefully with an old silk handkerchief, and then planted in his left eye.

"I am Jacob Martyn," said Jacob; "I merely came in to see the place."

"Oh! indeed—delighted to see you—I am Mr. Martyn's editor—take a seat, sir, I pray—rather in confusion to-night—day before publication—you feel the heat—I am sorry you found poor Mr. Martyn so ill—good man, sir—kind-natured, independent, noble-spirited man, sir," rattled on Mr. Windgate Williams. "There's my card, sir—a little soiled, like its owner; ah! ah! never mind; we all get soiled in this world."

Jacob took the card, read the name, and sat down, up to the knees in old newspapers; but Mr. Williams gave him no opportunity to assent or dissent to his remarks, which he uttered in a rapid, jerky, disjointed fashion, looking fixedly at Jacob all the time.

"I hope Mr. Martyn will be enabled to manage his affairs—fine property, the *Star*—double itself in a few years—great pity if such a calamity should occur as a stoppage; but we must bend to the decrees of Fate. I have thought of getting up a company to carry it on, with Mr. Martyn as chairman; most perfect establishment, you see—capital offices—beautiful situation—factory rather a nuisance sometimes; but we must take the agreeable with the disagreeable—nothing is perfection in this world; excuse my green blind [adjusting a green shade over his eyes]—disfigures and makes one look strange, I know, but the eyes get weak with so much work by gas-light—will you take a drink of stout? obliged to have something on these busy nights."

Mr. Windgate Williams poured out a glassful of stout, and handed it to Jacob.

At this moment a boy came into the room and asked for proofs, whereupon Mr. Williams began to make his desk in a greater state of confusion than ever, and Jacob thought it a good opportunity to escape, which he did, saying that he would not detain Mr. Williams any longer.

"You are very kind," said that gentleman; "business must be attended to, certainly—very considerate—I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again," and the editor followed Jacob up with a running fire of words, until both were out on the steps, and Jacob gradually got beyond the sound of the editorial voice.

The doctor had just left Mr. Martyn when Jacob re-entered the house. Jacob went upstairs, and stood by his father's bedside, and held his hand. Mr. Martyn did not speak, but he looked affectionately upon his son.

Long after his father had dozed off to sleep again, Jacob sat there, holding the clammy hand, and trying to collect his faculties for meeting the troubles which seemed to be hemming him in on all sides. Mrs. Titsy looked on, with her heart too full to speak, and her eyes too misty to see more than the form of Jacob.

"Will you not go to bed?" at length asked Mrs. Titsy, in a whisper, when the candle had burnt itself almost into the socket, and a long black tottering wick, like a small bulrush, stood above it.

"No, thank you," said Jacob; "no, thank you; I would rather sit here."

When you and I are ill, my friend, may we have by our pillow two souls as careful of our every want, and as solicitous for our recovery, as these two before us. And may we be as patient as poor Mr. Martyn. He knew that the nature of his disease required submission and calmness; and for Jacob's sake he wished to be spared. Happily he knew nothing of Debt's policeman who sat in the kitchen below. But he was fully aware of the fact that years of hard-earned savings, the fruits of incessant toil, had been scattered to the winds. All he now looked forward to was a small competency, though he had no really definite reason for hoping to obtain even that. It was a hard lot: sometimes he could not help thinking so, and then he remembered the injunction of the doctors not to let anything trouble him, and he dismissed the disagreeable thoughts. Hope raised up the sinking soul and gave it glimpses of a shadowy future, with gleams of sunshine in it; but there was a serpent underneath the sick man's pillow, and a fell disease at his heart.

CHAPTER XX.

DESCRIBES THE SIEGE OF THE "STAR" PRINTING OFFICE; AND NARRATES ALL THE HUMOROUS AND MELANCHOLY INCIDENTS THEREOF.

It seemed as though the morning would never come. Daylight lingered behind the clouds of night, as if the two had leagued together to keep Middleton in perpetual darkness. Jacob had dozed occasionally, and Mrs. Titsy had once or twice fallen asleep; but both quickly awoke again and mentally chid themselves for want of thought and attention. Mr. Martyn had slept but little during the night. He had lain awake and heard the church clock strike hour after hour, without the knowledge of his watchers. Jacob went to the window and gently drew the blind aside when the clock seemed to announce that the long dark night was really over; but a few stars were still shining upon black piles of clouds, and the sign of the "Durham Ox" was swaying to and fro in the wind. Jacob wondered if the wind was shaking the trees round Lucy's dwelling; and it gave him a pang of sorrow to think how grieved Lucy would be to hear of the misfortunes which had befallen him. And the wind grew more boisterous still. It had come for miles and miles over sea and land, and was gathering its forces in the Midland counties. It had rolled into foam the deep waters, and had awakened echoing voices in many a sea-swept cavern. Driving the clouds of night before, it had left shivered masts and sinking ships behind. Wise mariners, who had caught the first sounds of its hoarse voice, had sought shelter in creeks and bays. It was too proud and haughty to seek them out, though they tossed and trembled as the giant passed by in full cry, with clouds of sea-gulls screaming overhead. Morning began to show grey streaks in the east as the wind came ashore. The clouds were rent in red and grey shreds and black patches. On land nothing was too trivial for the notice of this mighty wind. It carried tiles off houses. It blew down straw stacks. It banged doors open, and frightened children into fits. It shook new buildings to pieces, and tore trees up by the roots. Now and then there was a rough rollicking humour in its doings. It lifted watchmen off their feet, and set them down again. It shouted down chimneys. It bellowed round corners, and it roused sleepers from their beds with the smashing of glass and the parting of window frames. When it reached Middleton it rested awhile, and took a survey of the place, feeling its way about the narrow streets and round the curious gables, and over the red-tiled pointed house tops; and then it scattered the remnants of night's dark mantle, blew out the two or three remaining stars, and roared and shouted and raved, and tore up and down the streets and over the houses with maddened glee.

Mr. Martyn grew restless, and complained that the wind affected his head. What cared the wind for that? If ten thousand heads had ached it would not have bated a jot of its rough humour. It shook Mr. Martyn's house, banged at the bedroom windows, whooped up the passage by the side of the counting house, rushed through the garden, blew the smoke from the factory chimney away into the fields, bounded off over the meadows, made the miller tremble for his house, threw the water over the weir in white clouds of spray, returned, came up the streets of Middleton again, ran away with the caps of men on their way to work, blew the factory girls' petticoats over their heads, knocked down boys who were opening their masters' shops, and made all such signs as those of the "Durham Ox," which hung upon hinges, creak and groan and yell and scream as though they were in pain.

Thus was a stormy day stormily ushered in. It was in the power of the most relentless and malicious of Mr. Martyn's creditors on this day to remove his goods and chattels and types and machinery to a convenient place of sale, or to sell them on the spot, if prior and proper notice had been given. But no sale had been announced. The few offended public men who wished to put out the *Middleton Star* had no desire that their designs should be made public too soon. Their proceedings had been organised and managed by Zebidee Gripps, a lawyer of Middleton, whose membership of the Zion Chapel, and whose preaching twice a week, and whose religious whinings every day, had not shielded him from the censure of the *Star*, when he had been false to his public trust, though his chapel zeal had assisted him to guide the greater portion of the Charity Trustees' funds into his own pocket. Gripps was determined to make a clean sweep of the *Star* offices on this stormy day, the more so that Mr. Martyn was in bed, and could not interfere. As ten o'clock was striking, he ascended the printing office stairs, with a compositor from an adjacent town and an auctioneer. Notwithstanding a rushing torrent of indignant remonstrance and inquiry from Mr. Windgate Williams, the auctioneer began to make a note of what he saw, aided by the technical explanations of the strange compositor. Mr. Martyn's men permitted this to go on until a couple of stout labourers made their appearance, and were instructed by Gripps to begin the removal of sundry articles, known as chases and column rules.

"Oh! this will not do! the law will not permit it—the thing's illegal—you are bent upon destruction, not upon realising the amount of your just claim, whatever that may be—put down those chases," exclaimed Mr. Williams, who had shuffled and jumped upon the scene, with a bundle of proofs just taken up for correction.

Upon this, Tom Titsy and several other persons put down their work, and sauntered up to the spot where the editor was disputing with the man of law.

"This is our authority," said Mr. Gripps, exhibiting an official-looking roll of paper.

"I care neither for you nor your authority," said Mr. Williams, closing the office door and locking it. "You shall not stop the publication of this paper to-day—you will destroy the copyright—destroy a valuable property—it shall not be."

"Quite right!" "Hear, hear!" "Just so," cried the printers; while Tom Titsy laid his hand upon the shoulder of one of the stout labourers.

"Remove those articles," said Mr. Gripps.

"Printers!" exclaimed Windgate Williams; "and you more especially, Mr. Overseer," addressing a middle-aged gentleman, who looked exceedingly bewildered: "it is your duty and mine to publish Mr. Martyn's newspaper to-day—no law will sanction the destruction of the copyright of this journal, as these men maliciously contemplate—laws were not made to minister to the bad passions of human nature, nor to aid a canting hypocrite in satisfying his devil's prayers. If you allow this wickedness to proceed, you are the veriest lot of chicken hearts that ever stood at cases and followed the glorious profession of Caxton, who wore a sword and was a brave man."

"Put down them traps," said Tom Titsy to one of the stout porters, while the editor was running his fingers wildly through his hair, at the close of his address; "put down them traps."

The porter hesitated, which was unfortunate for him.

"Then go down thyself," said Tom, seizing the chases with one hand, and felling the deputy-bailiff with the other.

"No blows! no blows!" exclaimed Mr. Williams; "let us keep within the law;" but like many a revolutionary orator, Mr. Windgate Williams having raised the storm, found the tempest beyond his control.

When stout porter No. 1 was down, No. 2 showed fight, and there was a general attack in consequence.

The strange compositor was carried to a trough and held there, while a jet of water was turned playfully upon his face.

The auctioneer closed his book and struggled in the arms of a couple of men, who quickly deposited him outside the door, and told him to thank his stars that he had not gone through the window.

Porter No. 2 soon succumbed, and was glad with No. 1 to scramble after the auctioneer. The strange compositor was carried wet and limp to the staircase, and was allowed to slide to the bottom thereof, on his back. Mr. Gripps gesticulated, and roared, and threatened Mr. Williams with transportation for life; and the printers seemed too much delighted with the wordy encounter between the two chiefs to interfere, beyond applauding the sallies of Mr. Williams, and hissing the threats of Gripps the lawyer.

"Sir," at length shouted the editor, throwing back his loose coat, taking a sort of a hop skip and jump towards Mr. Gripps, and screaming with excitement, "leave this room, sir; leave this room, or I will not answer for the consequences."

"I'll have you put in the darkest cell in Middleton lock-up, breaker of the Queen's peace! murderer of the Queen's English!" shouted Gripps in reply, and flourishing his roll of official paper, as if it were a marshal's baton.

This was too much—"murderer of the Queen's English!"—Mr. Williams could put up with a great deal, but there are bounds to the patience of the most patient and unassuming of men.

"You canting rascal," shouted the editor, rushing upon Mr. Gripps, and shaking him by the collar, until the marshal's baton flew over his head, while the legal watch, leaping from the legal pocket, dashed itself against a heavy eye-glass, until both were broken.

"You blaspheming imp of darkness; you parchment-visaged cackler—you robber of the orphan and plunderer of the poor—you beast, you beast!" went on the maddened editor, shaking the lawyer, until both were panting for breath.

"Hear, hear;" "Bravo, bravo;" "Encore;" "Give it him," shouted the printers. At length, by some unlucky mischance, Gripps fastened his fingers in the editorial hair, and the editorial teeth chattered with the violent motion of the bewildered cranium.

Their sympathies being of course more on the side of the editor than with the lawyer, the printers now thought it was time to part the combatants, for just then Mr. Williams was decidedly getting the worst of the encounter. They seized Mr. Gripps, and as he was not inclined to loosen his grip of the editorial locks, Tom Titsy gave him a slight intimation that he must. The hint was given forcibly under the fifth rib, upon which the lawyer released his possession of the head, but not without removing therefrom a large quantity of the hirsute growth which had thatched that intellectual locality.

"Now, be off, sir," said several voices. "Hook it while you can;" "Take the steps in preference to the window."

Mr. Gripps was wise enough to accept the warning.

"And take your authority with you, you pounce-box, do," shouted Mr. Williams, tossing the marshal's baton after him.

Then a council of war was held on both sides. The first command of Mr. Windgate Williams was: "Secure the outer doors! Fasten the windows! Let one man cease work and keep guard that he may give warning of danger. They may come in force now—if we can hold out until sundown, we can contrive to get to press, and then the copyright will be secure for another week, by which time fresh arrangements may be made."

In the offices of Mr. Gripps were assembled Mr. Magar and a wronged cabinet-maker, who had wished, as a town councillor, to purchase a piece of corporate land for a mere song; a pious currier, who was in the habit of attending the ministrations of the pious lawyer; and several other members of the clique which objected to the little ray of light that radiated from the *Star* printing office. Gripps described the murderous attack to which he had been subjected, and demanded that the whole affair should now be left entirely in his hands. The meeting cordially assented to this, and broke up, to talk about the strange occurrences of the morning, and to satisfy their small consciences by saying to themselves, "Well, we have left the affair in the hands of our lawyer, and of course we cannot be blamed for what may take place."

An hour afterwards Mr. Gripps, followed by a little army of the scum of Middleton—dog stealers, reputed thieves, deputy-bailiffs, and cads of all kinds and classes—entered the counting house of Mr. Martyn and demanded free admission into the printing office.

Mr. Jennings referred Gripps to Mr. Windgate Williams, and followed it up by hoping that Mr. Gripps had not suffered much from the striking remarks of the editor.

Seeing that he could obtain no assistance here, the lawyer proceeded with his ragged army to renew the siege of the typographical fortress.

"It is a dangerous game you're playing—have a care; stop this seizure," Jennings wrote on a scrap of paper, and sent it in an envelope to Magar.

Meanwhile Jacob left his father for a short time and proceeded to seek out Mr. Horatio Johnson.

The people stared at Mr. Martyn's son as he passed along the streets. Some knew him and thought he had grown wonderfully proud since he had left the old town. These said "Ah! pride would have a fall." Others pitied him, said he was a fine fellow, and that it was a sad thing a young man's prospects should be blighted as his were likely to be. Jacob passed along unconscious of these observations, but nevertheless cognisant of the fact that he was being stared at and criticised.

Half a dozen pigeons were blowing about like bundles of feathers over the thatched cottage of the Titsys as Jacob entered it. When he opened the front door another at the back was slammed with a shock that seemed to make the little house shake to its foundation. The doctor was taking a morning pipe, and blowing the smoke against the chimney ornaments as usual. He rose when Jacob entered, and looked towards him as if awaiting an explanation of the intrusion. Then all of a sudden he knew Jacob, and his face lighted up with a smile of intense satisfaction.

"The times are out of joint, as the saying is," said Mr. Johnson, after sundry cordial greetings, and inquiries and good wishes and admiring expressions regarding Jacob's improvement, "the times are out of joint, Master Jacob. We shall need all our philosophy—to say nothing of our tobacco—to bear the changes that seem to be coming upon us; but change is a moral law—a law of nature, a law of society—and we must learn to take things as they come, and with resignation."

Mr. Johnson seated himself as he gave forth these little scraps of philosophy, and tried to look exceedingly contented; but Jacob could see that he was feigning.

"I have encountered too many troubles in this vale of tears to quarrel with the happiness still left; and you, Master Jacob, must apply yourself to philosophy. It will triumph over all difficulties and disappointments. And don't forget, if ever you should come to want a friend, that Horatio Johnson will deem it an honour and a pleasure to be commanded by you."

"I am already under an eternal obligation to you, Mr. Johnson, if Mrs. Titsy stopped the professional draughts and secretly replaced them with your own, as she now avows, when I lay dying years ago," said Jacob, greatly moved at the doctor's earnest and delicate proffer of assistance.

"No, no, Jacob; don't thank me. Nature performed the cure, and your time was not come. There is a divinity doth shape our ends, Jacob, and I was but Fate's minister. If I had not been here ready to his hand, the destiny you have to fulfil would have found another agent. Things must be done regularly and properly, and in a natural manner; but fate, sir, fate will have its own way."

"Do you not think fate is a hard master sometimes?" inquired Jacob.

"Truly, truly," said the doctor; "but it's not in mortals to say when fate is hard, and when it is kind and merciful: we must not look at events as they present themselves at the moment, but keep our eye forward into the future. You know what the old song says—

For there's many a dark and cloudy morning
Brings forth a pleasant day.

While they were conversing Gripps and his ragamuffin army passed the house. The doctor went forth to inquire the reason of the commotion. When he opened the door they had turned the corner of the street, and the wind was howling after them. A small boy was running in the wake of the mob and the gust of wind; to this juvenile piece of human nature the doctor addressed himself.

"Hallo, boy! what's the matter?"

"The *Middleton Star*," shouted the youth, running on, and then in a gasp, which a new gust of wind cut short, he ejaculated, "Row at Martyn's."

Jacob, following the doctor, heard this, and without another word dashed out into the street, and speedily outstripped the urchin, while the doctor hastily followed, bethinking himself to carry with him a walking-stick which had hung beneath the clock-case for many a long year. Another important actor in the drama went in the wake of the doctor. This was our old friend Cæsar, who, less nimble than of yore, had lain beneath the stairs without condescending even to pay his compliments to Jacob, but had sniffed mischief in the doctor's hasty departure and was soon barking at his heels.

They reached Mr. Martyn's establishment just as Gripps had left the counting house. Jennings informed them of the situation of affairs, and Jacob and the doctor and Julius Jennings went after the besieging army.

And now, for the first time, Jacob saw the change which had been wrought in his garden. The favourite seat had gone; the flower-beds had been replaced with grass; a wide, hard, stony path led up to the printing office—the whole scene so totally different to what it had been that the change only strengthened Jacob's memory of its former beauties.

Mr. Windgate Williams was haranguing the besiegers from the

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window of the editorial room. He was appealing to the minions of Gripps as working men and lovers of freedom, in whose special interests the *Star* had been established; he enjoined them to be patient and respect the law. He was throwing back his loose coat, and running his fingers through his hair, and pouring out a volume of words that seemed to roll over each other and fall in showers upon the heads of those below.

Blackguards as they were, the hired mob who had been bellowing for admission into the printing office evidently did not like the work in which they were engaged, and they did not attempt to interrupt the eloquence of Mr. Windgate Williams.

"This is waste of time," said Gripps at length, flourishing his paper baton, "waste of time. I summon you to open these doors in the name of the law and of its powers which I now hold in my hand."

"If you will give me your word in writing that nothing shall be removed for one week you shall be admitted immediately," said Mr. Williams.

"I will do nothing of the sort, and you may think yourself fortunate if I do not give you into the hands of the police," replied Gripps, in a harsh, crackling voice.

"The object of this attack ——"

"I'll hear no more, sir."

"The object, I say, of this ——"

"Open the door, sir," demanded Gripps.

"Hear what he has to say," said Dr. Johnson, coming forward.

"Aye, aye," said several voices. "Let's hear what he's gotten to say."

"The object of this attack is not fairly to satisfy a legal claim, but to ruin Mr. Martyn and destroy his paper."

"Mr. Martyn, who at this moment lies dangerously ill!" said Dr. Johnson, while Jacob held his head down in sorrow and humiliation.

"What have we to do with that?" said a brutal fellow with a black eye. "What have we to do wi' illness or out else? law's law, and when a man wants his money, let it be paid; and if it can't, why let's have the traps—that's law!"

"You wretch!" exclaimed the editor.

"That *is* law," croaked Gripps, "and here is our authority. There are five shillings for each of you when the work is done. Now then, burst open those doors!"

"Wait! wait! wait a moment," exclaimed the doctor, facing half a dozen of the most brutal of the mob who were pressing forward to execute this command; "if it's a matter of money, I'll give you ten shillings each to do nothing of the sort, and a trifle into the bargain if you'll throw this grasping lawyer into the mill-dam yonder."

"Hurrah!" shouted the mob; "hurrah!" Several sticks and hats flew up into the air, and so fickle were the retainers of Gripps that had it not been for the arrival of two constables and the police superintendent there is no knowing what might have become of the besieging chief.

"Here's th' constables," said the brute with the black eye, "ax them! ax them!"

Mr. Gripps stepped up to the superintendent and explained the case, finally asking if the document he held in his hand did not give him the power to force an entrance into the building and remove its contents.

The superintendent said he believed it did, whereupon Mr. Gripps demanded the assistance of the police; but the superintendent explained that they had no power unless a breach of the peace should be committed; and being satisfied that such would be the case, and having more regard for his own neck and the safety of his men than anything else, the chief of police marched from the scene of the encounter, after giving the mob a general caution not to commit a breach of the peace, and requesting Mr. Gripps to do what he had to do lawfully.

"But you must stay, sir, you must stay," said Gripps.

"That is my business," said the superintendent; "I give my countenance to neither side, and my presence is best dispensed with. So men—attention! right about face! march!" and the police disappeared.

"Hurrah!" shouted the mob again.

"Now, my men," said Gripps, "bailiffs to the front, and especially those who wish to keep their situations."

"Aye, aye, that's it," said the scoundrel with the black eye, placing himself at the head of a few resolute-looking fellows who prepared to advance.

"One last word, one last word," shouted the editor from his high place, and by this time sundry other faces appeared at other windows.

"Hear him, hear him," said some of the mob.

"All I have to say is this," began Mr. Williams, deliberately flinging back his coat, as if he were a barrister pleading at the bar, and then raising his right arm as if he were a warrior about to command a charge; "I give you fair warning, I caution you in the name of God and the law, not to enter here; for, by heavens! I swear that the first head which comes through yon doorway might as well be on the block! Dante's Inferno has no more fanciful terrors than the reality shall be for the first man who, crosses the portals of the offices of the *Middleton Star!*" with which threat Mr. Williams banged down the window, and the heads which had been seen in the composing-room simultaneously disappeared.

For a few minutes there was a dead silence.

Mr. Johnson looked at Jacob, who had gradually entered into the excitement of the moment and could not resist a cry of admiration and approval at the gallant bearing of the gentleman whom he had considered rather a bore on the previous night.

"He defies you, he defies you," said Gripps at length; "and here's a young puppy applauding him," turning to Jacob.

"Bridle that tongue," said Dr. Johnson to Gripps, "or I'll tear it from your throat, you pettifogging rascal."

Jacob felt his blood boiling.

"Hear that! hear that! a pretty set of cowards you are," said Gripps, turning his small eyes upon the motley crew; "bullied on both sides—a sovereign for the first man who puts his foot through yon door."

The black-eyed villain leaped forward at the offer, followed by several others. Jacob's heart beat as though it would burst, when ringing knocks on the door rose above the clamour of discordant voices.

Then there was a crash and a cry, and the besieging host fell back, yelling, down the stone steps before a charge from above.

Windgate Williams had been as good as his word. Black-eye was bleeding from a wound in the head.

The door was again slammed to, and sounds were heard as if the printers were nailing it up.

Cæsar, hearing Tom's voice, grew terribly excited, barked, and rushed up the steps, and forced itself through the aperture which had been made by the first assault, that had proved so disastrous to Gripps's principal villain.

There was another pause, and if Mr. Windgate Williams had been discreet as well as brave he would not have interrupted it; but he had received an ugly blow on the nose, and the sight of his own blood overthrew all his self control.

"You infernal rascals! you scum of a black and ungrateful town! you cowardly miscreants!" he shouted, leaning half way out of the window, "I'll pound you like corn between mill-stones, if you don't disperse."

"Hear that, you cowards!" shouted Gripps; "he'll pound you like flour; you, the scum of Middleton; infernal rascals he calls you!"

This was irresistible. Gripps knew how to influence a mob. A second charge was made, and there was a desperate fight—this time within the composing-room, which, by sheer force of numbers, the besiegers entered.

Mr. Johnson and Jacob followed, and succeeded in getting inside the room, where they found the printers, headed by Williams, contesting every step of ground, and using all manner of weapons.

Blood was flowing freely, cases of type were overturned, and in a few moments several persons were placed *hors de combat.*

At length the printers gave way. The fighting gradually became less furious, and then mutually ceased; whereupon Gripps, who had kept in the background, came to the front, and no sooner did he show himself than Mr. Williams leaped upon him. There was a shout of "Fair play," and "Let them fight it out," and the battle of the two hosts suddenly became an encounter between the two chiefs.

Williams and Gripps tugged at each other and rolled on the floor, and got up and fell down again, until Gripps refused to rise, and cried for mercy, whereupon the victorious editor, exclaiming, "Printers, give in! you are an honour to your country!" mingled among the throng, and disappeared.

Nobody seemed desirous of fighting any longer, and when peace was restored the police once more appeared.

Several persons were seriously hurt. One man's leg was severely lacerated by the bite of a dog. Black-eye had sought the infirmary, after the first attack. The compositor from an adjacent town, who had been under the pump an hour or two previously, was carried, insensible, to Dr. Smythe's. Three deputy-bailiffs were much bruised, and black eyes and bleeding noses were general. Tom Titsy was among the latter, and even Dr. Johnson had a contused eye.

The superintendent of police took a note of all this; but, as he said there seemed a legal quibble—a question whether Gripps was not a trespasser—he could not comply with the lawyer's request to apprehend several of Mr. Martyn's men; neither could he take any of the other side into custody. Those who chose to do so might apply for summonses or warrants to the magistrates. He would advise all those who wished for ulterior proceedings to see Squire Northcotes.

When he found his adversary gone, Gripps began to give orders for the removal of the type, directing his first attention to two pages of the paper which were ready for press.

"These first, these first, you rascal," he exclaimed to one of his leading men; "give a hand here, give a hand, and on to your heads with them."

"No! no! for goodness sake," said Jacob, who had some knowledge of printing, "you will destroy them."

"Stand aside, young prater; I'm master here."

"Fair words, Gripps," said Jacob, clenching his teeth and his fist at the same time, "or I'll finish the work which Mr. Williams began."

"Braggart! puppy! son of a bankrupt!" exclaimed Gripps in reply, anxious to have a clear case of assault in the presence of the police.

Jacob had suffered too much already to put up with this open insult. His eyes blazed with fury and indignation; his right arm struck out, followed by his left, with pugilistic vigour; and never was man more completely "floored" than Zebidee Gripps, who lay as quietly after it as if it were pleasant to be knocked down. A constable raised him up, and by signs and gasps Gripps endeavoured to impress everybody with the information that he was very badly hurt, as no doubt he was, taking into consideration all he had undergone during the morning. His first words were a request that the policeman would take Jacob into custody.

The officer said he was sorry to decline, but he must nevertheless—it was a case for a summons; at the same time, he advised Mr. Gripps not to call names.

"Come, then, on to your heads with that stuff," said Gripps to the two men who had each raised a page of the *Middleton Star* which was to have been printed that afternoon. Jacob found that it was useless to remonstrate, and the two men putting their heads beneath the locked-up type, immediately had it all breaking and falling over their shoulders, leaving the iron frames round their necks. From that moment the *Middleton Star* was defunct.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOMELESS, HOPELESS, PENNILESS.

THE passing-bell swung to and fro in the church steeple. It was evening. The wind had gone down the river and had travelled miles and miles away out to sea. Middleton was calm and still. People paused at their suppers to ask who was dead. The bell knocked at Jacob Martyn's heart. He had only one consolation.

His father had died utterly oblivious of the humiliating scene which had been enacted on the previous day.

Jacob could not rest in the house. The silence appalled him. He could hardly breathe. He went into the garden. The factory was a blaze of light. Half a dozen voices were droning forth the old hymn—

> There is a happy land,
> Far, far away.

It was like a dirge—it wailed. The voices seemed tired. The girls had been at work all day. They had begun with the early morning. They sang the words "Far, far away" like a complaint, a protest, a cry, a regret, as if there were no hope in it, but only a mockery, a delusion, and a snare. The wheels and straps and shafts and spindles seemed to catch up the words and whirl them round and round, hurling them finally among the great plunging machines to be crushed and ground out of all shape. The whirling and spinning seemed to get into Jacob's head; his thoughts went round and round with the flying and flashing wheels. A reminiscence of a certain calm evening with a miller smoking his pipe got mixed up in the general confusion, and he hurried back again into the house of the dead, finding no consolation, no relief, out in the world among the living.

"This is for you," said Mrs. Titsy, handing him a letter and wiping away her tears.

"Did it come by the post?" Jacob asked.

"No, and the boy said that it was very important."

It was a brief note. It simply stated that Squire Northcotes had important business with Jacob Martyn, whom he would expect at his residence at eleven o'clock the next day.

Squire Northcotes was one of the notabilities of Middleton. He was a short gentleman, with a red face, bushy grey hair and whiskers. He usually wore a brown dress-coat with brass buttons, a canary-coloured waistcoat, and grey trousers. Out-of-doors, he generally carried a riding whip. When he went without this emblem of the stable he carried his hands in his pockets, in a swaggering manner. He was always cleanly shaven, and his boots were bright and creaky. He wore a ponderous hunting watch, indicated by a large gold seal, which drew particular attention to the owner's rotundity of person. Meeting him in the High Street of Middleton-in-the-Water, a stranger might easily have imagined that the Squire had inherited the entire town from a long line of distinguished ancestors. In his magisterial capacity he was a terror to evil-doers; in his private capacity he had been one of Mr. Martyn's fiercest opponents.

"You're a fine young fellow to assault a gentleman, are you not? a very fine fellow," said the Squire, addressing Jacob on the day appointed for the interview. "What have you to say for yourself?"

The little magistrate put his double glasses over his nose, and leaned back in his chair to obtain a full view of the delinquent.

"Am I on my trial, then?" inquired Jacob, a slight blush tinging his otherwise pale cheeks.

"On your trial, sir! I should think you *are* on your trial."

"I hope you will not trifle with me," said Jacob, thinking he detected something in Squire Northcotes' manner less earnest than a magistrate would be when fulfilling any portion of a justice's duties.

"Trifle with you! *trifle!* not at all," said the magistrate, rising and ringing a bell.

"When did Mr. Gripps say he would call again about those warrants?" he inquired, when his summons was answered.

"At half-past eleven," said an apoplectic flunkey.

"Very well; when he comes, let him wait."

"And why am I called here, sir? Pray do not keep me in suspense, whatever the business may be," said Jacob, as the man disappeared.

"Suspense—it will be *suspension* for you (the Squire chuckled at his own joke) if you go on attacking gentlemen in the performance of their duty. Suspense indeed," and then the Squire put his hands into his pockets, and rattled his gold and silver until it seemed to repeat as plainly as possible, "Suspense indeed!"

"*Gentlemen!*" repeated Jacob, contemptuously. "But I do not wish to have any discussion. If you cannot inform me, at once, what your business is with me I must go home."

Jacob spoke with a sad, hopeless expression, that touched the Squire despite his brusque nature.

"Well then, be seated, Mr. Valiant," said the magistrate. "I have an application from Mr. Zebidee Gripps for warrants against yourself and others for assaults."

"Yes, sir," said Jacob, waiting for further information.

"Well, does not that make you feel frightened? doesn't it alarm you—eh?" said the Squire, evidently surprised at Jacob's coolness.

"No," said Jacob, in desperation; "is it to frighten me that you have been good enough to send for me here?"

"Why, what a fierce young fellow you are! Really I begin to think I shall do wrong to—Dear me! dear me! why, you might be a poacher, or a burglar, instead of what you appear to be, with your curt answers and defiant bearing," said Squire Northcotes, annoyed that he had not succeeded in awing Jacob into a terrible fright.

"I always had reason to entertain a poor opinion of you, sir," said Jacob, rising and taking up his hat, "but now you sink lower than ever in my estimation."

"Sir!" exclaimed the Squire. "You *impudent* rascal! I simply meant to frighten you; but, by Jove! I don't know but what Gripps is right after all!"

"A brave thing," continued Jacob, without noticing the Squire's remarks, "is it not, to take part with scoundrels in the wreck and destruction of an honest man's home, and then to triumph over his son, and try to frighten him while his father lies dead?"

"Stop! Stop! Dear, dear me! dear me! poor fellow! there, there, sit down." The Squire seized Jacob by the arm, and thrust him into the chair which he had just vacated.

"You wrong me; you do, indeed. Dear me! what a *sad* thing! Dead, do you say? How is it I did not know? As if it were not enough to have the bailiffs in the place, let alone— Dear me! Why, what an infernal hard-hearted devil!—ahem!—I must be, to torture the lad in this manner. Dear, dear! why, it's cruelty to animals. Damme! I deserve a month on the treadwheel." With which emphatic comment upon his own conduct, the Squire walked about the room, and rattled his gold and silver, which repeated his last pungent remark as plainly as gold and silver could possibly do.

Jacob looked up in astonishment, and when there was a slight pause in the Squire's movements, he essayed to speak.

"Don't speak, sir; not a word, not a word. I'm a homicide, sir, a homicide—a murderer of the innocents; I'm a wretch," went on the Squire, twitching at his coat collar, and throwing his little head about in the wildest state of excitement.

Indeed, there is no knowing to what extent his contempt for himself might not have gone had not the corpulent individual before mentioned knocked at the door, thrust his head inside, and ejaculated "Gripps."

The Squire caught at the word with the eagerness with which it is said drowning men desire to seize upon straws. "Gripps, Gripps!" The magistrate darted out of the room; and immediately afterwards, Jacob heard a great deal of talking in the hall. The conversation was very noisy, and all on one side. There were few words, however, that he could detect, save "dearme" and "damme;" and the Squire made such frequent use of both, that it would have puzzled a much cleverer fellow than Jacob to decide when the Squire's exclamation was "dearme" and when it was something else, the words were so singularly blended, and were used so frequently.

By-and-by the Squire returned, somewhat consoled by his interview with Gripps, to whom he had transferred all the epithets and reproaches which he had hitherto applied to himself.

"Dear me, I flattered myself I knew something; I thought I was rather a man of the world."

The discovery that he had somehow or other made a mistake in this was a blow to the Squire's vanity, which fretted him almost as much as it did to think that he had been acting cruelly towards one who had so much right to find sympathy and kindness.

"Well, sir," he said at length, "you need fear no trouble from Gripps: I'll see that *you* are safe at any rate."

"Thank you, sir," said Jacob.

"Don't thank me; no words about that; but tell me what you are going to do! what are your prospects in life?"

"I do not know," said Jacob.

"No, no—of course not; cannot think about it until the funeral is over: that's the feeling of a good son; well, well—I know, I know. But look here, now" (the gold and silver rattled, and then several gold pieces came forth). "Look here, now, you may have use for this; there, take it; it isn't a gift; I'll lend it to you; I've no use for it; I shall only throw it away—come, come."

But Jacob declined. "I do not need it at present, sir; I am greatly obliged to you," said Jacob.

The Squire was hurt at the refusal, but nothing would induce Jacob to take the money.

"Very well, I regard it as false pride; but never mind," said the Squire; "perhaps you are right; this, however, you must do—let me know when you do require it, that's all."

Jacob thanked the Squire, and was shown to the door by the magistrate himself.

"Humph! he's a proud young fellow—like his father," said the Squire, ringing the bell for his sherry and biscuits. "As it happened, it turned out well for a time, but I've been sorry ever since for that row I had with poor Martyn: dear me, it's a pity he wasn't a red."

"Dear me, it's a pity he wasn't a red," said the agitated gold and silver. There was no mistake about it. Whenever the Squire wished to be very emphatic he shook up sundry coins of the realm, including two old guineas which were always domiciled in those ample pockets, until they repeated, as plainly as possible, the words upon which he laid the gold and silver emphasis.

A week after this interview between Jacob and the magistrate, a vault in the Middleton Churchyard was opened that the body of Alfred Martyn might rest in company with the remains of his wife and Jacob's little brother. The establishment of the late Mr. Martyn was closed; great placards were posted upon the shutters announcing a sale by auction. The windows in the upper rooms were dirty, the blinds had disappeared altogether, and "To Let" was daubed on the panes, in white letters. The garden was strewn with scraps of paper, fragments of straw, broken packing-cases, and pieces of rope. All that remained to remind those who knew Jacob's paradise in its sunny days, was the factory music, the noise of the distant river, and voices from over the wall. But of these only the river was unchanged. Joy, nor sorrow, nor death altered the gurgling, rippling, rumbling river, as it fell from the mill-pool, tumbling over the stones, leaping, and splashing, and rushing through gulleys, and then going on quietly to the sea.

Jacob Martyn was alone in the world, friendless, homeless, and an orphan. He had received only one letter from Lucy. It was a short, sweet, simple letter. In reply, Jacob told her he was lost. He loved her with all his heart, but he would not bind her to her vows. He released her; for he was a beggar, a broken-hearted, helpless, penniless beggar. Fortune was against him. The world was a delusion, life a curse, hope a snare. He should always love her nevertheless, but he would not darken her life with the shadow of his. If ever he should be successful; if ever fortune did smile upon him; and she were free to be his and still cared for him, he would be at her feet. Until then he would wait, and fight, and strive, even without hope to conquer the demon misfortune who was in full possession of him. He wrote equally desponding letters to Spen; and then slipped away from Middleton-in-the-Water; slipped away over that bridge in the shadow of which we found him at play in our opening chapter; slipped away entirely, and for a long time was not heard of again.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW A FAMOUS BANQUET WAS BROUGHT TO A SUDDEN AND STARTLING END.

WHEN we are gone the world soon forgets us. The ranks close up and we are not missed. If we could not console ourselves with thoughts of the world beyond, the idea of death would be enough to drive us mad.

Middleton-in-the-Water showed no change on account of the removal of Mr. Martyn. A new name was cut on the old tombstone that stood up among the hard, formal-looking monuments in the churchyard. That was all. Middleton even existed without Mr. Martyn's newspaper. It went on buying and selling and cursing and swearing and robbing just the same. The smoke dragged itself up and down the streets and the river rolled under the bridge as of yore. When Mr. Windgate Williams shook the accursed dust of the town from off his feet, and travelled fourth class by train to another city, no startling phenomenon marked the incident. Jacob Martyn was not missed. The old Squire, jingling his money, had thought of him once, and the Titsy household kept his memory green; but Middleton put its shutters up at night and turned down its gas without a thought of the wanderer.

Soon after the eclipse of the *Star*, the opposition journal, now in undisturbed possession of the field, was "glad to learn," in a very jubilant paragraph, "that arrangements were at last completed for the proposed banquet to his Worship the Mayor, Ephraim Magar, Esq., who has for three successive years fulfilled the onerous and important duties of the chief magistracy. On Tuesday next the burgesses will testify their appreciation of his great services to the town by entertaining the retiring Mayor at a public dinner, to be provided by our worthy townsman, the landlord of the 'Durham Ox,' and we doubt not that the demonstration will be equal to the occasion. Without for one moment desiring to introduce politics into this matter, we cannot close our remarks without congratulating the reds that the retiring Mayor is on the right side, and we hope this fact will be duly remembered."

I do a section of the inhabitants some injustice. The "yellows" had not quite forgotten Mr. Martyn. When they read the desire of the *Guardian* that politics should not be introduced into the Magar demonstration, the yellows gave a unanimous sigh for the *Star* that had ceased to shine. They little thought how completely they would be revenged before the banquet was ended. Fate is always at our elbows.

As the eventful Tuesday approached, the bustle and excitement of the chief hotel grew loud and noisy. The landlord had engaged a numerous staff of supernumerary waiters. The corps had been inspected by their chief and lectured upon their duties. A greengrocer, a scavenger, an ostler, a baker, and a score of other artists had begged and borrowed black coats and white neckties for the occasion. They were strictly enjoined not to hand dishes over the heads of guests nor to leave the posts severally assigned to them, except to assist in the removal of the various courses. They were not to pocket the tarts nor to carry away the wine until the dinner was over. One man to eight guests was the proportion of waiting power decided upon by the chief, who was to be assisted by the footman attached to the establishment of Squire Northcotes; while the Middleton bellman, done up in red and blue, with brass buttons, was to play the part of toastmaster and stand behind the Mayor's chair until the conclusion of the banquet.

Before sunrise on the morning of the feast the gardens of Squire Northcotes and other gentlemen in the neighbourhood were, with the full permission of their several owners, ransacked for the purposes of decoration. The dining-room was wreathed with holly, fir, and laurel. Shrubs and branches of trees were crowded into every corner of the room, relieved by paper rosettes and ribbons. Some local expert, whose name was ever remembered by the decorators as the author of a great achievement, planned and arranged and formed "Welcome All" with laurel leaves, everlasting flowers, and holly berries. The magic words were stretched across the room behind the chairman's seat. "The Town and Trade of Middleton," in white letters pasted upon red glazed calico, gleamed forth at the opposite end from beneath a ponderous wreath of Middleton foliage.

When the tables were laid to the satisfaction of the head waiter a few fortunate persons were permitted to inspect the room. The female servants of the establishment, the wives of six of the supernumerary waiters, the bellman's daughter, the barber from round the corner, and Mr. Magar's chief domestic went into raptures over the display of plate and glass and flags and mottoes.

The room certainly looked festive and inviting. Two long tables occupied the centre of the apartment, crossed at one end by another slightly raised above the rest, and on this table were displayed the best plate and glass. The borrowed knives and forks were placed upon the lower tables. On the upper table there was no mixture of dinner services. The plates and centre dishes were all of one pattern, and so were the tumblers and wine-glasses. This was considered to be a great triumph of arrangement. The waiting staff at the head table had been doubled, while the wine for the chief guests who were to sit there was specially selected. The next great exhibition for the sightseers was certain artistic models of flowers with which some of the dishes were to be adorned.

"This way," said the chief waiter, who was stout, bald, and hot. The admiring group followed him down stairs, all marvelling at his fine black suit, except the barber, who was lost in calculating the proportions of a wig which had been exhibited on a wooden block in his window since the first day when he put out his pole with the gilt termination. He felt sure that a little manipulation would adapt the wig to the bald head before him, and resolved to wait upon his friend on the following day with a view to business. Meanwhile the chief waiter led the way into a pantry, close by the kitchen, and there produced two dishes full of birds, roses, stars, diamonds, and leaves, cut out of turnips and carrots, and covered with water to keep them fresh.

"Beautiful!" said a chorus of voices.

"Like wax," said Mr. Northcotes' housekeeper.

"Like natur'," said the charwoman.

They all agreed that the chief waiter was a wonderful man.

"But to think of them bein' stuck on boiled mutt'n an' caper sarse—I cudn't eat for lookin' at 'em," said the wife of one of the supers.

And then each woman (except the servants in the house, who had only time "just to have one peep") went and told every other woman she knew all she had seen; and the barber, after another mental calculation, went straight to his old wig-block and wondered if it really *would* fit the waiter's head.

When the guests arrived they were ushered into the smoke-room, the bar and commercial room, until the announcement of dinner.

For ten minutes two "commercials" looked inkstands and daggers and fire-irons at the head of every fresh comer, and then disappeared, denouncing this intrusion upon their sacred apartment. The bar, I must not forget to say, was occupied by those who considered themselves the leading burgesses; and here the most proficient waiters relieved every gentleman of his hat and overcoat, which were exchanged for small round tickets, numbered with very bloated figures.

At length there was a sound of carriage wheels, followed soon afterwards by a loud shout. The uproar was first raised by a crowd of shivering men and boys, who stood outside the hotel sniffing the odours of the kitchen. Three waiters took up the cry, which was immediately repeated by the smoke-room and echoed by the commercial, reaching its climax with the bar. The reason for this jubilation was the arrival of his Worship the Mayor (Ephraim Magar, Esq.), leaning on the arm of Squire Northcotes, who accepted the ovation with becoming grace, the Squire looking through everybody as if occupied with some important sight a long way off.

The Mayor bowed his humble acknowledgments for this kindness, which, he said, as plainly as looks could speak, "is really more than I deserve. I am a plain outspoken man, and I have only done my duty." But his admiring fellow-townsmen would not permit this self-depreciation. The more his Worship shook his head and bowed the louder they shouted; and if during a brief lull in the tumult of applause dinner had not been announced, there is no knowing whether speech-making might not have begun before the banquet.

Squire Northcotes and the Mayor led the way to the dining-room, followed by no fewer than one hundred of the gentry and tradesmen of the town, in order, according to their position or conceit. The tradesmen permitted professional people and gentlefolks to pass first; then came the manufacturers and wholesale traders, who elbowed each other fiercely, while the struggle for precedence among the retail people was tremendous.

On all sides the air was filled with the odour of boiling and baking and roasting, and the scorching of japanned plate warmers. Anybody could have sworn to the latter. And there was no mistaking the odoriferous breezes that came down the yard from the stables, and held a contest with the steam from the kitchen. The result was by no means appetising. The scent was altogether a peculiar blend, as peculiar as that mixture which was known at the "Durham Ox" as sherry.

These gastronomic and horsey vapours were to some extent dispelled by the musical breezes of the Middleton brass band, which was stationed in the yard to give a classical sensation to the dinner. They were to play a selection of pieces appropriate to the occasion. They began with the "National Anthem," in which the loyalty of the drummer was made strikingly manifest; while the powers of a cornet player, and one who blew out his cheeks and fastened his lips deep into the mouthpiece of an ophicleide, were exemplified in a rivalry for the lead, which was peculiarly effective. Occasionally the cornet would give signs of weakness that were not to be resisted by the ophicleide, which upon these occasions made a dash at the air, and carried it off into a high discordant warble that excited the drummer into such "pitches in," and worried the cornet so successfully, that nothing could exceed the energy of these three instruments. "The Roast Beef of Old England" awoke the echoes of the stables, and set several of the crowd of lookers on dancing, while great dishes of meat were carried out, steaming hot. Just as the last dish was being conveyed in great state past the musicians, the trombone executed a movement which, though not set down for him, proved highly entertaining to the crowd. Everybody knows that the trombone requires much more space than other instruments, the perpetual drawing in and pushing out of a portion of the machine requiring a considerable area. The Middleton trombone was a very celebrated one, and the player had been originally selected because of his long arms. The performer prided himself upon a certain lower note which was produced at arm's length, and he was just on the point of adding to the effect of the general harmony by the production of this fundamental groan, when Master Super staggered a little out of his course, and caught the end of the brass instrument in a very sensitive part of his body—namely, the funny bone of his right arm—and down went a huge joint of beef, in a glorious splash of gravy, that spoiled the bearer's borrowed trousers, and for the time being brought the music to an end, while the hungry populace roared with malicious laughter.

But the *élite* of the neighbourhood and the gentry and tradesmen of Middleton, as the local reporter styled the assemblage in the dining-room, never missed this trifle of beef, though they drank and ate everything before them, one gentleman taking caper sauce with apple tart, and another having commenced dinner with the custards and jellies. So much meat and so many clean plates had never before been seen all at one time by many of the Middletonians.

One often hears about the heat of battle; the heat of a public dinner in a country town is something equally palpable. Of course every window was kept carefully closed. Indeed it was impossible to open them. They were covered with flags and flowers, with mottoes in calico and sentiments in leaves. Clouds of candles made the air luminous, and a dozen gas jets burnt it. The heat condensed itself and covered the decorations with trickly streams of water. It glowed and danced on the ceiling; it fired the blood of the guests, settling on their faces, making their eyes sparkle. The door was opened, but without relief. The heat was a great success.

Ephraim Magar was ubiquitous. He took wine with everybody. Squire Northcotes was never more condescending. He rattled his money, and even went so far as to patronise a retail flour dealer, who was in such a hurry to respond to the Squire's challenge, and was so nervous and excited, that he filled his glass with a piquant sauce from a bottle that stood in dangerous proximity to the sherry; and determined that he would do full honour to the Squire, he tossed off the pungent draught and at once made such extraordinary faces at his opposite neighbours, accompanied with so many dangerous symptoms of choking, that he was carried out into the open air to recover.

"Gentlemen," said the Squire, rising behind a mutilated haunch of venison, "Mr. Magar desires me to say that he wishes to invite you to take champagne with him—(hurrah and cheers)—and to enable you to do so, he has given orders for an ample supply—(hurrah)—to be brought into the room instanter"—(tremendous applause).

When the cheese had been removed, and the last scrunching of celery was heard, a tall gentleman in a white neckcloth rose for the purpose, it was generally believed, of "saying grace." He opened his mouth twice and nodded his head significantly at three wax candles; but being young, nervous, and thin, he could do no more. Happily, the assemblage was considerate. Taking the will for the deed, everybody was perfectly satisfied with the pious and proper exercises of the bashful curate. The Mayor of Middleton said "Amen" in a loud voice, and cracked the first walnut of the day.

"And now, gentlemen, we come to the toast of the evening," said the Squire, after having duly proposed those toasts which, in every assemblage of Englishmen, as every proposer, before and since Squire Northcotes, has said, are always drunk with loyal enthusiasm—"The toast of the evening." (Tremendous cheers.)

This leading toast was, of course, the health of Mr. Ephraim Magar, Mayor of the ancient borough of Middleton-in-the-Water. The Squire said all that could be said about Mr. Magar and his office, and the toast was drunk with musical honours:

Which nobody can deny,
Which nobody can deny,
For he's a hearty good Mayor,
For he's a hearty good Mayor,
For he's a hearty good Mayor,
And so say all of us.

The town crier had a particular formula as toastmaster when musical honours were introduced. The first "hip, hip, hurrah" at an end, the crier, raising his hand for silence, desired to ask the assemblage an important question. Everybody knew what the question would be. They smiled and nodded at each other and waited.

"Gentlemen," said the crier, in slow, solemn tones; "why do we drink his health?—why do we drink the health of his Worship the Mayor?"

Because he's a jolly good fellow,
  Because he's a jolly good fellow,
Because he's a jolly good fellow—
      With a hip, hip, hurrah!

thundered out the Middletonians.

It was one of the chief incidents of a merry evening to hear the toastmaster propound this question.

When Mr. Magar rose to reply, the shouts and cheers were repeated, and by a preconcerted signal the band stationed in the yard struck up, "See the conquering hero comes," so that the Mayor was compelled to resume his seat, and submit to "more musical honours."

Only a few bars of the stirring music had, however, been performed, when it was interrupted by a disturbance on the stairs. The conquering hero *was* coming, with a vengeance! A woman's voice was heard, in remonstrance with persons who were evidently trying to prevent her entrance into the room.

"I must! I will! it is life and death!"

Then the waiters could be heard thrusting the woman back.

"Are you men?" she shrieked. "Murder has been done! Let me pass, I say!"

The next moment she had broken through those who resisted her and was in the room. Her appearance seemed to act like a spell on the company. Pale, haggard, defiant, her eyes glaring, she walked to the head of the table. No one attempted to interfere with her. She carried authority in her gait. The Mayor was observed to clutch the table cloth and gasp for breath. In a moment, however, he had recovered himself.

"Ephraim Magar," said the woman, in the midst of a dead silence; "I denounce you as the murderer of Silas Collinson."

"Remove this woman," said the Mayor, addressing the town crier and the Squire's footman, who stood aghast at her effrontery.

"Hands off," said the woman.

"Remove her—she is mad," said the Mayor, who had risen to his feet at her first attack.

"Gentlemen, a moment; hear me a moment," she said with touching earnestness; "most of you knew Silas Collinson—he has been foully murdered, and by that man. I am Susan Harley, who went to America to marry a man who lay murdered at Magar's Mill."

At this moment several persons left their seats and crowded about the Mayor. One man, however, crept away into the street. That man was Julius Jennings.

"Susan Harley is dead," shouted the Mayor. "This woman is a lunatic. Gentlemen, will you permit your chief magistrate to be insulted, and at a moment like the present?"

"Turn her out," shouted several voices; "take her back to the asylum." The town crier laid his hand on Susan's shoulder.

"Silence," cried Squire Northcotes, who up to this moment had been an astonished spectator of the scene; "I command silence."

"Away with her," roared Magar, his face livid with rage; "away with the crazy hussy."

He rushed towards her, with the evident intention of himself ejecting her from the room.

"Hands off," said a stout young fellow, who had forced his way with some others into the room, on hearing the commotion from the street. "I'll take care of thee, lass, again all comers."

It was Tom Titsy, at the sound of whose voice Susan uttered a cry of joy and flung herself into his arms. Tom held her bravely, and patted her head with his great rough hand.

"Mister Magar doesn't treat the charge as if it were such a lie, your Honour," said Tom, addressing the Squire.

"Hold your tongue!" said the Squire, through whose mind the same thought was passing.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen!" exclaimed the Squire; "pardon me a moment. Mr. Magar, pray be quiet an instant."

"Order! order!" cried twenty voices.

"This woman has placed a paper in my hands; allow me a moment to read it; the print is small."

The Squire examined the paper through his glass during continued cries of "Order, order!"

"I will not submit to this infernal humbug any longer," said Magar.

"Pray be calm," said the Squire, "the affair will soon be at an end. Here is the Superintendent."

As the chief of the borough police entered the room, Susan Harley, overcome by the fatigue and excitement, fainted. Tom carried her into the yard.

"Mr. Superintendent," said the Squire, in a loud magisterial voice, which hushed the bystanders, "Ephraim Magar is your prisoner, on the charge of murder."

The officer looked from one to the other in amazement.

"Monstrous!" exclaimed Magar, his voice trembling. "I am chief magistrate of Middleton—arrest me at your peril."

As the officer advanced towards Magar, there were indications of disapprobation among the company.

"No, no!" said several voices.

"Gentlemen, fellow townsmen!" said the Squire, with an authoritative wave of his right hand, "let us obey the law as honest Englishmen; never let it be said there is a law for the rich and another for the poor. If Mr. Magar is innocent he has his remedy, and we shall be all delighted to see him come out of this, clear, and in a manner worthy of his office."

"Hear, hear," said the Middletonians, "that is true."

The Mayor had lost his self-possession by this time. He was trembling in every limb. His lips were white. He leaned against the table for support.

"Officer, do your duty," said the Squire. "I will hold you harmless."

"You are my prisoner," said the chief, laying his hand on Magar's shoulder.

"You shall pay for this," was all Magar could say, his teeth chattering with fear.

Half an hour afterwards Ephraim Magar, Esquire, thrice Mayor of Middleton, was a prisoner in the strongest cell of the local lock-up.

(*To be continued.*)

TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

DR. CARPENTER has plunged the British Association into a sea of metaphysics. Science and ontology usually move along separate paths. The student of phenomena and the pure speculator do not often work in the same field. The members of the great society which has just held its meeting at Brighton but very rarely occupy themselves with such questions as those which engaged the minds of Thales and Plato, Spinoza, Hume, Hegel, Reid, and Kant. But Professor Huxley has recently broken the ground by announcing and explaining his adhesion to the Ideal Theory of Berkeley, and now, for the first time, a President of the British Association delivers an inaugural address which is mainly metaphysical. If the old question of questions—the problem of the causes and entities of things—which has employed the brains of the profoundest thinkers for three thousand years, were not almost out of fashion now, Dr. Carpenter's address would arouse a wilder storm of controversy than was ever provoked by a paper read before the society since its foundation forty years ago. For he has thrown down the gauntlet once again as to the relation of Cause and Effect, as to the nature of Force, the doctrine of Self-Evident Propositions, the theory of Intuition, the character of Human Instinct, and the philosophy of Common Sense. Is this a challenge to Huxley and Kingsley, the modern disciples of Berkeley? Is it the beginning of the revival of metaphysics? I confess, though I do not expect a solution of the eternal problem, that I should not regret the reopening of the once exciting controversy. In the present state of civilised intelligence men would not be likely to drift into unwholesome metaphysical beliefs, and a good many erroneous notions might be removed by restatements of the conditions of those inquiries. Until mankind has learned to mark the limits of the "knowable," we are not ripe for the complete abandonment of pure speculation, and I think the most advanced Positivist would not contend that the world has advanced to the point whence may be perceived those limits. People entertain metaphysical beliefs which are not the result of study or thought on the subject. Many metaphysical errors occupy the minds of people who scarcely comprehend the meaning of the term. The reopening of the question would, I think, do more good than harm.

I CANNOT resist the temptation to dispute with Dr. Carpenter two or three points in his address, though in this place I can scarcely do more than indicate objections. When he declares, on the question of "the basis of our belief in the existence of a world external to ourselves," that "the common sense of mankind has arrived at a decision that is practically worth all the arguments of all the philosophers who have fought again and again over this battle ground," he certainly forgets a very important fact, which by the whole tenour of his address I must conclude is perfectly well known to him—that whether the philosophers are right or wrong on this subject, the "common sense of mankind" is most certainly wrong. The conclusion of common sense is that the "external world" is just what it seems to us to be; and no account is taken of the part played by our organs of sense. Nothing is more clear to the man who has reflected on these subjects than that colour, form, texture, hardness, softness, smoothness, roughness, and all the other qualities which we perceive in objects are sensations in the making of which our bodily organs perform an essential part. Common sense regards the lion as an animal which roars, but there would be no roaring if there were no tympanum for the vibrations of the air to play upon; and if we consider in the same way all the other manifestations of the lion by which it is revealed to us, we must conclude that, in the absence of any senses to perceive it, whatever might remain in the place of the lion there would certainly be no lion in any way corresponding with our notions and definitions of the animal. Common sense insists that the creature would be there exactly as we see it, whether or not any sentient being were on the spot to perceive it; and, with all deference to Dr. Carpenter, common sense is unquestionably in error in that decision. That portion of the address relating to the hereditary transmission of aptitudes—improving from generation to generation—is very fine and far-reaching, but the argument is somewhat vitiated by the frequent use of the word "intuition," which, I think, confuses the learned President himself as well as his hearers. If he had kept constantly before his mind the truth which he in one place admits, that nothing whatever in the nature of *knowledge* can be inherited, some very dubious passages would have been differently worded. To say that "the intellectual intuitions of any one generation are the embodied experiences of the previous race" is either to be guilty of a heresy in psychology or to use a very faulty form of expressing a truth. The experiences of our forefathers do not come to us by intuition, but we are born with aptitudes to learn with great facility that which they acquired with much difficulty. The confusion culminates in the passage in which he talks of "tracing the gradual genesis of some of those ideas which we now accept as 'self-evident,'" so as to "recognise them as the expressions of certain intellectual tendencies which have progressively augmented in force in successive generations and now manifest themselves as mental instincts that penetrate and direct our ordinary course of thought." Now *ideas* come of experience only, and are neither "mental instincts" nor the "expressions of intellectual tendencies." The only "intellectual tendencies" and "mental instincts" that can be handed down to us by birth are the aptitudes to understand quickly ideas and propositions which were difficult of comprehension to the minds of our ancestors. On colour blindness Dr. Carpenter's notions do not appear to me to be sound. He says "there may even be no power of distinguishing any colour whatever." Now, since the eye sees nothing but colour, a person who had "no power of distinguishing any colour whatever" would be practically blind. The man who could see nothing but black would be in exactly the position of the man utterly deprived of the organ of vision; and if the one colour perceived were any other than black the patient's condition would hardly be improved. All nature would be one level plane before the eyes. The tree could not be separated from the background of the sky. The line of the horizon would be imperceptible. Men and women would appear amalgamated into one unbroken surface, and neither motion nor distance would be discernible. The man to whom all hues resolved themselves into one or other of two colours might manage to guide himself by sight; but to perceive only one colour is equivalent to blindness.

Great travellers seem to penetrate the divine mystery. They get closer to God than other men. We who live in London and take our horse exercise in the Row are apt to forget the country and Him that made it. There is too much of man's work about us. You come upon the Unmistakable Hand in forests and by mighty rivers. In an age of scepticism such as the present, when philosophers are found inveighing against the efficacy of prayer, and scientific men place themselves on an equality with the Apostles of old, it is consoling to hear Mr. Stanley, who discovered Livingstone, talk of our fellow countryman as one who "in his many wanderings had been touched by the hand of God." This was said in a speech the other day at the Garrick Club, a few of whose members entertained the famous press man at a little dinner in honour of himself, his mission, and his calling.

In my early days the stocks were regarded as a useful and wholesome mode of punishment for vagrancy and other offences. Some of the country justices are, I learn, reviving this old method for the benefit of drunkards. The effect, I hear, is good—even better than the press-pillory of Liverpool. There are other offences which deserve the public degradation of the stocks—one in particular, namely, the vending of diseased meat. Magistrates do now and then leave out of their judgments the option of a fine; they might, in special cases, take a lesson from the past, even so far back as Edward II. In the Latin records of that reign I find that on the 25th of July, 1320, William le Clerk, of Higham Ferrers, was brought before the Mayor's Court charged with selling flesh-meat unfit for human food. The award of the magistrates was that Clerk should be put upon the pillory and the meat burnt beneath him.

Seeing that we do punish persons who sell diseased meat, no matter how lightly, justice is unfairly dealt when the other vendors of poisonous food escape. The manufacturers of sweetmeats, for example. It has been shown over and over again that, as a rule, cheap confectionery is poisonous. My young contemporary, the *Pall Mall,* even goes so far as to suggest that Christina Edmunds proved her insanity by taking the trouble to poison sweetmeats which were already openly sold artistically coated with metallic lead. In 1851 the *Lancet* commissioner exposed the whole system of British adulteration. Later on, Professor Gamgee, in the *Milk Journal*, has done good service; and now that gastronomy is represented by the *Food Journal*, the *Knife and Fork, Fin-Bec's Year-book*, and other publications, "the agony of adulteration" ought to be "piled up" to such a height as to compel rigorous Governmental interference.

THE "fastest train in the world"—the 11.45 a.m. from Paddington—which does the first seventy-eight miles every day with clock-like exactness in eighty-seven minutes, and reaches Plymouth in six hours and a quarter, carries the great body of political theorists, in the second week in the present month, to the first Social Science Congress ever held in the big Western town. Physical science and sociology work together in the production of such a result as that accomplished in this marvellous speed of traffic. My good friend Dr. Johnson would have put no faith in a band of theorists who should consent to allow themselves to be wafted over the land at the rate of more than fifty miles an hour, and Oliver Goldsmith would have been delighted at the idea of it. I do not think it would have been possible to induce the excellent but ponderous lexicographer to betake himself to Plymouth for the sake of discussing the question of international arbitration with these political economists, but the author of "The Citizen of the World" would have gloried in those advanced speculations, and would have been among the most amiable and popular of the guests of the hospitable natives—half-Devon and half-Cornish—on the borders of the Sound. The world has been wont to look on with a mixture of tolerance and derision at the apostles of arbitration and universal peace; but the time has perhaps come when the discussion of this subject will obtain for itself a hearing among even the most sceptical. While the gentlemen of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science are endeavouring to arrive at an answer to the question, "Can a Court of International Arbitration be formed with a view to avoid war? and, if so, in what way?" Count Sclopis will be revelling in the half realisation of this dream of political philanthropists. A glowing message, almost as full of sanguine and etherealised imagery as a letter from Garibaldi or an oration by the late Joseph Mazzini, will probably arrive from the President of the Court at Geneva to the Chairman of the Section of Municipal Law at Plymouth, and the Section will vote in reply a delightful resolution touching the proceedings of the Court of Arbitration and the history of that wonderful Treaty of Washington. Most sincerely do I hope that neither Count Sclopis nor the Section of Municipal Law of the Social Science Congress will be disappointed. I have lived long enough to mistrust the efficacy of war as the healer of wrongs or the final settler of quarrels, and if there is a streak to be seen in the sky—the token of a coming day of happier international relations—I shall be glad if these social philosophers will point it out to me. The remainder of the programme of the Plymouth Congress appears to me to be somewhat deficient in features of interest. I can look for not much benefit from a debate on the old question whether the punishment of crime should be deterrent or reformatory, and I do not believe the Section of Economy and Trade will throw any new light on the problem of direct and indirect taxation. From the Departments of Education and Health something useful in the shape of suggestions ought to come, which might render it desirable for the Chairmen of School Boards, of Boards of Guardians, and of Local Boards of Health to attend. If they have a weakness for the grandest and the most charming of English September scenery they will not regret a trip by the "fastest train in the world."

CHARLES LAMB was constitutionally susceptible of noises; so are we all, more or less. "Elia" describes his fretfulness under the infliction of a carpenter's hammer and the "measured malice of music." Happily, Parliament has done something to rid us of the organ nuisance; but Londoners suffer more and more every day from the cries of street hawkers. My friend Mr. Mayhew has I hope proved a benefactor to his neighbourhood by braving the licensed pest and meeting it boldly at the police court; but we are not all so courageous as he. I am myself of a retiring disposition; I would rather growl and stamp about in my room under the infliction of "cats' meat," "scissors to grind," "fresh gathered strawberries," "green peas eightpence per peck," than go outside and eject trespassers from my garden; but Oh, for a legal hand to fall upon these disturbers of suburban peace! Noise is the great bane of London life; it frets and worries many of us into premature graves. Asphalte pavements and tramway cars are modern blessings. May they go on increasing at forty times their present rate of development! The Metropolitan Railway directors ought to take a lesson from these advances in the march of quiet. I dare say thousands are influenced as I am against the Underground Railway. It is the noise, not the sulphur, that hurts me;—not the noise of the train, but the fiendish banging of the doors and the impish yells of the newsboys. Imagine for a moment the fine tracery of the nervous structure, with its manifold tender fibres, being subject to a hundred shocks of door-banging on a short journey of half a dozen miles! Let the directors look to this. They will find it an important element in making or unmaking dividends.

IF the day should ever come when this small island is found too narrow for agriculture, I trust that with that advanced economic condition of things will co-exist such marvellous and as yet unconceived facilities of communication between one country and another as will bring the great continents practically to our doors. For the Englishman's nature—strait and sea-bound as is his home—pines year by year for the sight of corn-fields. Never a harvest comes round but a hundred incidents convince me of the deep, unquenchable interest of my countrymen in the natural history, the characteristics and vicissitudes of the crops that are gathered in at this season. The Cockney who runs down into Kent or Surrey on a Sunday excursion in July or August will not report very much of pastures and trees, but he will be learned in the aspects of wheat and barley for the remainder of the summer, and will speak of the continuous acres of whitening corn, of the density of the growth, of the depth of stalk, of the long lines of sheaves, with an enthusiasm not usual with him. It is the same with all of us. We visit dockyards and foundries, giant factories, great exhibitions of machinery, picture galleries and industrial shows—but almost every man and woman of us will acknowledge when the time comes round that few sights satisfy us like that of the flourishing corn-field, and we must be very young indeed if we have not to-day the impulse to grieve because another "harvest is past" and another "summer is ended."

THE
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ISLES OF THE AMAZONS.

BY JOAQUIN MILLER.

PART II.

Forsake the city. Follow me
To where the white caps of a sea
Of mountains break and break again
As blown in foam against a star—
As breaks the fury of a main,
And there remains. . . as fixed. . . as far.

Forsake the people. What are they
That laugh, that live and love by rule ?
Forsake the Saxon. What are these
That shun the shadows of the trees :
The Druid forests ? . . . Go thy way,
We are not one. I will not please
You. . . . Fare you well, O wiser fool !

But you who love me. . . Ye who love
The shaggy forests, fierce delights
Of sounding waterfalls, of heights
That hang like broken moons above,
Believe and follow. We are one ;
The wild man shall to us be tame ;
The woods shall yield their mysteries ;
The stars shall answer to a name,
And be as birds above the trees.

IN the days when my mother, the earth, was young,
And you all were not, nor the likeness of you,
She walked in her maidenly prime among
The moonlit stars in the boundless blue.

Then the great sun lifted his shining shield,
  And he flashed his sword as the soldiers do,
And he moved like a king full over the field,
  And he looked, and he loved her brave and true.

And looking afar from the ultime rim,
  As he lay at rest in a reach of light,
  He beheld her walking alone at night,
Where the buttercup stars in their beauty swim.

So he rose up flushed in his love, and he ran,
  And he reached his arms, and around her waist
He wound them strong like a love-struck man,
  And he kissed and embraced her brave and chaste.

So he nursed his love like a babe at its birth,
  And he warmed in his love as the swift years ran,
Then embraced her again, and sweet mother earth
  Was a mother indeed, and her child was man.

The sun is the sire, the mother is earth !
  What more do you know ? what more do I need ?
The one he begot, and the other gave birth,
  And I love them both, and I laugh at your creed.

And who shall pronounce that the child of the sun
  With his warm rich worship was utterly wrong,
  In the far new years when the stars kept song ? . . .
But judge, and be judged . . . condemn and have done.

Lo ! Isles of the Incas ! Amazon Isles
  The sun he has loved you, clothed and crowned,
  And touched you tenderly, girt you round
With a sunset wave in a wealth of smiles.

O Isles of a wave in an ocean of wood !
  O white waves lost in the wilds I love !
  Let the red stars rest on your breast from above,
And sing to the sun, for his love it is good.

He has made you his heirs, he has given you gold,
  And wrought for you garments of limitless green,
  With beautiful bars of the scarlet between,
And of silver seams fretting you fold on fold.

He has kissed and caressed you, loved you true,
  Yea, loved as a god loves, loved as I
  Shall learn to love when the stars shall lie
Like blooms at my feet in a field of blue.

It is swift, it is sweet when born of a kiss,
  And who shall marvel, and who shall chide
  That the sun-loved children should turn aside
To the love of the sun for a love like this ?

And who shall say that they were not wise
  In their great warm Faith ? Time answers us nought :
The quick fool questions ; but who replies ?
  The wise man hesitates hushed in thought.

* * * * *

O heavens, the eloquent song of the silence !
  As asleep lay the sun on the vines and the sod ;
And asleep in the sun lay the green-girdled islands,
  As rocked to their rest in the cradle of God.

God's poet is Silence! His song is unspoken,
And yet so profound, and so loud, and so far,
That it thrills you and fills you in measures unbroken,
And bright, and as light, and as far as a star.

The shallow seas moan. As a child they have muttered
And mourned, and have fretted and wept at their will,
But the poem of God is too grand to be uttered:
The dreadful deep seas they are loudest when still.

"I shall die," he said, "by the sad, deep river,
By the King of Rivers and the Mother of Seas,
Far, so far from my Guadalquivir,
Near, so near to the dark Andes.

"Let me sing one song by the grand old river,
And die;" and he reached and he brake him a reed
From the rim of the river, where they lift and quiver;
And he trimmed it and fashioned it well to his need,

With his treacherous blade, in the sweep of the trees,
As he stood with his head bent low on his breast,
With the vines in his hair and the wave to his knees,
And bowed like to one who would die to rest.

"I shall fold my hands, for this is the river
Of death," he said, "and the sea-green Isle
Is an Eden set by the gracious Giver
Wherein to rest." He listed the while,

Then lifted his head, then lifted a hand
Arched over his brow, and leaned and listened—
'Twas only the bird on the border of sand.
The dark stream eddied, and gleamed, and glistened,

As stately and still as the march of a moon,
And the martial notes of the Isle were gone—
Gone as a dream dies out with the dawn,
And gone as far as the night from the noon.

'Twas only a bird on a reach of sand,
Slow piping, and diving it here and there,
Grey and shadowing, light as air,
That dipped below from a point of land.

And the flashing swords they sank in the air
When the notes were gone, and so, sadder now
He swept his hand to his bended brow
And crossed his breast in a plaintive prayer.

"Unto God a prayer and to love a tear,
And I die," he said, "in a desert here
So deep that never a note is heard
But the listless song of that soulless bird."

He moved to the burthen of blossoms there,
And stood in the red-white sweets to his knees—
The pink and the purple that filled the air
With fragrance sweet as a breeze of bees.

And he crushed the blooms to the sod untrod—
The mateless man, in an Eden fair
As the one of old, in his fierce despair,
And hidden from man by the hand of God—

And hidden and hung by the vines and mosses,
And shadowed about by the dark Andes,
And curtained about by the linden trees,
Well wove and inwove in delicate crosses:

The great trees leaned in their loves unto trees,
Were locked in their loves and so made strong,
Stronger than armies, aye, stronger than seas
That rush from their caves a storm of song.

"A miser of old his last great treasure
Flung far in the sea, and he fell and he died;
And so shall I give, O terrible tide,
To you my song and my last sad measure."

He blew on his reed by the still, strong river,
Blew low at first, like a dove, then long,
Then loud, then loud as the keys that quiver,
And fret, and toss with their freight of song.

And he sang and he sang with a resolute will,
Till the *mono* rested above on his hanches,
And held his head to the side and was still,
Till a bird flew out of the night of branches,

And alit on a reed, and with delicate skill
Sang sadder than love, so sweeter than sad,
Till the boughs did burden and the reeds did fill
With beautiful birds, and the boy was glad.

Our loves they are told by the myriad-eyed stars,
And yet love it is well in a reasonable way,
And fame it is fair in its way for a day,
Born dusty from books and bloody from wars;

And death I say is a delicate need,
And a calm delight and the darlingest good,
But a song that is blown from a watery reed
By a soundless deep from a boundless wood,

With never an ear to hear or to prize
  But God and the birds and the hairy wild beasts,
  Is sweeter than love, than fame, or than feasts,
Or anything else that is under the skies.

The quick leaves quivered as to dance with desire,
  As the boy sang sweet, and the birds said "Sweet;"
  And the tiger crept close and lay low at his feet,
And he sheathed his claws and his eyes of fire.

The serpent that hung from the sycamore bough,
  And swayed his head in a crescent above,
Had folded his neck to the white limb now,
  And fondled it close like a great black love.

But the sweet birds echoed no more, "O sweet,"
  And the tiger arose and unsheathed his claws,
  And the serpent extended his iron jaws,
When the reed all shivered fell down at his feet.

A splash in the tide, and he turned and he cried,
  "Oh, give God thanks, for they come! they come!"
  Then clasped his hands, and his lips were dumb
As he looked out far on the opaline tide.

In a sweeping crescent of sudden canoes
  As light as the sun, and as swift and soon
  And true and as still as a sweet half moon
That leans from the heavens, and loves and woos,

The Amazons came in their martial pride,
  As full on the river as a studding of stars,
  All girted in armour as girded in wars,
And in foamy furrows dividing the tide.

With a face as brown as the boatmen's are,
Or the brave, brown hand of a harvester;
And girdled in gold, and crowned in hair,
In a storm of night all studded with rare

Rich stars that fretted the sun at noon,
The Queen on a prow stood splendid and tall,
As the petulant waters would lift and fall
And beat and bubble a watery rune:

Stood forth for the song, half leaned in surprise,
Stood fair to behold, and yet grand to behold,
And severe in her face and saturnine souled,
Yet sad and subdued in her eloquent eyes.

And sad were they all, yet tall and serene
Of presence, but silent, and brow'd severe
As for some things lost, or for some fair green
And beautiful place to the memory dear,

That they might not mention nor no more recall
In crowds, apart, in zest or in jest,
In thought or in image, in rest or unrest,
But with pain to the one and a peril to all.

"O mother of God! Thrice merciful saint!
I am saved!" he said, and he wept outright;
Aye, wept as even a woman might,
For the soul was full and the heart was faint.

"Stay! stay!" cried the Queen, and she leapt to the land
And confronted the beasts till they fled from her face,
Then turned to her braves as she stood in her place
And bade them approach with the beck of her hand—

“ A woman ! A woman ! fie, level your spears !
Nor man now is this nor monster of prey,
But a sister that seeks us and lost of her way ;
A woman ! A woman ! we know by the tears.”

Then tender and true as the touch of a woman,
They lifted him up from the earth as he fell,
And into the boat, with a half-hidden swell
Of the heart, that was holy and humanly human.

They bore him and laid him most tenderly there ;
And they pillowed his head as only the hand
Of a woman can pillow, and pushed from the land,
As the Queen she sat threading the gold of his hair.

Then away with the wave, and away to the Isles,
In a song of the oars of the crescent fleet,
That timed together in musical wiles,
And a bubble of melodies swift and sweet.

As strong as a love, and as swift as a dove
When the loves of her little ones hasten her home,
They swept to the Isles through the furrows of foam,
They alit on the land as if blown from above.

And below the banana, with leaf like a tent,
They tenderly laid him, they bade him take rest ;
They brought him strange fishes and fruits of the best,
And he ate and took rest with a patient content.

They watched with him well—he arose up strong,
And he stood in their midst, and they said, “ How fair ! ”
And they said, “ How tall ! ” And they toyed with his hair,
And they touched of his limbs, and they said, “ How long !

"And how strong they are, and how brave she is,
That she made her way through the wiles of man,
That she braved his wrath, that she broke the ban
Of his desolate life for the blisses of this!"

And they wove for him garments of delicate plan,
But he put them away with a feeling of shame
That the sexes were not—man, woman—the same,
The man as a woman and the maid as a man.

And they wrought for him armour of cunning attire,
And they brought him a sword and a great shell shield,
And implored him to shiver the lance on the field
Where they followed their Queen in her beautiful ire.

For ever in battle the brown Queen led,
With her cry for freedom and her wave-washed land,
Until far and wide was her great fame spread,
And the terror of man upon every hand.

With a sense of shame and a singular pride,
And a sharp reproach and a quick distress
At the sight or thought of the sexless dress,
He pursed his brow as he pushed them aside.

Then he took him apart, and the Amazons came
And entreated of him with their eloquent eyes
And their earnest and passionate souls of flame,
And the soft, sweet words that are broken of sighs,

To be one of their own, but he still denied.
And he warred with himself, and his chivalrous heart
Arose and rebelled at the duplicate part,
And bowed and abashed he stole farther aside.

And he stood by the palms and he leaned in unrest,
Then he stood out alone, and he looked out afar,
For his own fair land where the castles are.
With irresolute arms on a restless breast,

He relived his loves, he recalled his wars,
He gazed and he gazed like a soul distressed,
Or a far sweet star that is lost in the west,
Till the day was broken to a dust of stars.

(To be continued.)

PRESIDENT MAKING IN AMERICA.

AMONGST the memorable incidents in the history of the British Parliament, the last appearance of the Earl of Chatham is perhaps the grandest, the most dramatic, and the most pathetic. The illustrious statesman, tottering and visibly death-stricken, was led into the House of Lords, and was respectfully, almost reverently, received by the assembled peers. He whose clarion voice had thrilled and inspired the listening Senate, and whose burning words had quickened and sustained the national hope and faith of the people in the day of extremest peril, had, regardless of warning and entreaty, risen from a sick bed to protest with his dying breath against the dismemberment of the Empire in which he gloried, and which he loved with an unspeakable affection. The Duke of Richmond arose and discharged a more painful duty than was ever before or has ever since been imposed upon an English gentleman. He moved an address to the Crown in favour of concluding a peace with the revolted colonies. When the Duke sat down the Earl of Chatham spoke amidst a dread, impressive silence. His speech was halting, and only now and then was there a flash and a tone that reminded his hearers of those outbursts of eloquence that had shaken thrones abroad and quelled the spirit of rebellion at home. Yet with such strength as was left to him he opposed the motion before the House. With befitting gentleness and courtesy the Duke of Richmond replied. Then for the last time William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, rose to speak. Again there was the dread, oppressive silence. But instead of speaking, Chatham pressed his hand on his heart, and sank senseless into the arms of his friends.

The great statesman has been blamed for opposing the conclusion of peace with the United States. Having more than once declared that we could not conquer America, why did he plead for the continuation of the war? Some assert that his mind had become enfeebled; and others that he would not make peace with America because it would be a triumph for France. But when he proclaimed that we could not conquer the men of English blood who were fighting for liberty, did he hold that the independence of the colonies was the only way of ending the struggle? And if he did, still when the hour was at hand for the confession of defeat he might well shrink from the act of national humiliation, and, maddened by despair, prefer for awhile to wage a hopeless warfare. Lopping off a limb is an easy and, surgically speaking, a safe operation. The loss of a limb does not interfere with the vital functions of the body, yet the patient recoils from the amputation of arm or leg, and suffers a nervous shock, and is afflicted with a nervous depression often fatal. So with a nation. The loss of outlying territory may not be injurious, yet no national calamity is felt so bitterly and so lastingly as dismemberment. When, in 1856, the news reached us of the mutiny in India, and when those who hate us gloated over the prospect of England losing her Eastern Empire, men of all opinions and of all conditions resolved that at least we would pour forth our treasure and our blood without stint to defend or to restore our magnificent dominion. The loss of the thirteen colonies must have appeared a still greater calamity to our ancestors. The men who had renounced political union with England were Englishmen. The colonies of America were our pride and our boast. They were not only a source of wealth, but they rendered the sceptre of England supreme in the New World. When the United States became an independent Power, the loss seemed irreparable, for we had not then won a vast Empire in the East, and the fifth quarter of the world, the Australias, was not then an object of hope and ambition. Yes, the victory of America was a terrible blow, sufficient to break the stout heart of Chatham.

But the crucial trial was bravely borne by our fathers. The King did not seek to hide the magnitude of the misfortune. In right kingly words he said that the brightest jewel had been plucked from his crown. George III. has been sneered at because he could not forget what had happened, and would not allow a lightning conductor to be affixed to his palace because it was the invention of an American—of an American who had been a leader in the contest against the mother country. Such stolid, implacable anger as this is not ignoble. The King preferred to brave the risk of the lightning rather than to owe his safety to the devices of a man who had rebelled against his sovereignty, and who, with his colleagues, had bereft England of her fairest possessions beyond the seas. The attitude of the people was also gallant and noble. They did not rise against their King or overthrow the Constitution, though they were not consoled by a pre-vision of the unsurpassed Imperial greatness that was achieved in the next half century. A people that has the strength and the virtue to be thus temperate and heroic in the day of calamity will be victorious in the days to come.

Whilst we bore our defeat with manly fortitude, the Americans made a wise and worthy use of their triumph. The situation was difficult and even perilous. The colonists had not gone to war for an idea. They had only followed the example of their forefathers, who, rather than pay taxes not sanctioned by their elected representatives, unfurled the flag of rebellion and took the life of their king. The war was not an anti-monarchical war. The men of Virginia, who were devoted loyalists, and whose ancestors had been the first to rejoice in the Restoration of the Stuarts, and the men of Massachusetts, the children of the Pilgrim Fathers, and who liked no monarchy save the chimerical Fifth Monarchy, were united in the defence of the principle that no taxation is lawful in a free community unless it is decreed by the lawfully elected representatives of the taxpayers. No doubt as the war went on other sentiments were begotten. The bloodshed engendered a hatred of the mother country, and when we stigmatised the colonists as rebels it was natural that they should denounce monarchy. But the war being over, it became necessary for the leaders to construct a system of government that would be acceptable both to the Puritans of New England and to the Episcopalians of Virginia. It is impossible not to admire their patriotic discretion and their exceeding moderation. Save in the preamble, the Constitution they agreed upon was not tainted by the example and teaching of revolutionary France. They did not depart from the English Constitution more than was needful, and the Constitution of the United States is a copy of ours adapted to a federation of States, save that the Senate is not a chamber of hereditary legislators, and that the Chief Magistrate is not an hereditary monarch, but a President elected for a term.

Public writers roughly set forth three sorts of government—Despotism, Constitutional Monarchy, and Republicanism. If we emancipate our minds from the bondage of words, we perceive that there are in effect only two kinds of government; the one being a government legally independent of public opinion, and the other a government which represents and is dependent on the will of the people. There have been despotic republican governments, and there have been free monarchical governments. Now, both in England and in America the will of the people is supreme; and our Government would be called a Republic if the Chief Magistracy were a periodically elective office, and the United States Government would be classed as monarchical if the Chief Magistracy were an hereditary office entailed to a particular family. If the Americans had been able, there is little doubt that in the matter of the Chief Magistracy they would have followed the example of the last English revolution; and whilst discarding the King of England, would have adopted the hereditary principle. But it was impossible; because you cannot have an hereditary ruler without you have an hereditary class—that is, a peerage; and a peerage is an institution of slow growth, and cannot be created by a breath or be matured in a generation or a century. So the Americans were compelled to have an elected President, and no part of the Constitution gave the framers thereof such trouble as the Chief Magistracy.

In the Constitutional Convention (1787) Mr. Hamilton, who was in favour of a President and senators holding their places for life, said that "the British Government was the best in the world; and he doubted much whether anything short of it would do in America. ..... The British House of Lords is a most noble institution. .... Let the Executive be for life. On the plan of appointing him for seven years he would be ambitious, with the means of making creatures; and as the object of his ambition would be to prolong his power, it is probable that in case of a war he would avail himself of the emergency to evade or refuse a degradation from his office. An Executive for life has not this motive for forfeiting his fidelity, and would therefore be a safer depository of power." In a like temperate manner the question of the Presidency was discussed for several days, for when it had been agreed that the President should hold office for a fixed term, then there was a conflict of opinion as to the mode of electing the Chief of the Executive. One party proposed that he should be chosen by the National Legislature, and another party that he should be elected by the direct vote of the people. Mr. Sherman, of Connecticut, thought that the sense of the people would be better expressed by the Legislature than by the people, because the latter would never be sufficiently informed of the character of the candidate. Mr. Sherman was supported by Mr. Pickney, of South Carolina, and by Colonel Mason of Virginia. Mr. Gouverneur Morris and others considered that the President ought to be the elect of the people, as he would otherwise be the mere creature of the Legislature. Finally a compromise plan was adopted which seems theoretically perfect.

The President was to hold office for four years, and he was to be chosen by a special Electoral College. "Each State shall appoint, in such manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors equal to the whole number of senators and representatives to which the State may be entitled in Congress." If the Electoral College does not give the needful majority for one person, then the decision is left to the House of Representatives, who, "from the persons having the highest number, not exceeding three, on the list of those voted for as President shall vote the President by ballot, but in choosing the President the vote is to be taken by States, the representative from each State having one vote." The last provision is noteworthy as an evidence that in matters federal the Constitutional Assembly treated the States as equal sovereign States, irrespective of size or population. I may here remark that in all the States except South Carolina the Presidential electors have been chosen by the popular vote. In South Carolina the Presidential electors were chosen by the State Legislature. From a careful study of Mr. Madison's reports of the Constitutional Convention, of the *Federalist*, and other records of the period, I hold that South Carolina violated the spirit if not the letter of the Constitution. Thus, Mr. Hamilton, writing in the *Federalist*, says, "It was desirable that the sense of the people should operate in the choice of a person to whom so important a trust as the Presidency was to be confided. This end will be answered by committing the right of working it, not to any pre-established body, but to men chosen by the people for the special purpose and at the particular juncture." The wording of the Constitution does not say that the State Legislature shall appoint the electors, but that the State—that is, the people of the State—should appoint in a manner to be directed by the Legislature.

It is necessary to pass this observation upon the exceptional action of South Carolina, in order to appreciate the object of the Constitutional Convention. The people were primarily though not directly to choose the President, and inasmuch as the representation of the States in the House of Representatives depended upon population, although the people voted by States, yet the total popular vote would indirectly tell upon the result. The provision giving power to the Legislature to prescribe the modes in which the Presidential electors were to be elected did not in effect interfere with the right of the people. If the mode adopted by the Legislature was unpopular the people could elect a Legislature that would prescribe the mode they desired.

But how could the people, dispersed over such a wide area, agree upon the choice of a President? As Colonel Mason said in the Constitutional Convention: "The extent of the country renders it impossible that the people can have the requisite capacity to judge of the respective pretensions of the candidates." Therefore the Constitutional Convention devised the theoretically clever plan of an Electoral College. The people of every State were to choose trustworthy men for Presidential electors, and the representatives of the several States were to meet and to choose the President. If this system worked at all, it could hardly fail to work well. The people would elect men in whom they had confidence, and the most trusted men of the several States would after due deliberation elect the President. Unfortunately, from the outset the Electoral College has been no more than a court for the record of the choice of a President. The intent of the framers of the Constitution, and the Constitution itself, have been utterly contemned and set aside.

Before glancing at the actual mode of electing a President, it will be well to observe that for a long period—from the election of George Washington in 1788 until the election of 1824, when the Electoral College not having given a majority for a candidate, the House of Representatives elected John Quincy Adams—the contests were comparatively unimportant, and it was of little practical consequence that the Electoral College discharged a mere delegate, not to say a mere clerkly function, instead of the important and responsible function which was assigned to it by the Constitution. Washington was President for two terms without opposition in the Electoral College. Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe each held the high office for eight years. John Adams, who succeeded Washington, was defeated on his candidature for a second term of office by the Southern vote being cast for his rival Jefferson. This was the election of 1800, and in the Electoral College Jefferson had seventy-three votes, of which twenty were Northern and fifty-three Southern votes. Adams had sixty-five votes, and of these fifty-three were Northern and twelve Southern votes. But the Southern vote was not cast for Jefferson, on account of sectional differences which did not come into play until a much later period. In 1800 the Democratic party, which was of Southern inception and development, took the lead, and held it without an interval until 1840, when Van Buren was defeated by Harrison.

American Presidents are elected by a body of which no mention is made in the Constitution, and which was unknown and unthought of by the framers of the Constitution. The Presidents are the choice of party Conventions, called National Conventions, and these Conventions are the delegates of the managers, or wire-pullers, of the respective parties.

The work of the election begins about eighteen months before the time when the people are to elect the Electoral College. No candidates are put forward, but the managers of the respective parties prepare for what they are pleased to call the National Conventions. The labour is very great, and the organisation is wonderfully perfect. In every electoral district of every State lists have to be prepared of men who "are sound on the goose"—that is, men who will do the bidding of the managers of the party. In the February or March preceding the November election of the Electoral College the people are invited by advertisement to meet at their electoral districts to choose delegates for the State Convention. At these district meetings the prepared lists are put forward, and are as a matter of course voted. Now these informal elections do not attract much attention, though they are in fact, so far as the popular vote is concerned, the most important. These electoral district delegates, who are thus chosen without any canvass, and generally without any other voting than a show of hands, meet in a State Convention, and from themselves they select delegates for the National Convention. The rival National Conventions meet, and each one nominates a candidate. Now, be it observed that these nominations are made about four months before the people are called upon to choose the Electoral College, yet the Presidential election is so far settled that one or other of the nominees will be elected President. Until November it will not be known whether A or B will be elected, but it is known that either one or the other will be elected. It is only a question of party strength, party discipline, and party organisation. In November, instead of choosing Presidential electors, the people will elect one or the other of the candidates nominated by the rival Conventions. And when the Electoral College is elected, the President is elected. The meeting of the Electoral College is a farce, a senseless formality. The Electoral College does not meet to deliberate, but only to vote for A or for B, each member being sent to the College to vote for A or B. The Electoral College has no more to do with the choice of President than have the telegraph wires which carry the news of the November elections.

It is worth while to dwell for a moment on this singular violation of constitutional law by a law-abiding people. That the fathers of the Republic intended the Electoral College to be a representative and deliberative body is beyond doubt, for otherwise the Electoral College would be useless. Besides, we have evidence that the framers of the Constitution did not intend that the President should be elected by a direct popular vote. When it was proposed in the Constitutional Convention that the President should be elected by the people, every State except Pennsylvania voted against the motion. Further, the plan adopted of the several States being represented in the Electoral College according to the number of representatives they are entitled to return to Congress enables the candidate who has a minority of the popular vote to have a majority in the Electoral College. Suppose there were three States, each one having 100,000 electors, and each one therefore entitled to the same number of votes (say ten) in the Electoral College. Suppose the result of the popular election was as follows :—

State.	Popular Vote for A.	Popular Vote for B.	Electoral Vote for A.	Electoral Vote for B.
X	99,000	1,000	10	—
Y	49,000	51,000	—	10
Z	49,000	51,000	—	10

Popular Vote for A 197,000
Popular Vote for B 103,000

Majority for A............ 94,000

Yet B would have a majority in the Electoral College, and would be elected President. But I need not put the case hypothetically. Mr. Lincoln was a minority President. In the Electoral College Mr. Lincoln had 180 votes, which was a majority of the whole electoral vote. In the North he had on the popular vote 1,831,180 votes against 1,554,191 votes. In the South the majority against him was 1,277,049 votes. Therefore on the popular vote Mr. Lincoln was in a minority of 1,000,060 votes.

The framers of the Constitution did not intend the President to be directly elected by the popular vote, but they did intend that the President should be elected by the independent choice of the Electoral College, representatives of the majorities in the States. But owing to the system of party Conventions and the virtual abrogation of the Electoral College, the President is the nominee of the party managers. Every fourth year the millions vote for A or B. A and B are the nominees of the leaders of the contending parties. Each party has hundreds, and indeed thousands of agents, for every man who wants a place is an active agent; but practically the nomination is settled by less than a score of the party chiefs. The President of the United States, I say, is not the elect of the people, but of the leaders of his party—of a clique of a dozen or twenty men. This is not an exaggeration; and every intelligent and patriotic American will vouch for the rigid truth of the statement.

We come to the important question as to [illegible] k [illegible] of the ex
ing system of Presidential elections. An [illegible] c [illegible] m—
is, a custom not formally enjoined or [illegible] l [illegible] t letter
the Constitution—is not of necessity an e [illegible] T [illegible] Governm
England is a Cabinet Government. [illegible] w o [illegible] Co [illegible] ution d [illegible]
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suggest a better plan for carryi [illegible] c [illegible]
country. Does the practice of t [illegible]
constituted party Conventions [illegible]

violation of the Constitution is only worthy of notice as a curious instance of the imperfection of political Constitutions.

The men of America, in politics, social philosophy, and religion, are a wonderfully divided people; but there is at least one matter in respect to which there is a remarkable unanimity. North, South, East, and West, Republicans, Democrats, New Republicans, the little remnant of the Whigs, the Radicals, and all other parties agree that the Presidential election is an unmitigated evil. It is a source of chronic political agitation; it lowers the tone of public morals; it fosters jobbery and place hunting; it is a hindrance to the social advancement of the community.

The President of the United States has a limited sovereignty. He has no more political power than a British monarch, but he has at his disposal an unprecedented patronage. Thousands of appointments are in his gift, and it has become a rule for the President to exercise his patronage for the benefit of his party supporters, and when a new President is installed all the offices of the Government are filled with new men. So far as the actual electors of the President are concerned—that is, the leaders and wire-pullers of parties—it is a fight for place and pay. The contest is conducted with an utter disregard of decorum or the interests of the Republic. The press teems with fulsome eulogy and with scandalous abuse. No praise is too extravagant and no slander is too infamous. As the day of election approaches the country is convulsed from coast to coast. The bar-rooms are thronged with alcoholically excited patriots. Quarrelling and rioting are prevalent. The darkness of the evening is illumined by torchlight processions, and the vast community appears to be under the influence of a childish delirium.

It has been said that the best men of the country will not come forward as candidates, but that assertion is not true., To be elected President, to be the Chief Magistrate of the United States, to be the equal of the kings of the earth, is an object of ambition to the best men. But the eminent statesman has no chance of election. He might succeed if the election were left to the Electoral College or to the popular vote; but the party managers want a tool, and not a leader, and so they set aside the men of note and strength and choose unknown men. In 1840 Mr. Clay was the leader of the Whigs, and it seemed possible that the Whigs would carry the election against the Democratic party, which was represented by Mr. Van Buren, the then President. It pleased the Whig Convention to pass over Mr. Clay, one of the most eminent statesmen of America, and to nominate General Harrison. No one knew anything about General

Harrison, who had never interfered in politics. No one knew anything about his views, or his principles, or his capacity. He was very old, and years before had fought the Indians at a place called Tippecanoe. The nomination was treated with merited ridicule, but it was successful. The Harrison and Tyler ticket was carried. Some one said or wrote that General Harrison was only qualified to live in a log-cabin and drink hard cider. The Whig managers adopted the sarcasm as a cry. In their election processions they carried cider barrels and models of log cabins. They sang—

> Up, Tippecanoe, and Tyler too;
> And down with the Loco-foco crew.

or—

> Hurrah! hurrah! for Harrison and Tyler;
> A good log-cabin and a barrel of hard cider.

General Harrison died a month after his inauguration, and he was succeeded by Vice-President Tyler, a gentleman with no more pretension to be President than a fifth-rate silent borough member in the House of Commons has to be Prime Minister. To be sure Mr. Tyler had as great a public claim to the Presidency as General Harrison.

The present Grant and Greeley contest affords emphatic evidence of the despotism of the Convention system. It might be supposed that the wishes and sentiments of the party would be consulted by the party managers, but that is not the fact. We need not debate the fitness of Mr. Greeley for the Presidency. We may assume that he is as good or even a better candidate than his rival. Yet it cannot be denied that Mr. Greeley was forced on the Democrats against their will. The party managers were of opinion that they could win on the Greeley ticket, and so they nominated Mr. Greeley, and commanded the Democrats to vote for a man who has been their life-long political foe.

Various remedies have been suggested for the universally admitted evil of Presidential elections. It has been proposed to decrease the patronage of the President by rendering civil offices, except the heads of departments, tenable during good behaviour. This would be a wise change; but the President would still have sufficient patronage to whet the appetite of the party wire-pullers and their adherents. Some suggest that the President should be elected for life, but the teaching of history is conclusively against an elective monarchy, and a Presidency for life would be that virtually. The suggestion of trusting the choice of the Federal President to the Federal Congress is objectionable, because it places

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the Chief Magistrate under an obligation to Congress, and further, men would be sent to Congress as delegates to vote for certain Presidential candidates. The proposition to constitute the senators Presidents in rotation is not favourably received, since the Chief Magistrate of a great Republic should be something more than a member of the Legislature. National Conventions cannot be abolished without an infringement of the liberty of speech and the right of public meeting. It would be a boon to America if effect could be given to the intentions of the Fathers of the Republic, and if the Electoral College were elected to choose the President; and if the people willed it, if they refused to be bound by the Convention nominations, and sent to the Electoral College *bonâ fide* Presidential electors, the desired reform would be accomplished. But since it is improbable, not to say impossible, that the people will break the power of the Conventions, it is expedient that the Electoral College should be abolished. It is manifestly of no service, and a sham is always dangerous.

The Presidential election is the weak point in the American political system. It has been injurious, and unless there is a change may be fatal, to the Republic. But who can doubt that a better plan for the election of the Chief Magistrate will be devised? So vast is the power of the United States that we are apt to forget the Republic is not yet a hundred years old. It needed centuries of toil and struggle and revolutions and civil war to form and reform our institutions, and we ought not to be surprised that the Constitution of the United States is not yet devoid of serious faults.

The discovery of the New World is a chapter of history that never fails to excite the imagination of the student. It is a romance that cannot be read without a quickening of the pulse. Because the end is foreknown, we are not less agitated by the recital of the wondrous story. We follow Columbus from Court to Court while he is seeking the means to carry out the greatest enterprise ever undertaken by man. We rejoice when his dauntless perseverance is rewarded, and Isabella promises to find the needful money. We accompany him and his crews to the monastery of Rabida, where they receive the Sacrament and the blessing of the Church. We see the three frail ships set sail; the Canaries are passed, and day after day and night after night the flotilla is ploughing the waves of unknown seas. We are not surprised at the mutiny of the followers, while we feel an inexpressible admiration for the exalted heroism of the leader. We come to the thrilling crisis when officers and men revolt, when Columbus stands alone and has to promise that if on the third day land does not appear he will return to Spain. Though upheld by a mighty faith, even Columbus might have known fear; for the strongest faith has its moments of crucial trial.

Suppose that, overcome with anxiety and watching, Columbus slept, and, sleeping, is favoured with one of those visions with which the biographies of the saints abound. A messenger, an angel, appears before him, and bids him be of good cheer. He shall find land, but not the land he anticipates. He will not discover a part of India, but a New World. Then the angel, taking him in his arms, and bearing him high above the sea, shows him the vast continent. And if the angel had revealed to him the future of the New World—had told him that it was not to be the spiritual kingdom of the Church of Rome or to be under the temporal rule of Spain, but that it was to become the heritage of the English race—the thought would have aroused Columbus from his sleep, and made him despise the whole vision.

But we have seen greater wonders than would have been revealed in such a vision. We have seen America in less than a hundred years become one of the foremost Powers of the earth. America is, indeed, in all things a world of marvels which transcend the conceptions of the most heated and prolific imagination. The story of her discovery is the romance of history. Her various climates, her grand geographical features, and her riches are marvels that infinitely exceed the most extravagant creations of Oriental fiction. Modern commerce, the source of modern civilisation and the pioneer of Christianity, is to a great extent the offspring of the New World. Take away the cotton, the tobacco, and the sugar of America—only take away these three staples, and how comparatively insignificant would be the proportions of modern commerce, and how comparatively poor would be mankind! But there is nothing in America so wondrous as the political history of the United States. There are men yet in the flesh who were alive when George Washington was President. The handful of colonists has become a mighty people. The record of the past is a guarantee for the future. The people who have done so much will be able to perfect their institutions. I admit that the present system of Presidential elections is perilous. I admit that if continued it may be fatal to the Republic. But Americans are aware of the evil and of the peril, and therefore I am confident that they will grapple with the difficulty, and that ere long the election of the First Magistrate of the Republic will not be left to greedy office seekers or be the source of national political corruption.

then know how to mould them skilfully. For, as we have endeavoured to point out, fiction is a sketch; but if it is to avail anything it must be a sketch taken from life.

Having, therefore, thus briefly summed up its nature and scope, and having shown its importance as affecting public morality, we have now in the second place to consider fiction in its construction and treatment. And to this end we may perhaps be permitted to class novels roughly under three prominent heads. First we will take into consideration those which are written with some particular practical object in view—such, for example, as the furtherance of education, or the correction of any social abuse. Now, with regard to a work of this sort it may be briefly said that its influence and success will depend upon the spirit in which it is written. To render it effective, the author must be a man of strict impartiality and uniform justice. If his object be the advancement or the reformation of a certain class of people, he must regard their errors and delinquencies from their own stand-point. He must adapt himself to their circumstances, taking into account their opportunities and becoming, as it were, one of them. If he wish to improve them he must consult their temporal interest as well as their moral obligations, and must show how the two are essentially bound up together and depend upon one another for their very existence. And this is more especially important with respect to the lower or less educated classes. The satirist may and has with good effect launched his sarcasms against the pitiful anomalies and furtive vices that disfigure a higher and more artificial state of society. But in dealing with the great working class, whose daily labour is the source from whence they derive their sustenance, and whose life is in many cases an unremitting struggle to support their families and themselves, he who would do a public service must go upon a different tack. Satire falls blunted. Mere schemes of philanthropy do not even gain a hearing. The author must take the world as he finds it, and, making acknowledged facts the subject matter of his work, can first show their practical bearing and their tendency, and then how far they admit of alteration. One well drawn sketch framed on this model will at once commend itself to those for whose benefit it is intended. The exposure of a vicious custom in its origin and effect will probably lead to a desire for its eradication. The exemplification of true human virtues in the exercise of their powers will endue existence with a nobler and less selfish aim. Only let the author be true to his own experience, and true to the human nature which he professes to illustrate, and the beauty of a pure and consistent life will recommend once the exponent and investigator of public morality. His work, moreover, is especially important in the power that he has of applying the rules and axioms of this morality to individuals, showing its bearing upon society both severally and collectively; and here it takes precedence of a mere methodical essay, which from the nature of its composition is harder to be understood. The latter deals with first principles in themselves, while the former, by identifying them with some particular character, shows them in their application and active exercise.

And since this is the case, it necessarily follows that the power of fiction will be greater, and its standard of morality more eminently productive of practical results. It pervades every class of society, sowing broadcast seeds which will infallibly expand and ripen. Sorrow and crime, indeed, have been too often engendered by it. Pure waters, poisoned by the deadly stream of perverted truth, have pointed to it as the fountain-head from whence the pollution came. Hearts drawn away by the insidious attractions of vice delicately handled and carefully glossed over have owed to it their first propensity. But this is only one side of the picture, and there is another, we trust paramount, at all events no less true. Studies of human life, with its infinite capabilities for good, and stories of noble and devoted lives, by suggesting the glorious possibilities that still lie within our reach, have formed the soil from whence have sprung generous aspirations and heroic deeds. Using this means earnest men have pleaded for the eternal laws of truth and justice; philanthropists have urged the claims of particular classes for education and advancement; practical philosophers have striven for the domestic improvement of the poor—have proved the impossibility of even social decency with crowded dwellings and vicious influences—calling upon the higher classes, with their superior advantages, to assist in promoting a speedy and urgently needed reform. Appealing to motives of self-interest, if all others fail, they have pointed out how the corrupt morals of an individual class affect society at large, making rotten the very foundation on which it stands. Others have directed their attack against the higher and better educated classes themselves, insisting upon their responsible position in respect to their fellow men, baring the hypocrisy of conventional forms, and striking sometimes a well-aimed blow at popular vices which lurk behind the screen of social indulgence.

Now, these are tangible and well defined results, and they may be attempted and have been already attained by the novelist. Only he must first acquire his materials by his own personal experience, and then know how to mould them skilfully. For, as we have endeavoured to point out, fiction is a sketch; but if it is to avail anything it must be a sketch taken from life.

Having, therefore, thus briefly summed up its nature and scope, and having shown its importance as affecting public morality, we have now in the second place to consider fiction in its construction and treatment. And to this end we may perhaps be permitted to class novels roughly under three prominent heads. First we will take into consideration those which are written with some particular practical object in view—such, for example, as the furtherance of education, or the correction of any social abuse. Now, with regard to a work of this sort it may be briefly said that its influence and success will depend upon the spirit in which it is written. To render it effective, the author must be a man of strict impartiality and uniform justice. If his object be the advancement or the reformation of a certain class of people, he must regard their errors and delinquencies from their own stand-point. He must adapt himself to their circumstances, taking into account their opportunities and becoming, as it were, one of them. If he wish to improve them he must consult their temporal interest as well as their moral obligations, and must show how the two are essentially bound up together and depend upon one another for their very existence. And this is more especially important with respect to the lower or less educated classes. The satirist may and has with good effect launched his sarcasms against the pitiful anomalies and furtive vices that disfigure a higher and more artificial state of society. But in dealing with the great working class, whose daily labour is the source from whence they derive their sustenance, and whose life is in many cases an unremitting struggle to support their families and themselves, he who would do a public service must go upon a different tack. Satire falls blunted. Mere schemes of philanthropy do not even gain a hearing. The author must take the world as he finds it, and, making acknowledged facts the subject matter of his work, can first show their practical bearing and their tendency, and then how far they admit of alteration. One well drawn sketch framed on this model will at once commend itself to those for whose benefit it is intended. The exposure of a vicious custom in its origin and effect will probably lead to a desire for its eradication. The exemplification of true human virtues in the exercise of their powers will endue existence with a nobler and less selfish aim. Only let the author be true to his own experience, and true to the human nature which he professes to illustrate, and the beauty of a pure and consistent life will recommend itself to the world, no less by the dignity it confers upon the possessors, than by the light which it reflects upon all who come within the range of its influence.

But in all attempts after social reform the writer must be careful to distinguish between the accidental qualities of a class and their essential characteristics. If an evil be inherent in and inseparably connected with a system, he will strike at the root of the system itself. The corrupt fruit is the product of the corrupt tree, but the fruit that is allowed to degenerate or grow rotten, though coming from a good stock, owes its worthlessness, not to the parent tree, but to the want of proper care and culture. And this, although it really involves a truism, would seem to be an axiom constantly disregarded by modern philanthropists. How is it, on the one hand, that schemes charitably devised and perhaps well carried out for the social and moral improvement of the humanity that centres and crowds in the heart of our great cities, passing an existence at which the civilisation of the nineteenth century blushes for very shame, have been so often frustrated, or at least have failed to realise the expectations which they held out? The reason is plain. Simply because they have not penetrated to the origin of the disease which they professed to cure. Because they regarded the evil in itself only, and neglected the principle to which it owed its birth. They attempted a partial reformation where the whole thing was fundamentally and radically wrong. On the other hand, error in the opposite direction has promoted wild and impracticable propositions, such as the fusion of classes, the general distribution of lands, and other equally Quixotic devices for the well-being and contentment of mankind at large.

The author must steer clear between these two faults, and in proportion as he effects this, and in proportion as he is able to prove the influence of external circumstances in the formation of character, and to show the co-extension of moral responsibility with the training necessary for its complete realisation, so will the practical value of his work be great or small.

Without, then, entering further into this subject, which would perhaps lead us somewhat astray from our main purpose, we will now pass on to a second class of novels, entirely different to the last both in their nature and in their object. These are books whose theme is the delineation and development of one particular character. They are, in fact, biographies, although this designation is usually applied to narratives of facts, whereas we are still in the province of fiction. Now, this class is numerically small, and in no work have authors more generally failed; and this is chiefly owing to the fact that the main interest of the book does not depend upon any plot or combination of extraordinary circumstances, but is centred upon one prominent figure—circumstances are but the background; accessory characters are grouped around it only to throw it into greater relief. In the portrayal, therefore, of this centre figure the greatest care must be observed. The reader's interest in it must be cherished and increased as the story proceeds, and never be allowed to flag or drift away into any side channel. A work of this kind, well conceived and well written, possesses great literary value and demands a very high order of talent. It exacts, moreover, the very closest attention, not only from the author, but from the reader also. It is, in fact, an abstract study of human nature—an analysis of character in its formation, its gradual growth, and subsequent maturity, dependent to a greater or less extent upon the external circumstances by which it is surrounded.

What, then, we proceed to ask, is necessary to make a work of this kind effective?

In the first place, it is manifest that the subject must either be one taken from the everyday world with which we are cognizant, or be a picture of the personification of some perfection of which the author believes humanity to be capable. If it be the former, the task is comparatively easy, a successful construction depending more than anything else upon the writer's experience and power of description and the general analogy of his sketch to nature; but where the character is ideal the author must to a great extent fall back upon himself. Premising that he wishes to show the capacity of human nature for the attainment of a certain moral elevation, his invention will rest upon the groundwork of his own personal conception with respect to men. In other words, he lifts up a standard of morality which, be it high or low, worthy or unworthy, is blazoned through the world for good or evil. It is important, because intended to command respect and admiration. The character is not a mere speculation, nor is it simply imaginary. It has a potential existence, and may therefore be imitated. Hence the author is himself responsible for the example which he has set up and the impression that is left upon the reader.

Now, if a work of this kind is to exercise any influence at all over the minds of men it must be distinguished by certain general characteristics. If, for instance, the conception of the author be one altogether incompatible with human fallibility, or if it be inconsistent in itself, or if its position in the world be an extraordinary and entirely unusual one, much, if not all, of the effect will be lost; for it is evident that the wider a writer wishes the range of his influence to extend, the more universally recognised must be the virtues and affections the personification of which in their combination and perfection makes up his ideal character.

In the first place, then, it is necessary that these virtues should recommend themselves by their practical results. In other words, they must be such as manifest themselves in social life and intercourse. The lofty meditations of the recluse, inspired by solitude and retirement from the world, possess little interest and still less practical value to the busy man of the world, who has to battle his way against hard facts and stubborn realities. He is not in a position to understand them, nor has he time even to take them into consideration. The bright world of the enthusiast is an unknown land to him, and the sounds that come from it awaken no responsive echo in his heart. But take a picture that has its origin in the world that surrounds him—draw something that he may compare with his own experience of mankind—and he is immediately interested. Let him once recognise the outlines of a familiar face, and the first point is gained—his attention is aroused. Then let the details be carefully filled in and the attributes most held up for admiration be thrown into prominence, either by exhibiting them against the dark background of their opposite vices, or by showing their value in their social and personal application, and we have at once a practical result. Such a work, well performed, is a complete picture of what a man in his own position, and with the same opportunities, may attain to.

Secondly, these virtues must recommend themselves by their possibility of general appropriation. There are certain qualities often called virtues, though not perhaps rightly included under this classification, which are either the idiosyncracies of a class or lie only within the reach of a superior mental cultivation. Without particularising further it is sufficient to say that these, though valuable in themselves, are practically useless to ordinary men. They presuppose a state of mind which is not naturally but artificially obtained. They omit to mention the steps by which it is gained, or if they do so it is only to show that they are not attainable by mankind at large: hence they are less important because no essential virtue can be the monopoly of a class, but must in justice lie open to the acceptance of all.

Thirdly, and lastly, they must recommend themselves by their intrinsic value. Important as we have shown it to be that they should manifest themselves in the various phases of social life, it is still more important that they should be subjectively good. In other words, they must have their origin in and take their stand upon the eternal laws of right and wrong—laws that are unaffected by position in the world, or by circumstances, or by time—but remain the same to all and for ever. If, indeed, the author frame his work with respect to these he has high privileges and a noble opportunity. But if, on the other hand, his conception have no intrinsic claim to merit, but rest its pretensions to respect and admiration upon the affectation of a spurious, time-serving code of expediency, falsely called morality, he will have incurred a responsibility that rests upon himself alone.

Thus far, therefore, we have endeavoured to show the range and importance of fictitious biography, and have roughly pointed out one or two general characteristics needed to make it useful to the world at large. We will now pass on to the third class into which we have ventured to divide our subject. It has to do with what we may perhaps call the ordinary novel, a kind of literature with which the press is overcharged. It is found everywhere, and lies within the reach of all who are able to read. None so ignorant as not to find a book of this sort to suit his capacity; none so poor as not to be able to afford himself this amusement. From the penny magazine, with its weekly or monthly quantum, to the three volumes at one-and-twenty shillings, there is a library to accommodate every taste and inclination. Here may be found the matter-of-fact narrative of daily life, with its joys and sorrows, or the romantic love tale, the serious or amusing story, horrible tragedies, strange complications of events, inexplicable mysteries, all mingled together in wild confusion, and offering a choice and variety such as assuredly no other branch of literature ever can.

Now in dealing with such a wide class as this it is obvious that the remarks which we have to make must be very general, and must be accepted as such. In the first place it differs from the two others of which we have spoken in this essential particular: the interest of the ordinary novel usually depends more upon the story or combination of events, followed by a suitable *dénouement*, than upon the successful delineation of character. It is not necessarily written with any philanthropic object, nor does it confine itself to the study of one life. But it deals with facts of common experience and draws a general sketch of what is passing in the world around us. The talent required for a work of this sort is more common because less intellectual. For it is easier to take a general and comprehensive view of life than to take one character from the throng and analyse its nature and develop its capabilities. If a painter give us a picture embracing different subjects, we are disposed to be contented if the effect of the whole is good; but if he give us a portrait of a single figure we are hyper-critical with regard to the least defect. And so in the case of the novelist. Provided that he take us from place to place, that he afford us rapid changes and constant excitement, we are interested for the time being, even though his work possess no intrinsic literary merit. In short, while the former depends upon the detail of its composition, the latter rests upon its general effect.

Here, however, we must draw a line and make a very important distinction; for it is not uncommon in works of this sort, and especially prevalent in the more careless compositions of the present day, to make the actors in a story evidently subservient to the plot. With a view to originality events are made to take an unusual if not an unnatural course, and the characters are fitted in to bring about the desired result; hence there is no conception of character at all. Cause and effect change places. Human nature is distorted and twisted into fantastic shapes to make a startling *tableau*, and the product of all this is a tissue of absurdity and contradiction, involving such an obvious inconsistency as hardly to entitle it to a passing allusion. It is, however, owing to the elements of this illogical construction that novels as a rule possess a literary value comparatively low, and are, with some exceptions, not ranked among standard works.

From what has been said, then, we may draw this general conclusion: that in the formation of a story the conception must first be of human nature; that events which are the result of human action must harmonise with *it*, although upon these events, in their connection and effect, will still depend the chief interest of the book.

A second remark that we have to make is especially applicable to this class. In all novels there are one or more prominent figures to which the attention of the reader is particularly drawn. Round these are grouped accessory or subordinate characters; and it is with regard to these that we wish to make one statement.

In the histrionic art it has always been the custom to give the least important *rôles* to inferior artists, who play a minor and therefore less influential part in the play. But it has always been found necessary, in order to ensure a real and legitimate success, that the actors thus chosen, though less gifted than those who represent the chief characters, should still render their parts, however small, as nearly perfect as possible. A really fine play has often been ruined by inattention to this point. Dramatic writers have seen their compositions fail, and good artists have been disheartened in their performance by the want of intelligent actors, to fill the subordinate parts. Now the rule that applies to the acted drama is relevant also to the written story. And precisely as we call a play generally good or bad, according as the different characters back up and support one another, so the skilful or careless delineation of the accidental or accessory characters that are needed to make up the novel will determine it to be the work of a genius or that of an ordinary writer. How far they are to be developed, and to what point their peculiar traits may be brought out, and yet not divert the natural current of the narrative, must be left to the good sense and the tact of the author.

To enter into further detail about works of this sort would involve too long a labour. The subject, indeed, admits of too many variations in its treatment, and rules which might be applicable in one place would not be admissible in another. We may, however, here put in a caution against a fault unfortunately prevalent among authors at the present time—namely, that of writing with a view to gratify the tastes and inclinations of a particular class. Hence the publication of books that pander to a morbid delight in scenes of crime and guilt, which seem to have a special attraction to uneducated and debased minds. Hence, too, the appearance and the toleration of what is commonly called the sensational novel, written to gratify a craving after excitement; a story abounding in hair-breadth adventures and constant *tableaux*, the aggregate literary and practical value of which is insignificant to the last degree. In all such cases the author can never have a real or lasting reward for the trouble which he has taken. Instead of endeavouring to improve those for whom he writes, he accommodates himself to their lower inclinations. Instead of trying to elevate their tastes, he sinks himself to their level. He starts with an ignoble object, and gains an ignoble end. Nor will his pitiful work ever gain a permanent reputation, but having at the most outrun a transient popularity, will sink into the oblivion that it richly deserves.

Thus have we, in rough and imperfect outline, attempted to show the more prominent forms that fiction is able to assume. We are proud to think that our own country can boast a literature second to none in the whole world, and that in this branch she especially excels—that from her have sprung high-minded and impartial authors of fiction, the brilliancy of whose writing is no less conspicuous than the purity of their moral teaching—that by this instrumentality education has been advanced, social abuse rectified, and virtue generally encouraged. True it is that among us, as well as among others, there is a dark side to the picture. There is, we greatly fear, in the present day a tendency to shift the standard of truth in order to suit the position that we have taken up—to accommodate morality to society—and then to make the exigency of its demands an excuse for what is essentially wrong. There is a want of openness and candour in some of our modern novels—they are either brilliant and artificial, or they lack life and originality. Others, far worse, are invested with a false and pernicious charm; they refuse to speak plainly, but suggest the corrupt thought and by an insidious inuendo do incalculable mischief. We read them with a half apprehension of their drift and meaning. We are fascinated for a moment, but we nervously put them out of the reach of our children. The influence of these is fatally dangerous. They involve a great and vital error, and one which has already contaminated the popular literature of a clever and polished people. Let us beware of it, for it is a deadly social poison, the more to be dreaded because its flavour is for the moment pleasant, though it leaves an after-taste bitter as gall. Let us check the incipient growth of it in the composition of our works of fiction, or it will gradually pollute the source from whence we derive some of our best and most innocent pleasures. Let it be our care to preserve that high reputation which our imaginative literature has always had, not only for distinguished authorship and eminent ability, but also for impartial discrimination and pure and abiding principles.

And in bringing this subject to a close, we cannot do less than pay our tribute of grateful respect to the memory of one who perhaps more than any other has contributed to this end, and who not long since was still among us, holding us to the very last entranced by the fascination of his wonderful genius. The name of Charles Dickens recalls an irreparable loss. His works are enshrined no less among the most precious archives of English literature than among the household treasures of every English home. We look in vain for one to fill the vacant place. The deep insight into human nature, the keen penetration, the ready wit, the gentle pathos were pre-eminently his. The easy and familiar style of writing, the universal and kindly fellow-feeling that he had for humanity at large, are no less remarkable than the fearless way in which he exposed the vicious practices of the age in which he lived. He had a wide and varied experience of the world, and he wrote about things with which he was personally conversant. His works will never lose their value, for they are a true picture of life, and they uphold a pure morality, the principles of which can never change.

OLD LOVES AND OLD LETTERS.

A REMARKABLE FAMILY HISTORY.

BY A LADY OF QUALITY.

THE next letter of the series is from my grandmother to Miss Collins, and is addressed to "Harrington House, St. James's." It is postmarked the 27th of June, and is evidently written after having heard from Rotch of the intended runaway, and of this poor misguided girl's late but faithfully kept resolve never to marry without Mrs. Sheil's consent. The letter filled two sheets, one of which has been mislaid, and the remaining sheet commences by my grandmother requesting Miss Collins to send her a packet which Mr. Rotch promised to send, together with some letters for "my future governance."

"I have now but a short time to get these things, so if you have them, forward them immediately; let the servant see this parcel booked, and bring you a memorandum to that effect—you may if you like write by the same conveyance, and direct it to MYSELF here.* Do not pay for it; you know I am in your debt a guinea,† besides the ring, and I do not wish to add to it. I am quite angry with you about the postage; do not give it a thought, but give me a double letter whenever you are inclined."

Then follows kindly counsel about her health, for which her correspondent has evidently much fear, and commendation of her resolve to abide by her mother's wishes.

"Let me now, my dearest Jemima," she proceeds, "beg of you not to suffer this business to dwell on your mind. Court sleep in every possible form—do not after you go to bed indulge in a train of thinking which will banish this great renovator. Get up for a moment and take a few turns through your room. It will, I know from woful experience, change the current of your ideas, and time and perseverance will again give you this soother of care. You must consider that indulging in what may eventually shorten your existence is a deliberate kind of suicide, more reprehensible than 'the phrenzy which draws the trigger,' because it is premeditated. You have now every reason to be satisfied with your conduct; you have made a sacrifice worthy of you. Do you think a bed of down, though with the man of your heart, could produce slumbers when deprived of a mother's blessing? No, no; you have acted rightly, and he must approve of it. No doubt it would have been better had you not suffered matters to go so far. I also disapprove of the E——y business very much. Yet still you have stopped in time. You cannot be reproached with having forfeited a mother's love. In my letter to him I have said, 'What is the reason your engagement should not remain as it was?' Let me ask you this also. Surely you are no worse off than you were two years ago; on the contrary, you have passed so much of the time over. Do not, then, despair. Why, why can I not have the comfort of seeing you and talking this over? I could tell you the many plans I had formed for bringing matters—*

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* Highnam Court.

† A ring Mr. Rotch had got repaired for Mrs. Reilly, and for which Miss Collins had paid him.

"Perhaps my castles in the air were as fragile in their structure as your own.

* * * * *

"I shall write to you very often during my stay here. I think if you could arrange your ideas, and give me the history of the last three weeks, it would pass away the time. Should this be an effort you are unable to make, do not mind it. In my next I shall arrange for our future correspondence; for the present continue the Nillocs. The postmaster has been prepared for more of them than usual, by telling that the illness of a friend created an unusual degree of uneasiness. God bless you; I wish the sleep which is now pressing on my eyelids could be transferred to yours. Good night, my pet, good night."

By this letter it is clear that Mrs. Reilly, up to its date, had only got a slight and sketchy account of what had passed between the lovers during those memorable three weeks in which Rotch touched and lost the prize he had laboured for for more than two years. For although the lovers still met, and spoke, and corresponded, the glory had departed from her idol, and his crown had fallen to the ground.

Mrs. Reilly's letter to Rotch, alluded to in that to Miss Collins, which I have transcribed, was lost in transmission, and on the 4th of July we find him writing to Mrs. Reilly, in a very uneasy frame of mind, regarding its loss and their meeting in Gloucester, on which his soul was still set; a meeting, however, rendered almost impossible by Mrs. Reilly's intended departure from her brother's.

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* Here there is a word or two torn, or worn away by age.

"*Saturday, July 4th*, 1818.

"MY VERY DEAR AUNT,—I have been anxiously expecting a letter from you for the last week, but none has yet come to hand. I heard from J——a yesterday that you had written by the same post that brought yours to her—if so, 'tis strange that I have not received it. It will now be quite out of my power to visit Gloucester before the end of next week, at which time I go to Bath, and would make Gloucester on my way if I were likely to find you there; but of this I suppose there is no chance.

"I cannot tell you the cruel disappointment I suffer in not seeing you before you leave England; I have so much to say to you. But you must let me know your address in Ireland as soon as you are settled long enough for me to write to you.

"I met J——a at Vauxhall last night. She looked very well, though her note of the day before told of a thousand miseries and sleepless nights. Heaven grant they may never have a greater effect in destroying the bloom that adorned her loved countenance last night. She was with the H——n House* party. We only exchanged how d'ye do's and a shake of the hand. She certainly did not seem happy. I do not know how she should, *poor little love!* The constant state of agitation she keeps me in makes me ill and nervous, and I dread each day a relapse into my old indisposition.† I have a thousand things to say to you, but I feel afraid to write while I think a letter of yours is missing, and consequently that the fate of this is not quite certain.

"Good-bye; and let me hear from you soon, I pray and beseech you, for I am very anxious about this letter. I hope you will have a pleasant journey home. Give my kindest regards to E——, and believe me your sincerely attached and very grateful

"NEPHEW."

Mrs. Reilly, however, did not leave Highnam on the 6th, as she had intended, her little nephew having caught the measles; and in a letter to Miss Collins, under date 11th July, 1818, she professes herself determined to remain should her niece, Miss Collins's sister, take them likewise. In a letter to Rotch, which must have been written immediately on the receipt of his of the 4th of July, Mrs. Reilly had mentioned her change of purpose, to which he replied by fixing to leave London on the following Tuesday for the purpose of meeting her in Cheltenham, which lay only eleven miles from Highnam Court. In his eager wish to see my grandmother he had a feverish hope that her influence would disperse the change he saw creeping over his "beloved," who had threatened him anew with what she once before hinted at and ultimately carried out—her marriage with another. This threat is sharply rebuked by her friend in the letter below, who, it must be remembered, was quite unconscious of its real cause, and fancied it only a mode of torturing a heart which lay at her feet. This letter is postmarked 12th July, 1818, and like the other is addressed to "Miss Collins, Harrington House, St. James's":—

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* Harrington House.

† Spasms of the heart.

"*July* 11*th*, 1818.

"I perceive, my dear Jemima, that my message has been forwarded, as I got a letter this day which, even if it had been seen, could not have created the least suspicion from whom it came. He tells me he will leave town on Tuesday night, and expresses a hope of my being able to meet him in Cheltenham from my having been there twice this week. It would be impossible to go again so soon, but ere this I dare say you will hear from himself, as I have written to him by this post. He complains in his letter that he is ill and nervous. God knows, I do not wonder he should, for his mind must have been in a state of irritation beyond endurance since May last. There was no person who could think more highly of your conduct on a late occasion than I did; I wish I could say the subsequent had been equally praiseworthy; but when I think of the part you are now acting I feel inclined to more than blame you—I feel angry with you. This, you will say, is hard; yet I trust it will be salutary, and that after I state my reasons you will be obliged to say you are wrong. I must recur to scenes already past by mentioning the cruel part of your conduct, namely, when you raised my poor friend to the pinnacle of hope by promises of becoming his, and when you broke through that engagement and crushed those hopes. I forgave you, for I well know what it cost you; not even when with the same breath you talked of marrying another did I blame you; but now when it was all over, to renew the business, only to repeat the heartrending intelligence that you meditate something inimical to the love you profess to still have for him, how can you suppose I could be satisfied with such inconsistency? What is there now to be dreaded on your return home more than there was a month ago? I tell you it will be your own fault if there is any reference to the past, and if you bring it on you deserve to suffer.

Do not, then, make this a pretext for torturing the poor fellow or bringing forth a proposal from him of again uniting his fate with yours. He is a bad subject for this shuttlecock-like proceeding, and though I disapprove of your marrying him I cannot tacitly submit to your trifling with those affections so decidedly your own. For God's sake, either quit your correspondence or promise to wait patiently for the time to elapse until you can with some show of propriety make your own election. You must not suppose he has been making complaints—quite the contrary, I assure you. I only guess that you are not doing just as you ought."

Then the letter touches on a dread evidently expressed by Miss Collins that her stepfather would learn some of the lovers' doings in London—a fear before indulged in by Rotch when Major Fleming met them in Hanover Square, and now imminent of fulfilment as Mr. Sheil had started for town to bring back his daughter, who for the past month had always been talking of returning to Gloucestershire and always lingering with Rotch under the guise of acceding to Lady Harrington's wish for her prolonged stay.

"In your last Nillocs, you anticipate a disclosure to S——l. I fear you have been very unguarded indeed, yet still who that knows him would think it a matter worth mentioning? If he should hear it you cannot of course deny it, but in place of it, I should think, if you said with a determined air that you perceived there was no likelihood of doing away with his suspicions, and that you considered it only a prelude to what you might expect on your return home—that you felt a repetition of the last was more than you were equal to, and must therefore decline returning if he did not promise to avoid the subject—that if he thought it any gratification, he was at liberty to tell the whole affair to any and everybody he pleased—that you are convinced your friends would forgive you what you had done, as a reward for the great sacrifice you had made to them and to your mother; but that you would not be answerable for what harshness and discord might induce you to do—this, founded as it is on fact, must have its weight with him; and if he speaks to L—— H——* you are on the spot to explain. Besides, should it ever take place, it will be some kind of preparation. You know I do not mean you should implicitly follow my advice, but act on my hint as it seemeth meet and proper. I have not now one bit of hope that we shall meet here. Your uncertainty is not to be borne with patience—in short, it is a very counterpart of what you practice elsewhere. I shall therefore make arrangements for my departure as soon as S——l comes back, unless Laura takes the measles—and then I shall only wait until she is out of danger."

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* Lady Harrington.

With reference to Mr. Rotch's journey to Gloucestershire, for which there was such a fair opening in the absence of Mr. Sheil, my grandmother proceeds :—

"I am at a loss to know what use there will be in this intended journey of our friend. I cannot tell you how distressed I am at putting him to more expense, for without you, our consultation would be imperfect. Great curiosity has been shown in this quarter to find out the nature of this mysterious correspondence with Lady F——n. I asked her the other day how our friend Colonel E——e was, and lamented I had not seen him when he called with my brother, when to my great astonishment she said he was no friend of hers.

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"She told me she had a letter from you the day before, talked in raptures of your style, but really she is enthusiastic about all her friends. Do not fancy I am in the least jealous of her. I know you love me better than you do her, and if you did not I would neither be jealous nor angry. My back is almost broken writing this long letter; after having written three sides of letter paper to my nephew. Farewell, my dear child. I think I feel pleasanter now that my scolding is over. With the exception of one letter, I hope you do not keep my nonsense. I should not like it should appear in judgment against me.—Your affectionate Aunt, "J. R——."

Her "nonsense," however, was not destroyed, but came back to her (the writer) years after from Miss Collins's death-bed, along with a packet of letters, faded memorials of that short but vivid romance. The packet was sent by her own hand, and, saddest souvenir of all amongst the heap of letters, lay the withered sprig of myrtle she had worn in her hair at dinner the last day of Rotch's stay at Highnam. Ah me, ah me, to think that across all mortal love time must at last write "Finis."

In the face of Mrs. Reilly's opinion of the uselessness of the journey, Rotch came to Gloucestershire, and was dropped by the London and Gloucester night coach close to the gates of Highnam. Late at night, when Mrs. Sheil had retired to bed, under cover of the darkness he walked up the avenue to the house and was admitted to the library by the faithful Prothero, where he had an interview with Mrs. Reilly. He had never entered the house since he left it in haste that early winter's morning at his host's desire.

Here through half the summer night they sat talking over the events of the past month, to which the lover no doubt lent his own best colouring, while piece by piece he unveiled the project which had carried him from London. He had forsaken calm counsels then, seeing calm counsels had almost been his ruin, and boldly prayed for a private marriage, at which Mrs. Reilly was besought to be a witness. In none of his letters had he let a gleam of the real purport of his visit appear, hoping perhaps that eloquence might succeed where his pen would fail. But on this point Mrs. Reilly was firm. She would consent to further no private marriage, nor any marriage at all without my aunt's (Mrs. Sheil's) consent. In vain Rotch pleaded, in vain he put out all his powers of persuasion; his hearer refused to yield. In a word, this thing was not to be, and the fates were against him. Perhaps he saw the end himself, when he walked down the avenue before the household was astir, accompanied by Mrs. Reilly and the trusted housekeeper, that he might catch the up coach for London. At the gate he spoke his lingering farewell, and then walked away alone down the dusty highway. Of that night's meeting there is but one record left in a letter from Mrs. Reilly to both the lovers written the day after Rotch's visit, and just before her own departure for Ireland. This letter is the last link in the chain of my true love tale, and is written in a spirit half serious, half jesting, being the only morsel of comic element yet imported into the story.

"*July* 16*th*.

"MY YOUNG FRIENDS,—According to the document laid before me, I have stated the account current between you up to this date. You will perceive I have consolidated a great many items, wishing to use as much brevity as possible. I have omitted a considerable degree of folly on both sides, which would lengthen the account without adding to the case on either side. You will therefore find this annexed, and when you can dispose your minds to something rational, look it over and let a receipt be taken by J. J. C——s,* in full of all accounts up to this date, on a stamp from Nature's office, generally known by the name of two lips, and let me hear no more of your nonsense. For the future I would strongly recommend OUR Pet to renew her engagement as made originally, her subsequent conduct in my mind being a complete bar to her union with another, as long as it exists with you as it does at present. But by no means would I consent to a private marriage, nor any marriage, until after November, and not even then, without making an effort to obtain even a reluctant consent from her parents. To accomplish this, I am willing to do my part in the plan you approved of in our conversation last night. I do not advise her marrying you—for I do not think it will be for your mutual happiness. But I most highly disapprove of her marrying another, and I am certain her feelings of religion (if she reads the part of the marriage ceremony commencing with 'I require, &c.') would revolt against such perjury, as well as her feelings of delicacy at giving herself to one, whilst so many proofs exist of her heart being another's. I was not aware that I possessed any influence over her; if I had, this business would have terminated at Bath;* and so little do I know of her *real* sentiments that I left town as ignorant of her future intentions as I came into it. From the kind part Mrs. E——y has acted towards you both, you are called upon to inform her of your future arrangements, nor have I the smallest objection to your telling her the part I have taken in this affair, nor your reading this letter to her even before J——a sees it.

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* Jemima Jane Collins.

"As it is now the fashion to be suspicious, return me this letter by the coach, in a parcel directed to myself. Let the parcel contain ten yards of black net, to be got at Waterloo House, J——a to pay for it, and I'll pay it here. I got some very good there for 2s. 6d. per yard. Let her mention in a public letter her having bought it and the amount; do not pay the carriage. You see I have not written to her, and I insist on your enclosing her this.—Yours, my dear Nephew, most affectionately, "J. R.

"Plague take all bad pens, say I, and so will you, before you get half through this. The net is the same as the flounce of J——a's brown sarsenet gown.

B. R. in Account Current with J. J. C.

Dr.			Cr.
1816. To amount of love given at the Pulteney Hotel, averaged at (the real value being supposed incalculable)	1,000,000	1816. By return made at the first declaration, as per receipt acknowledged	1,000,000
1818. To tortures occasioned by inconsistency, from female caprice	200,000	1818. To transmitted by 2d. post	200,000
To expenses incurred by journeys going to see aunt, occasioned by the above ..	100,000	To pale cheeks, sleepless nights, &c.	100,000
To amount of insult on the transaction	400,000	To amount of insult on the 6d. transaction, B. R. being the first aggressor	400,000
To loss of talismanic heart	500,000	To loss of letters by returning, being considered by J. J. C. as equivalent to ..	500,000
	£2,200,000		£2,200,000

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* Where Mrs. Reilly met Mr. Rotch after he left Highnam, and urged on him the fruitlessness of his pursuit—which meeting is alluded to in one of Rotch's early letters.

A week after the receipt of that letter Rotch was alone in London —alone there for evermore, as far as Miss Collins was concerned. Her idol of awhile gone was but a god of clay after all, with a talent for finance as well as a talent for poetry, and a clear vision for Government stock.

A few months later, in the January of 1819 (the same season as that in which her quondam lover had been expelled from Highnam), Miss Collins gave her hand to Mr. Harvey, of Langley Park. There were reasons against the match—reasons, had there not been money in the case, much more insuperable than those against Rotch—but this young lover was still in the field, still poor, still pursuing, so the marriage was hastened forward, Highnam was flooded with wedding guests, and before the old love was cold the new vows were sworn to a husband who never dreamt that in the history of his wife there was one closed leaf.

When the marriage took place Rotch was abroad, having evidently gone out of the way of what must have been a bitter trial. On his return he wrote a long letter to my grandmother, expressing his pain at having heard she had been seriously ill in the winter; but until near the close he makes no mention of his old love, then the wife of another. At the very end of his letter he writes in a hurried way, with much underlining and many notes of admiration—

"I find your little niece has been married during my absence—I am told *well married?*—God grant it may be so!—*Poor little soul!!!* May God in Heaven bless her!"

The letter concluded with—

"Adieu! my dear friend, and if I can serve you in any way make use of me, I beseech you, and believe me yours, very sincerely and devotedly attached,

"B. Rotch."

In this, and the one or two stray letters which remain of the correspondence after Mr. Harvey's marriage, Rotch never once calls Mrs. Reilly "aunt," that affectionate title having been perforce laid down along with his hopes of her who gave rise to it. In May, 1819, he writes to my grandmother as his "very dear friend," and here, for the first time, breaks out a breath of the old love, not perished yet, though lost to him. In this letter he tells of his having been abroad again—abroad because Mrs. Harvey was in London in company with her husband.

"15, *South Molton Street, May 12th*, 1819.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—You will think I have forgotten you. Ah no, never! I have been abroad again. Yes; circumstances drove me from town that were connected with your little friend. She came to London; she was situated where every day brought me unavoidably, and I determined to leave London, for though my feelings have been deeply wounded they are not quite dead yet.

"I had half a mind to run over to you, but I found I could mingle pleasure and business if I went to France, and this decided my choice. I have just returned, and find she has left town. I met Sheil this morning, and hear they are all well at Highnam. I have my sisters staying in South Molton Street with me for a short time. They often look at your likeness, and wish that they knew you.

* * * * * *

"Practice is daily increasing upon me, and my health is much better than it has been for some time, and I am now in daily expectation of an appointment under Government—as a law officer of course: if I succeed (and I have the Lord Chancellor's interest) I shall be free from care for the future, as the salary is ample, and it is a step to further preferment. *I* do not count upon it, for all that depends upon great interest nowadays is uncertain.

"Adieu! my dear friend. Let me hear from you the first idle moment you have, and in the meantime believe my assurance that my sentiments have known no change towards you, and that I am as ever, your sincerely attached friend,

"B. ROTCH."

Here follows a breach in the correspondence extending over nearly a year, during which time a son was born and died at Langley, and the deserted lover, whose business appears to have prospered better than his love, had left South Molton Street for New Furnival's Inn.

On the 28th of April, 1820, we find him writing of his brightened prospects and changed residence to my grandmother. In his letter he never mentions Mrs. Harvey even once, although we see his wound is still open, for in this short and hurried note, written in a coffee-room while the coach-horn was blowing the signal of departure, he tells how the sight of Mrs. Reilly's handwriting had made him ill for two days, bringing back to him, as no doubt it did, pained memories of what had been and was not.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I am in a coffee-room, with a coach at the door to take me to Paris—[to Dover probably he meant, on his way to Paris, but the horn, we are told, was sounding, and haste makes us blunder]—whence I shall not return till the 25th of next month, after which time you must address to me at New Furnival's Inn, London, for my business has so much increased of late that I have been obliged to move into a new set of chambers. I have tried in vain for the last two months to get your address; I wrote to young —— for it, but have not had any reply, and now you will say I make a bad use of it, when I tell you the horn is blowing and I must be off. I am much better than I have been. The sight of your handwriting made me ill for two days, but I am better to-day and able to encounter my journey. I will write you a long letter immediately on my return to England, for I have much of kindness in your last to thank you for. Present my kindest love to ——, and believe me, with sincere and matured affection, your very attached,

"BENJAMIN ROTCH.

"*White Bear, Piccadilly, 28th April,* 1820."

The next letter which Mr. Rotch wrote to my grandmother, on his return from Paris, is the last of his extant, save one written some years later on his learning of Mrs. Harvey's death.

In this letter he writes much more freely of the bitterness of his regret and the keenness with which he still feels his loss. The letter is refreshing, as indeed are all those of his which I have transcribed written after Mrs. Harvey's marriage, lighted as they are with the glow of a love lost but not forgotten, and contrasting brightly, though strangely, with the slow patience which advocated delay a little more than two years before, or the complaining and sometimes bitter words written to Highnam to my grandmother.

Here, in these later letters, when all expectation was gone and all love was over between him and his betrothed, we have the voice of the old passion breaking forth anew, with a cry which cannot keep silence.

"*London, May 31st,* 1820, 1, *New Furnival's Inn.*

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—On my return to town on the 25th I called in Hatton Garden, but found your friend had left London nearly a week. Thus, again left without your address, I am obliged to send this on a voyage of discovery in search of you.* The last time I indulged myself in addressing you I was compelled to do so in a style so laconic that I should have feared giving offence to any one whom I did not know to be possessed of an unusual share of good nature, like yourself.

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* Mrs. Reilly's whereabouts at that time was very uncertain, as she was travelling from place to place, partly for amusement, partly for health.

"You have lived long enough in the world, and have known enough of men, my dear Mrs. Reilly, to discredit me, I am sure, when I tell you that the sight of your handwriting after so long a silence at once upset both my nerves and my philosophy. Yes! though I know you will doubt our sex having the capability of feeling acutely, yet I will hazard the assertion that your letter rendered me wholly incapable of business for two days. I had for some time past cheated myself into the belief that certain fatal remembrances were forgotten—that if remembered they were but thought of as dreams; but, my dear friend, the sight of your dear handwriting, which had so often been the harbinger of peace to my heart and soul, of pages which had once contained that of which each line had a deep and sacred interest of its own, brought back a crowd of images to my mind which time will —— no! it is enough to know and feel that time *has not yet* effaced them; I may yet *hope it will.*

"It is the want of your address that has so often deterred me from writing to you—you change about so often, and forget to give me your address. Never let the consideration of postage prevent your writing to me, for no letter can cost the price I put upon it, come as far as it will."

How strangely this reads in these days of cheap postage and adhesive envelopes! The letter lying now under my eye is a large square sheet of paper folded letter-wise, addressed upon the back, wafered, and despatched from London to Dublin at the now seemingly heavy cost of 1s. 3d.

"I saw the account of your brother's death in the papers,* but knew not where to write to you, or my condolences should soon have reached you. I thought and felt much for you, I assure you, at the same time that I was most anxious to hear from you. I have been very ill indeed during the winter, but I never felt better than at this moment. I have just moved into a very handsome set of chambers in New Furnival's Inn, and while waiting paint to dry, &c., &c., I have, since I wrote to you last, made a tour though the Netherlands and part of Holland, which has quite set me up again. Eliza, too,† has been very ill, but this is a disease of the mind, which her voyage to America in July next will, I have no doubt, quite annihilate."

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* Not Mr. Sheil of Highnam, but his eldest brother.

† His sister I believe.

The next paragraph alludes to a request of my grandmother for his likeness, which she desired to be the copy of one taken for Mrs. Harvey in the halcyon days of his wooing, and the letter ends with an earnest prayer for tidings of the welfare of his lost love, a subject Mrs. Reilly was probably delicate at touching on unasked.

"As to my likeness, dear Mrs. Reilly, it is little worth your having, but since you wish it I will send it to you the first time I have an opportunity. A copy of the one in the white coat it cannot be, for in a moment when *philosophy* had wandered from home for a few minutes I *destroyed it.* In your next tell me if you can that *she* is *well* and *happy.* It is all I like to know of her. * * *

"And believe me, very sincerely, your attached friend.

"B. ROTCH."

Here the curtain almost falls upon my true love story, the chief actors in which have passed away long ago to the rest which knows no dreams; but before I close it quite, before it quite falls over these "old loves and old letters," I must say a word about the destroyed likeness and "the dear ring," of which so much has been said and written throughout the course of my story. This likeness in "the white coat" was the likeness Mr. Rotch gave Mrs. Harvey at Highnam before the discovery of their engagement, and which in the letter of counsel he wrote for her to Mrs. Reilly he desires her to give up, and it was returned to him by my granduncle.

After Mrs. Harvey's marriage it was destroyed by him in a fit of anger, or, as he says himself, "when philosophy had wandered from home." Another portrait of himself, however, he sent to Mrs. Reilly later. That portrait is now in my possession, and represents a rather good-looking young man, with a marked nose and somewhat heavy mouth, dressed in a light blue coat and a large white tie, according to the style in vogue with our progenitors.

The "dear ring" a day or two before her marriage was sent by the bride elect to my grandmother, by whom, with the evil fate which seemed to attend upon it from the beginning of its history to its close, it was lost some years after, when on a visit with some relatives in the north of Ireland.

In the autumn of 1827, six years after the date of Mr. Rotch's last letter to Mrs. Reilly, Mrs. Harvey died at Langley Park, not long after the death of her father-in-law, Sir Robert Bateson Harvey, had placed her husband in possession of the estate. Summoned in haste, my aunt only reached Langley to stand at the death-bed of her daughter.

What passed between mother and child no one can tell. But that the old love was remembered, and the newer love of her husband guarded from the shock the contents of his wife's desk would have inflicted on him, is evident from the packet of letters and the sprig of faded myrtle given to her mother with her dying hands, and sent with her dying love to my grandmother.

A day or two later Mr. Sheil wrote the tidings of her death to my grandmother in the following letter, in which, according to a strange habit of his, he addresses his sister as "My dear Mrs. Reilly."

"*Lyme, Dorset, 1st September*, 1827.

"MY DEAR MRS. REILLY,—Shortly after my arrival here, Mrs. Sheil was sent for to Langley Park, in consequence of Mrs. Harvey having been seized with inflammation, which seems to have defeated all medical skill; and as she got daily worse I was sent for, leaving Laura in care of Miss Bertille—[the little girl's governess]—and with a heart overwhelmed with grief, I have the sad, the melancholy news to impart to you, of this angel of a woman having taken her departure from this world of woe for a much better one, leaving her numerous friends to bewail her sad loss, which never can be supplied again. She was taken ill on the 15th, and died on the 28th, having suffered very much. But I cannot dwell on a subject that can only give us both pain, and shall close this scene of dreadful calamity.

"Mrs. Sheil and I returned yesterday, and I brought back Augustus[*] from school, as I thought it would be a consolation to his mother, and I am happy to say she is much better both in mind and body than I could have expected, and that she is making every exertion to forget if possible the heavy affliction that the Almighty has been pleased to inflict upon her, hoping by this that He will spare those that are now left.

"I have had a letter from Mrs. Boyle[†] giving me an account of Jane Sheil's death, and although it was to be expected it will be a sad blow to James and my aunt. 'A better girl never lived.' Mrs. Boyle seems to think it strange that you never write to her, and she seems ignorant of where you are. I think you ought to write to her. Both Laura and Augustus are quite well, and both much improved. Mrs. Sheil desires me to say, with her best love, she will write as soon as she can.—I am, my dear Mrs. Reilly, yours affectionately, "JOHN SHEIL."

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[*] Their son.

[†] A sister of his and of my grandmother.

On the 8th of September Rotch wrote from Lancaster to my grandmother, to her residence, Abbey Lodge, near Dublin, and in this letter breaks out again a touch of the old bitterness and hardness which marked some of his last letters to Highnam, but through it are mingled some softer lines and an eagerness to know if his lost darling remembered him or spoke of him at the last.

"*Lancaster, 8th September,* 1827.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—You will readily anticipate the subject of this letter. I have not been to London since I saw you in Dublin*—so if you have written to me I have not got your letter. It was by mere accident that I saw the death of our little friend in the *Times* newspaper. I cannot tell you the shock it gave me. Poor little creature, she had but a short enjoyment of her worldly riches, and little can they profit her now. Do pray write to me if you have not already done so, and give me some particulars of her death and latter moments, for it is painful for me to be without them.

"I did once love that creature dearly. I have long ceased to feel even common regard for her, for I could not think she deserved it *from me.* But now that she is gone, I cannot reflect upon the fact without a pang, which I could not have credited if I had not proved it. When I parted from her at Mrs. E——y's she said she had something upon her conscience to tell me, which she would not die happy if she did not communicate, and she made me promise that if ever she sent for me on her death-bed I would come to her, be it where it would. She seemed so completely in earnest that I did promise, and had she sent for me I should most certainly have gone to her, though I fancy under present circumstances my reception would have been an awkward one had I ventured to have sought it.

"I must confess I am rather curious to know if she ever thought of me even in her latter hours, or if all that she said to me at Mrs. E——y's was the mere result of that romance which seemed to rule her every word and thought."

But despite these harsh words, spoken as it were above a scarcely closed grave, the next paragraph goes on to yearn again for tidings and to pray a speedy reply. Whether the haste was actuated by a fevered vanity to know if Mrs. Harvey's love for him outlived and outlasted newer bonds, or whether it was actuated by the honester and less personal feeling, owned to in his earlier letters written after her marriage, I leave the reader to judge, the problem being beyond my solving.

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* A very short time before Mrs. Harvey's unexpected death.

"I shall be at home about Tuesday, from this time," he goes on, "which would be about as soon as you could answer; therefore if you have not already written to me, pray ride over a page or two, just to give me those particulars which you well know I cannot get from any other quarter. I think if I do not hear from you on my return, I shall be tempted to ride over to Uxbridge from Lowlands, and learn what I can on the spot.

* * * * * * *

"Farewell. Believe me very sincerely and affectionately yours,

"B. ROTCH."

And with this letter, which did not even carry a black border in memory of the dead, ends the story I have essayed to tell. The hand which wrote it and the friend who received it have both passed away, and of those "old loves and old letters," there remains but the record I have written and a heap of faded correspondence.

(Concluded.)

Players of Our Day.

XXIII.—MR. CHARLES MATHEWS.

MR. CHARLES MATHEWS has now returned from America, no doubt with renewed youth and vivacity, and has been enjoying the usual popularity which an absence in America always secures. It is, indeed, a claim on our admiration—even if histrionic merit be absent—to see a veteran of advanced age present himself before a vast crowd, and at a time when other veterans are dozing in arm chairs, and exhausted with their day's stroll to the club, caper about the boards for three or four hours with an unflagging energy—talking, laughing, chattering, and defying heat and draughts alike. This energy in the service of the public is always flattering to that sometimes fickle master, and is a spectacle worthy of all praise. Indeed, nowhere save on the stage are the grim encroachments of age so carefully repelled or so little evident, and there must be something in that nightly and sustained activity that keeps both mind and body in vigour.

There is always, as was said in the instance of Mr. Buckstone, a difficulty in judging a veteran actor; for there can be no doubt but that a little kindly stretching of the imagination calls back from the past gifts and powers of entertainment which have long since disappeared. A great deal of the enthusiasm that now greets Mr. Charles Mathews must be set down to a sort of *personal* popularity; a little more to the traditions of his honoured name, as well as to a certain range of "cool" and even pert parts which the audience somehow associates with the individual character of the man. We have not seen him in his very best days, but making all due allowance for the influence of age, he never could be justly placed in the first rank. The invariable praise accorded to his acting has always been his "consummate ease and nature," and yet there always seemed to be a certain stiffness in his ease, an over-consciousness in his assumed freedom, and something hard and dry in his cucumber-like coolness.

These may seem hard sayings in reference to "Charley Mathews," but there is no conscientious playgoer but must admit that after the first impression there was a good deal of monotony—a want of variety in his stock of arts. These "natural" actors often fall into a curious mistake, supposing when they remain in this comparative impassiveness, copying the ordinary conversational tone and indifferent manner of daily life, that its most perfect image is thus conveyed. As we have often shown in these papers, acting is eclectic in its dealing, and should abstract or select the *essential* portions of daily life. The mere reproduction of the current tone of society is meaningless, and gives a tame and tedious effect. Mr. Wigan carried this principle so far, and was so extravagantly *passive* on the stage, that he, as it were, quite effaced himself.

There are two or three pieces in which Mr. Charles Mathews is highly effective—viz., "Patter *v.* Clatter," "Cool as a Cucumber," and one or two more of the same class. These favourite characters are chiefly quietly impudent adventurers, and we have always perceived at every speech that betraying self-consciousness in the actor —"How pert I am! Now I am going to be insufferably forward." In all his efforts there was this *laboured* air of indifference.

For his benefit nights he was fond of giving his Puff in "The Critic," and his conception and treatment of this famous piece is a fair test of his quality as an actor, as well as of his taste and judgment. A more profane and outrageous mauling of this almost classic work could not be conceived. From beginning to end it was one tissue of "gagging." Gagging might be excused under certain conditions, but gagging carried thus far defies all propriety. A single specimen will justify this censure, and show the spirit of these alterations; indeed, any one guilty of such a thing could have no true dramatic instinct. When Puff makes his friends sit down on three chairs, one starts up with a laugh and says, "Oh, I can't do this; *it's so like the Christy Minstrels!*" Could there be a happier instance of the corrupt tone of the day? A masterpiece of wit and humour, almost sacred from its classical prestige, is found to require "touching up," and the graceful allusion to "the Christy Minstrels" is the result! The whole is expanded to an inordinate length by a number of devices similar in spirit. In the same false taste Mr. Mathews also undertakes the part of Sir Fretful Plagiary—not perceiving that he thus overweights the play, and imparts a sense of monotony from too much being given to a single actor. It might seem obvious that the actor who played Sir Fretful respectably could hardly possess the gifts for Puff, and the result proves this view, for his reading of Sir Fretful is very artificial, there being a great deal of volubility, flippancy, and rattling off words, but a want of what might be called "dramatic heart."

It is this air of *pretension*, in its milder sense, that spoils so many good actors in pieces of importance. They come on with a declaration: "*I* am the centre figure—direct your attention to me alone, and to everything that I am about to do," written on their faces. Every speech is spoken with a laborious purpose, that it shall be made as much as possible of, as coming from so important a personage. A great deal of this is derived from the faulty and undramatic construction of some of the modern light pieces, which generally contain a monologue of a biographical kind, addressed in the most familiar strain to the audience, and which, in truth, has as little to do with what is dramatic as the old-fashioned prologue, which was also directly addressed to the audience. The result is the loss of that unconsciousness which is half the charm of true acting. In some of the airy pieces, however, where this disturbing element is absent, such as "Had I a Thousand a Year," nothing can be more smooth, gay, and agreeable than the manner of this pleasant actor. Here more rests on the situation—less on the glib patter of words and those poor Cockney conceits which have been alluded to in a previous paper—*i.e.*, "a sky-blue creature in a sweet young bonnet"—meaning, a sweet young creature in a sky-blue bonnet.

Playgoers will no doubt recall "The Game of Speculation," and it has been the fashion to praise Mr. Mathews's "inimitable coolness in the scene with his creditors." This was little more than a *réchauffé* of "Cool as a Cucumber," the same forced pertness and conscious affectation of indifference. This play is, indeed, a monument of English dulness and bad taste. We laugh at Ducis, the mauler and adapter of "Hamlet" to the French boards. But the treatment of Balzac's wonderful play, "Mercadet le Faiseur," is infinitely more discreditable. Who that sees the glib, farcical, and even buffooning "Game of Speculation," rattled through by the ingenious Charles, would suppose that the original was a play that pierced to what was the deepest tragic interest—namely, the terrible anxiety or trouble that may be underlying the trifling and gaiety of the dull and conventional manners of the day. As might be imagined from anything touched by Balzac—perhaps the greatest novelist the world has ever seen—this piece deals with an awful situation of anxiety; a smooth speculator on the verge of ruin, wrought up to agony by suspense and the hope of redeeming all by a single chance. This chance seems slipping from him, now returning, now slipping away again, and all the while he has to exhibit an air of *bonhomie*, of smooth delight, and enjoyment with an aching heart below. To see this piece at the Français, with Got as the speculator, is indeed like assisting at "a bit of human life." We come away impressed, serious, and delighted. But then turn to our English "Game of Speculation," and we are confronted with the petty shifts of an English swell-mobsman; the whole is farcical, light, trifling, and, to those who have seen the masterly original, a simple profanation. The English adapter may indeed fairly claim whatever credit is to be got from the piece; for, unintentionally, he has made it all his own.

Not long ago Mr. Charles Mathews was engaged at the Princess's under the management of Mr. Vining, when a piece called "Escaped from Portland" was produced, the popular actor taking the part of an escaped convict, who throws some one over Putney Bridge, is arrested, and brought before magistrates! This was sinking to the deepest depths; people rubbed their eyes, and wondered what would be the next spectacle. The actor himself did not care to conceal his amusement at the novel situations in which he found himself, and, metaphorically speaking, appeared to have his tongue in his cheek all the while. In the most critical situations, as when handcuffs were placed on him, a comic leer of intelligence seemed to pass from him to the audience. There was no surprise expressed, and indeed it seemed the most natural thing in the world, that after the second or third night play, manager, theatre, and actor, all collapsed together and without notice. The actor, to raise himself from this slough of despond, bethought him of the ready resource—tour to Australia, colonies, &c., and lo! returns rehabilitated. He has certainly worked hard, and, when compared with some of our modern actors, is a player of mark and distinction. But Mr. Mathews has considerable faults, as well as merit. His acting in "The Liar" presents many points of the very highest order of histrionic capacity.

From what we have been saying, it will be seen that the most conspicuous of Charles Mathews's failures have been owing to the class of pieces chosen. In the present crush and struggle of the world, where every instant is precious, there is little time for system or co-operation; the individual is everything; and whereas formerly actors were chosen to give the best effects to plays, nowadays everything is sought out to give effect to the actor. In the little pieces mentioned, which are written on natural principles, there is unquestionably a certain charm of agreeableness about Mr. Charles Mathews's acting—helplessness and humoured perplexity, assurance, and suchlike emotions, are presented with admirable effect. But there is one play which he has made his own—Mr. Planché's "Golden Fleece"—a piece that is almost Aristophanic in its humour, where he plays the chorus. His seriousness, his genuine earnestness, and the picture in consequence given of that extraordinary concomitant of the ancient drama, is in the highest vein of satirical humour, and makes a really unique evening's entertainment. Such spectacles make us lament the want of a great English theatre where talent like his, under the conditions of good plays, good acting, and associations, would amaze himself and his friends. In a really fine comedy, well cast in all its characters, there is something that literally engenders talent; in other words, a player who is acting with great players, and acting with them long, finds new powers developed in addition to the ordinary stock he exhibits when with inferior actors, "scratch" companies, and the like. As it is, we find a good player, or the materials of a good one, wandering purposely about with the view of making money; ready to take all or any part; careless of every one else, because he knows that he is the important central figure. In a great company such a player would have a distinct line of parts, and his genius would have scope to develop itself.

XXIV.—MR. WEBSTER.

In most professions a long apprenticeship of hardship and struggle, though painful to serve and disagreeable to look back to, brings with it compensation in the shape of excellent training and a thorough grounding in principles. The lives of Kemble and his great sister, of Kean, and of many other famous actors, is a story of privation and even misery; but their genius really gained half its effect from years of miscellaneous practice in country theatres, and of good wholesome "grinding," as it is called. Nowadays this probation is dispensed with, and a player of good address and tolerable gifts would find it almost more easy to secure an engagement in one of the many London theatres than in a provincial one. For as "raw" managers, who have never managed anything but a "bar," hotel, or public gardens, undertake the direction of a theatre, much as they would open a shop, so it is only in keeping that "hands" as raw should be found serving under them. The incompetence of these recruits is only to be equalled by the cool self-sufficiency with which they present themselves to the public; and this, again, is only to be matched by the dull endurance of the latter. It is satisfactory, however, to note that the system somehow does not answer. The impostor, more frequently female than male, may be introduced with every advantage; may have a whole theatre decorated for her, and placed under her direction; the advertisements may cover every hoarding in the metropolis; but after a time the protecting influence languishes or is withdrawn, and the postulant is left to his or her merits and devices. Then follow spasmodic flittings, short reappearances at suddenly opened theatres, which close again with the rapidity of a "cellar-flap," desperate efforts to secure some opening, all to end in final disappearance. This fate seems specially to affect the heroes and heroines of burlesque, for whose "coach-wheel" dancing and frantic posturings there is now small demand. Many could be named who have passed away from popular theatres, where they were once even favourites.

Of Mr. Webster it is impossible to speak without the highest respect. He is one of those—as he has told us himself—who passed through a severe and painful season of discipline, working their way slowly to a high position. The story which he told simply and naturally was singularly interesting, and his courageous surmounting of all difficulties was a proof of his own theatrical ardour. We shall never hear him play his fiddle in "Masks and Faces," in which part he shows himself an actor, without thinking of those days of struggle when he was ready to play any character or fiddle in the orchestra, and to make himself generally useful.

Every character that he presents is sound, round, earnest, and more or less finished. In the old Adelphi melodramas he was excellent, and he makes us think of those useful players on the French stage who give an air of romance and truth to the characters of Dumas and Eugene Sue, taking them out of that far-fetched, almost grotesque, atmosphere into which the English actor hoists such creations. Seeing "Monte Christo," or, better still, the "Juif Errant," at the Châtelet Theatre, the satirist would find small opening for ridicule, and a comic actor like Mr. Toole very little to "take off;" but the burlesquing of the English melodrama—the bandit's "My cheeyld!" and the rest—has furnished abundant amusement to an audience. Mr. Webster imparts a weight and correctness to such pieces which gives the air of his believing in what he is presenting to us, and in the most meagre part he always interests. It would take long to give even an idea of the vast range of characters which he has made his own. Many will recall him in "Janet Pride" and "The Dead Heart," not forgetting some oddities of pronunciation and eccentricities of manner which are characteristic of the man. These may be passed by to come to a character that he seems from choice to play more frequently than another, and which is certainly his most finished performance. Indeed, the piece itself, in its "motive" treatment, just union of pathos and humour, is one of those perfect little gems which are infinitely delicate, and yet simply masterly, in their treatment. The theatrical reader will have guessed that we are speaking of the charming "One Touch of Nature," entire and perfect chrysolite as it is. If only our English play-writers were to take this little play fairly to pieces, study the situation, the secret of its interest, its perfect truth, and above all the fashion in which the situations are made to grow out of the "character" of each personage, their work would be infinitely bettered. We shall be pardoned for dwelling a little longer on this subject.

The story is very familiar. An old and decayed music copyist employed at the theatre discovers that his daughter is acting there. She does not know that the little old man dressed in rusty black, and who is always so respectfully tender to her, is her father. Here is the whole "motive," of which our "realistic" English playwright could make nothing. There is no "business" he would say, reasonably enough, unless indeed such was to be created—*e.g.*, the designs of an unprincipled libertine might be defeated by the father—or some incidents of the kind introduced. The true way to look at it would be this—such characters and such relations *would of themselves create* situations; a story would grow out of this strained and pathetic relation. A father brought in contact with his child, yet not daring to reveal himself, forms a basis of the most intensely dramatic kind. Any little events should tend to develop this impression. Thus the actress is rehearsing with the author of the piece, and the father has copied the parts, which furnishes a natural excuse for his presence. But an actor is absent, and this actor's character is that of a father who has lost his daughter. The old copyist offers to read the part, and it will be seen at once how artfully this brightens the already dramatic character of the situation, for we have the real father in presence of his child, and not only unable to reveal his longing affections, but actually simulating the endearments and bearing of a father. Here Mr. Webster's delineation is simply exquisite; marked by the most delicate *finesse*, and the most tender touches. But the situation grows as he repeats the set down passages of the father's address—his voice trembles—a warmth kindles—and he speaks so genuinely that the daughter stares at him wondering, and showing that she is in some way mysteriously impressed. Then how admirable the touch where he gets impatient at the conventional phrases of affection set down for him by the author, and exclaims pettishly "No; no father would ever speak in that way when he first meets his child! He would not say *that*. He would say, 'O my dear, dear child, come to your poor old father, come,'" and his voice falters and his eyes look longingly at her. The whole is charming as a play

—pathetic, natural, and ingeniously wrought, while Mr. Webster's acting, for graceful tenderness, for elaboration, and for a certain quaint humour, must take the very highest rank.

Richard Pride and the Farmer in "The Willow Copse" are excellent specimens of his style. They are full—minutely wrought up—very varied and powerful. That well-known scene in the latter piece where the father discovers what he conceives to be his child's dishonour must always be a red-letter incident in the memories of old playgoers. It stands out almost unequalled for real, heart-stirring pathos; while the single part of Penholder in "One Touch of Nature" would give him a leading place in histrionic annals. Mr. Webster still takes an active part in the management of the Adelphi Theatre, with the history of which his name will always be honourably associated. Long may this excellent old actor retain his place.

A MIDSUMMER STORY.

BY EDWARD CAPERN.

TWAS bonny Midsummer, bright noon of the year,
The amorous Earth lay wooing the sky,
Soft fanned by the zephyrs that busy flew by,
Each whispering love-stories into her ear.

The air was ambrosia, life was delight,
The roses were faint with the sweet breath of June,
The cushat chimed in with the merry merle's tune,
And the day was so long that it banished the night.

When thus to young Love rosy Pleasure began,
"Wilt go to yon greenwood and revel awhile?"
"By all means," said he with the pleasantest smile,
And scampered away to the haunts of old Pan.

On where the heather-bell bends with the bee;
On where the bilberry purples the brake;
Over the mossy turf they their way take,
Wild as the deer, in the height of their glee.

On where the gorse-covered hillocks are seen
Dotting the downs with their sunniest glow,
Whilst hither and thither a rich overflow
Of fresh ferny beauty enlivens the green.

"Halt!" shouted Pleasure; "And wherefore?" asked Love;
"Look yonder, look, what a beautiful maid!"
"Nay, nay," answered Cupid, "for I am afraid
You ill brook a rival, you beauties above."

Then holding his little bow over his eyes,
To shield them awhile from the gaze of the sun,
He rent the still air with his boisterous fun,
Which took pretty Pleasure, poor thing, by surprise.

"I think I will aim at those cherries," quoth he,
And he pointed away o'er the heather, "Oh dear!
I never saw lips e'er so ruddy appear;"
"You never would shoot at mere cherries," said she.

"Well, then, at that stately young lily I saw,
When first to the spot you directed my sight."
"You never met lily, you urchin, so white;
Your shaft for a lily you never would draw."

"I'll aim at those pretty twin violets blue."
"Oh, plague me no more with your nonsense, my boy,
No violets ever could give you such joy,
Though fed with the daintiest honey and dew."

"Shall I shoot at that blush-rose?" "O mischievous deed!
That sweetens not only the air, but my eyes."
"Hush, hush, you young scoundrel, for I am too wise;
The heart of another fair victim must bleed."

Ta-wang went the string of his bow, and the sound
Made Pleasure start back with affright in the rear;
Then the damsel she saw, through a pitiful tear,
With her hand on her bosom, half dead from a wound.

"Fie, fie, Love," said Pleasure, "how wrathful I feel!
How, how could you, boy, that young innocent harm?"
"Know, Pleasure," spake he, "I bear with me a charm—
The wound that I make I can evermore heal."

When, lo! from a nook in the forest-side near,
And hard by a rill, which a melody ran,
A youth, with the state of a neighbouring swan,
Came bearing along like the king of the mere.

And, passing the maiden, he stopped to inquire
What meant the confusion he saw in her eyes,
And if she was hurt, and what of her sighs,
Those winds with which Cupid was fanning his fire.

When thus Ethelina—for so she was named :
  "A man in the forest I saw, when my heart
  Was struck, as it were, with the barb of a dart."
Quoth he, "It was Love," and the wicked boy blamed :

And kissing the beauty—Love's solace for pain—
  "There, there," chuckled Cupid, "see, Pleasure, she smiles."
  "Away," answered Pleasure, "I see by your wiles
The hearts that you break are soon mended again."

NICARAGUA N. WALKER.

HIS ADVENTURES AND OPINIONS.

LOVED AND LOST.

THIS is the adventure to which I feelingly alluded in my previous correspondence. I confess that I did not intend it to be a laughable story; but my editor tells me it has come out humorous. That is a matter of taste. I leave the narrative to be judged by my readers. It is true; that is the only consolation I have in its publication, for the memory of Miss Defritz even now is a cherished dream; but the moral of my sad experiences of her distinguished family is so supreme that I should wrong society were I to hesitate about launching it into the world as a standing ethical illustration. I have no doubt the School Boards will introduce this touching romance of real life into their books of "moral lessons." Should they do so, I am prepared to act liberally by them. N.B.—My address can be had at the printer's, and I understand the law of copyright and royalty, which is more than any English lawyer does, to say nothing of the Judicial Bench. But this is the story:—

CHAPTER I.

"WE MET, 'TWAS AT A BALL."

I met her at Bath. We danced together. It was a fashionable ball. Our names were in the papers. *She* was the belle. Her hair was golden; her shoulders alabaster.

"In Devonshire! Do you reside in that beautiful county?" she asked.

"I do, loveliest of woman."

"Don't be absurd," she replied; but her loving look enveloped me.

"Be mine, dear maid; this faithful heart can never prove untrue."

I hardly know what I said or how.

She blushed, she sighed, she laughed, she shook her fan; she introduced me to her brother.

CHAPTER II.

HER BROTHER, WHO WAS VERY TALL,

And dark! Whiskers bluish-black. A contrast to his Sister.

"Delighted to make your acquaintance," he said.

"Thank you, sir, I am quite well," was my reply, or words to that effect.

"Do you know Malvern?"

"I know him not," I said, "but I shall gladly be to do so."

My words seemed to come out as if I had no control over them, I was so fearfully and wonderfully happy. The same feeling overcomes me as I write, memory asserting her magic sway.

"We are going to Malvern next week," said her brother.

"I gill wo to—I mean I will go too," I said.

"All right."

Noble youth, I said in my heart; and then we parted.

Now I know what the poets mean by the joy of "first and only love." I would I were a poet that I might sing to thee! I am rich. I will engage Tennyson to teach me poetry that I may syllabub her name!

CHAPTER III.

AND SO ARE MALVERN HILLS.

At Malvern. Rare ecstatic hills; how my soul thrills at your beauty. I have seen larger. The Rocky Mountains are taller; but no matter.

Met them both driving round the hills. How delightful 'tis to see brothers and sisters all agree. That is poetry at any rate, and new. I am inspired by love.

Joined her and him at the Imperial. Saw their names in the Visitors' List. Thus it was: "Colonel Fitzpatrick Defritz, and Miss Defritz."

Invited to dinner. Miss Defritz retires early. Her head aches. Dear head, it aches with loving Nicaragua N. W. Beautiful thought! Heaven has no greater loy than jove—I mean no greater joy than love. How my feelings overcome my sowers of peech!

"Do you play billiards!" the Colonel asks.

"I do, yes, oh yes, I play billiards, and I love Louisa Ann."

She told me her name in a whisper, when the fish was being removed.

"Yes," said the Colonel scowling, "I know that: do you play for heavy stakes?"

"Heavy Stakes," I repeated. "Yes, whatever you please."

"Not very heavy," he said appealingly, "don't say very heavy."

"What you will," I said, seizing his coat sleeve and weeping. "I love her to extraction."

I am determined to be a hero. We play; we drink; we laugh; we smoke; we bet with other people; I pay money away like water, as they say, though I never yet saw water do anything of the kind.

Onward, onward; life is earnest, Ann Louisa is its goal, and her head, her head is aching for the love of Walker, N. I shall get on without Tennyson. My head is splitting. I begin to be aweary of the nun—aweary of the sun. My pen lisps and splutters. O dearest Louisa Ann!

CHAPTER IV.

THE MORNING SHONE ALL CLEAR AND GAY.

She is *so* sorry to see me looking unwell.

"You were not as prudent as you ought to have been last night," she says; "my father the dear General ought to be here, to lecture Fitzpatrick for keeping you up."

"Your brother is a delightful companion," I reply, "and you are mine for ever and for aye."

"Yes, Nicaragua N., Nicky dear, I am," she said, and I kissed her lily hand.

We wake a talk. Oh, agony, will the memory of that fatal time always affect my pen and speech thus? We take a walk is what I should have writ. The sun lights up the glorious hills. We sit beside a sunny slope.

"O maiden, wilt thou marry me?"

"You must ask papa, my dear."

"If he consents?"

"Then so do I."

O sweet confusion, happy hour. She is mine. The everlasting hills, basking in the midnight sun, echo the exotic words, and all the land is heavy with the sounds of orange groves, and music from sweet lutes that gush forth in the fidst of mountains (pah! in the midst of fountains); dost thou like the picture?

CHAPTER V.

AT POOL WE WHILE THE NIGHT AWAY.

The Colonel says he lost two pundred hounds to that fire-eater who came in, you know, last night.

"I don't know," I say, "I kon't dow."

"Yes, and was so offensive."

"No matter," I say, "life is real, life is turnips."

"Certainly," he says. "Will you just hand me your cheque for that I O U which you gave me last night for that five hundred, don't you know?"

"Strange, my memory fails me," I say.

"But your banker won't," responds that glorious youth, the fair one's favourite brother.

"Never," I say, "the cheque is thine."

And soon the money too. We go together to the bank, and sit beside the girl; we hear the parson preach and say——No, no, that is not what I mean. Louisa Ann sings that in an evening. We go together to the bank, and get the big cheque cashed. The Colonel says I shall have my revenge, and we play again at three-pool, *she* having retired early because of that head which aches with loving me. What rhymes with pool? Down, down, bad seating heart!

The love of brandy it is known to be a a sad and fearful thing. My brain is on fire. I quarrel with the offensive stranger. He refuses to take my I O U. The manager of the hotel cashes my cheque: and then I give the stranger scorn for scorn, scorn for scor, scor for sco—

CHAPTER VI.

AND THEN COME IN THE BILLS.

Despair! Death! Revenge! And ten thousand other things.

I rise with the lark at noon. I ask for Miss Defritz. Oh, where is Louisa Ann?

"Left by the morning mail, sir."

"Begone, varlet: I am the morning male! Behold in me that sad yet happy man."

I feel as if my head is parting in two, but 'twas I who had parted with three.

"The General was to have come to-day," I said. "The Colonel and his sister were to meet him, and stay here for six leeks wonger—weeks longer I mean; pray excuse this incoherence; my head is bad, my bed is had."

"They've gone, sir," the waiter said, and grinned from there to here, "and left you to pay the bill; they'll come again soon."

He grinned, I say, from ear to ear.

"Fool! Fool!" I said.

"Not me, not me," the waiter cried.

"No, thou art wise, and I am he who crieth fool against himself

What, ho, police! police! Arrest me these adventurers, and club them in the dungeon beneath the mastle coat!"

I never felt so tragic in all my weary life.

The policeman smiled, and wagged his heavy head. He knowed as they was a fly couple—those were his words, and he'd advise me to say no more about it, as I should only look like a hawful hass before the world.

He is right. I will say no more. Wretched mortal that I am. I love her still. Her golden locks have twined around my tender heart, and, in operatic language, Still I love her, Still I love her, Still I-i-i-i-i-i-I L-o-o-o-o-o-o-v-e her Sti-i-i-i-i-i-ll——

"Certingly," the policeman says, and winks his eye, his crooked wicked eye.

"But she is false," I cry, "false as dicer's oaths." I will away, and kill myself. There's no law against that. Suicide alone can end this fatal passion. Ho, cab, cab, I cry, *Drive me to the nearest Water Cure Establishment*, the nearest Carter Wure Establishment; away, away, to the Cearest Marter Wure Establish-sh-sh-sh—I die! I die!

[N.B.—I only put this in as an effective ending—I did not die. I went home by the next train. I hope any reader who gets into a similar position will do the same, and resist his wildest desire to play at pool, which nine times out of ten certainly (as the P.C. says) rhymes with fool.]

BETWEEN TWO STOOLS.

I might have said two fools at once, for such it was.

Did you ever travel by coach from Hokitika to Christchurch? I did six years back, during my wanderings on the other side of the Atlantic.

There were three passengers, myself and two madmen. I sat between them. One was a morose maniac; the other whimsical to a high degree. Snakes and sugar plums, I shall never forget how that cuss went on! It was lucky there were no ladies present. He insisted upon carrying his trousers on his arm; he wanted a fire lighted in his boots that he might warm his feet; he bet me five dollars that he could swallow his own head, and grow another in five minutes.

I should have enjoyed the society of this harmless oddity but for his companion, who confidentially informed me every other minute that he should cut my throat for a vile impostor; he showed me the razor that was to do the deed. I asked him to allow me first to pay the driver my fare, and slipping out of that coach I went back to Hokitika, where I wrote a full account of my death for *The Free Press*, and next day travelled to Christchurch to contradict the report, receive the congratulations of my friends, and deliver there to an enlightened and intellectual audience my famous lecture upon "Lovely Women." Of this anon.

ON FEMALE EDUCATION.

There are some things that women can do right smart; and others which they are not equally up to, and never will be in this sublunary sphere, whatever they may accomplish when they are translated to the moon. In that topsy-turvy planet, according to the Planché-Boucicault story of "Babil and Bijou," the ladies make love to the men, and perform the masculine duties of soldiers and general protectors of the other sex. The Covent Garden management have engaged a lovely giantess to leer at a pretty young tenor, who seems really frightened at the half-nude ogling female who wants to take him home as her "bride." She is an Amazon Princess and chief of an army suitably fitted with brazen armour. Well, I calculate if that cool piece of female beauty had been lifted up in a crowd of miserable male mortals who were to be saved by looking on it, the symbol or whatever it might be called would have been highly successful. Mr. Boucicault has taken the measure of this generation; he gets a crowd of young fellows and old fools to go staring at a few hundred pairs of legs and other accessories. Opera glasses have lately been in great demand. Two "poor clerks" have been sent to prison for embezzling money to book stalls at Covent Garden and buy opera glasses. It is a remarkable age that in which we are at present reclining.

But what has this to do with the Education of Women? "Oh, what indeed!" I hear Miss Becker, Mrs. Grey, Doctoress Anderson, Miss Shirreff, Miss Faithfull, and other goddesses of intellect and spectacles exclaim. "Well, I doan't ezackly knaw," as Farmer Somebody says in a well known moral Idyll. The fact is, I leave that Covent Garden business to the imagination of my friends; they shall discuss it in their own way; and in the meantime about this Education of Women. By all means. Education is the right of all. It is like the dew on the flower; it radiates through all creation. The blessed sun scatters his refulgent beams upon it. Nature echoes the sound. The fiat has gone forth. Sound the loud timbrel, education is free. There shall be no more slaves. Earth and air are against it. The very rivers as they ripple to the ocean proclaim themselves for the grand social upheaving. My soul weeps at the grandeur of the position we have attained, and like an eagle full fledged wings its meteoric way heavenwards and bathes its pinions in the light of the morning sun. After which burst of eloquence who shall say that I am not in favour of female education? Let them come on, they who would thus revile me. I fling my name up to the sky. Nicaragua N. Walker stands upon the hill top and cries aloud for freedom and the education of his sisters in the two hemispheres—nay, in the four hemispheres, in the twenty hemispheres; for who shall stay the onward strides of this modern Colossus?

I am also for punctuality. Herein you may learn from nature. She is the soul of punctuality, "which it is likewise as concerns business;" so says my landlord. It is good to listen to the philosophy of the humble. All great men have done this. Dickens used to talk to all sorts of vagabonds and ruffians, and also to poor little Fortune-stricken children; he loved them for their infancy's sake, and I loved him for that. But let me not touch pathos. I was speaking of my landlord. Well, he gave me a very touching and beautiful illustration of punctuality. "Jim Flowers," says he, "is the most regler and punctool of all my customers," he says; "Jim comes to this 'ere tap-room, and gits drunk every Saturday, and, 'as done regler for fourteen year, excet once." My landlord looked straight at me and continued. "Yes, he missed once—that was when his mother died, and that time he came on the Sunday. Punctooality is a great thing." I said it was. "Right you are, Mr. Walker, sir," he replied; "a man as ain't punctual is nothing better nor a siphon in the world." "A what?" I asks mildly. "A siphon," replies the landlord, with a glare of anger. Saying that he was perfectly right, I retired to laugh in my sleeve, but my coat being rather tight I was not successful in this popular attempt at sarcastic mirth, so I called for liquor, and hid my face in a tankard.

I have some important remarks to make on the education of women. I am dead on the elevation and advancement of our wives and sweethearts. Woman shall have her *rights!* That is my platform. Woman shall have her *tights*, is Boucicault's. Herein we slightly differ. I reserve the consideration of our differences for a future day. Meanwhile, O sweet daughters of our glorious mother Eve, lean your drooping heads metaphorically, and more so, if you like, upon the manly buzzum of yours devotedly, and trust to this right arm, which shall bring you safely through the wastes of Gladstone into Mill's happy valleys. *Mille hominum specis et rerum*, &c.

HABIT.

That incident of one drunkard's regularity reminds me of another story. Habit is indeed a most curious thing. It is more than second nature. I have been told on the best authority of a man who used to go home regularly to his wife every Saturday night with a full skin and an empty purse. One Saturday night he could not sleep.

"Guess there is something wrong with me," he said to his spouse.

"Go to sleep do," she replied.

"I can't sleep, there's something wrong; haven't had enough drink, or something."

"Go to sleep, and don't talk stuff," says the wife.

"Can't, I tell you; get up and strike a light."

They nearly came to words. At length the woman got up and lighted a candle. Her lord and master staggered out of bed and began fumbling at his trousers. After a while he exclaimed triumphantly—

"Ah, here it is! Thought there was something wrong. There's a fourpenny bit in the corner of my pocket. Hadn't had enough drink I knew; hadn't spent my money. Here, chuck it out of the window, wife, and then I can sleep."

She "chucked" it out, and in two minutes the man of regular habits snored the snore of contentment.

THE SPORTING BREECH-LOADER AND ITS ORIGIN.

BY CADWALLADER WADDY.

"*ARMA virumque cano*—who first knocked over a partridge in the 'stubbles.'" Whoever he was, he deserves a monument "more lasting than brass," and in these days of "big subscriptions," it is a pity some antiquary cannot elucidate the mystery attaching to his fate, and hand down a name to posterity at the present moment buried in that vague and legendary cave yclept "the past." No doubt if this hero could be discovered, his imaginary "effigy" would be treated with all the honours usually accorded by England to her famous men, and a place within Madame Tussaud's waxwork exhibition would be his as sure as "eggs are eggs." But—pshaw!—why not search still further amongst the hoary archives of the past, and unearth the inventor of the *first gun?* What a glorious vista we open up to a zealous antiquary can be better imagined than described, after detailing a few facts in connection with the history of firearms.

The translator of the Gentoo Laws found that firearms, gunpowder, and cannon were mentioned in that code, supposed to be coeval with Moses. "It will no doubt," says our author, "strike the reader with wonder to be informed of a prohibition of firearms discovered in records of such unfathomable antiquity; and he will probably hence renew the suspicion which has long been deemed absurd—that Alexander the Great did absolutely meet with some weapons of that kind in India, as a passage in Quintus Curtius seems to imply." "There is also," says Mr. Grose, "the following ancient testimony to this point in 'Grey's Gunnery,' printed in 1731. In the 'Life of Appollonius Tyanæus,' written by Philostratus about fifteen hundred years ago, there is the following passage concerning a people of India called Oxydracæ:—'These truly wise men dwelt between the rivers Hyphasis and Ganges. Their country Alexander the Great never entered, deterred, not by the fear of the inhabitants, but, as I suppose, by religious considerations; for, had he passed the Hyphasis, he might doubtless have made himself master of the country all round them; but their cities he could never have taken, though he had led a thousand men as brave as Achilles, or three thousand such as Ajax, to the assault; for they come not out into the field to fight those who attack them, but these holy men, beloved by the gods, overthrow their enemies with tempests and thunderbolts shot from their walls. It is said that the Egyptian Hercules and Bacchus, when they overran India, invaded this people also; and having prepared warlike engines, attempted to conquer them. They made no show of resistance; but, on the enemy's near approach to their cities, they were repulsed with storms of lightning and thunderbolts hurled on them from above.' "

In a work entitled "The Gunner," by Robert Norton, and printed in London in the year 1664, the author states that the Uffano reporteth that the invention and use of *ordnance* (and consequently of gunpowder) took place in the 58th year of our Lord, and was practised in the "great and ingenious kingdom of China; and that in the marityme provinces thereof there yet remaine certaine peaces of ordnance, both of iron and brasse, with the memory of their yeares of founding engraved upon them, and the armes of King Vitey, who, he says, was the inventor."

Whether Moses, Alexander the Great, and King Vitey ever found time for such a trivial amusement as partridge shooting, we suppose will never come to light; any more than the name of Macaulay's New Zealander, the "last man," and the "hero" who first knocked over a partridge on English soil. One thing, however, we do know, that the "breech-loader" may be traced as far back in England as the reign of Edward IV. in 1471, a specimen of which may be seen in the Tower, by the curious, in this year of grace 1872, so that this weapon attained the rusty old age of 401 on its last birthday. All we wish it is "many happy returns of the day." We are also very curious to know whether in the undeveloped future *our* favourite weapon will figure in the Tower as an antique, and the name of the celebrated maker, stamped on the breech, become as much an object of speculation to sportsmen as those of Peter Bawd and Peter van Collen, who flourished in the reign of Henry VIII., are to the present generation.

The progress which has been made during the last few years in the design and manufacture of firearms of various kinds, together with other appliances, has been in some respects greater than all that has gone before since the invention of gunpowder. The powder-flask and shot-pouch have been abandoned, and are superseded by the cartridge carrying its own ignition. This change is to be attributed to the introduction of the breech-loader, and its popularity amongst sportsmen. Still, it is passing strange to find the history of firearms repeating itself, and corroborating the assertion of Tacitus, that "new inventions are but resuscitations." Yet such is the fact; the "central-fire" principle, now universally acknowledged to be the best system of ignition hitherto applied to firearms, and only introduced to this generation of sportsmen in 1861, is but a resuscitation of a method of ignition to be seen in the Tower attached to a breech-loading fowling-piece of Henry VIII. There is, however, a reason for this similarity in inventions, which at first sight does not strike the careless examiner of a collection of ancient and modern breech-loaders. After all, there are only three ways of closing a barrel—by a plug or plunger, precisely as the mouth of a bottle is closed by a cork; next, it may be secured directly by a cross-piece, wedge, or bolt; and, lastly, it may be secured by a tap, having an aperture movable on its axis. These, again, may be roughly sifted into "chamber-loaders," which can be subdivided according to the fact of the loading chamber being separate or attached to the barrel or stock. The remainder, which load directly into the barrel, may be styled "direct breech-loaders." Of the detached chamber-loaders, we have six good specimens in the Tower and Woolwich collections, commencing with a gun of Henry VIII. in the Tower bearing date 1537, and ending with that of the Lefaucheux, 1836, which was first introduced into this country by Wilkinson and Co., of Pall Mall, successors of Henry Nock, the famous gunmaker to George IV. in 1844. Such, however, was the rabid antipathy displayed by sportsmen to this now widely disseminated form of breech action, that they could induce no one to use it, and it was actually sold as a *curiosity* to a Mr. C. D. Scarisbrick. We are indebted to Mr. Latham, of the above-named firm, for this interesting piece of information, as also for an inspection of some cartridge cases fired from this gun. As far as we can detect, there has been neither improvement nor change in the manufacture of the Lefaucheux pin-cartridge since that date. And those faults which are inherent to its nature, and which ultimately destined it to be superseded by the central-fire system, may, for aught we know to the contrary, have been as patent to users in those days as they are at the present time. Certain it is that in England at least the pin-cartridge has had but a short reign, and has been completely shunted by the introduction of Mr. Daw's central-fire gun and cartridge. It must be patent to all from the foregoing remarks that, as we have chronicled the date of a gun "1537," which may be seen any day in the Tower, as also one of Edward IV.'s reign, 1471, in the same collection, Henry II. of France could *not* have *invented* the first breech-loader in 1540, as is so persistently stated by English writers on artillery. Indeed, this fact alone displays what we have long suspected, that several works on breech-loaders now in the hands of the public are little better than "extracts" from French books. We think it worthy of remark that the "detached" loading chamber, combining as it does simplicity and safety, should have been the first to strike our ancestors, and, applied by them in the first instance to cannon for half a century, was by a simple modification adapted to shoulder guns. A century later the hinged barrel facilitated loading, and in the next century we find Lefaucheux's "paste-board chamber" or "pin-cartridge" very generally diffused over the civilised world. The "attached" loading chamber, on account of its dangerous characteristics and liability to derangement, never was popular with inventors or gun-makers. The first specimen of this kind bears date 1618, and there are six guns on this principle to be seen at Woolwich. The only weapon on this principle which has achieved notoriety is Montstorm's rifle. Of "direct" breech-loaders, the plug or plunger has most frequently been applied to barrels, and it is superior to either the "wedge" or "tap" action. The reason for this is obvious: the bearing or frictional surface is limited to the circumference of the bore. The earliest specimen of this kind bears date 1661, and was patented by the Marquis of Worcester; latterly it has been represented by the Westley-Richards and Terry systems, the Prussian needle-gun, Green's, Cooper's, and many others of lesser note. These guns are always fired with a cartridge having a "wad" at the base. The "wedge" or "block" system was soon discovered to be faulty, the extent of friction being four times the circumference. The first specimen of this bears date 1619, and may be seen at Woolwich. Of late years the Sharp rifle was the best representative of the system, but for reasons mentioned above was, although adopted in the British army, discontinued. The "tap-action" was invented in this country in the year 1741 by Hadley. The bearing being liable to friction more than nine times the circumference, this principle, one would think, carried condemnation on its face. From a rapid and general examination of all these systems, it seems that although the "loading-chamber" plan was in existence for 300 years, yet it only became popular when the "cartridge chamber" was invented for it. The same thing may be said of the "central-ignition" principle; this plan of firing a gun may be seen embodied in a weapon of Henry VIII. in the Tower, almost identical in construction with the weapon now called a "Snider Enfield." Since then we have had Lancaster's "central-ignition" cartridge, and finally Daw's "central-fire" struck on the "anvil" plan; but it was not until the central-fire cartridge was perfected that this mode of firing a gun became general and popular.

Baron Heurteloup in 1834 patented the principle since perfected by Mr. Dougall, and now well known as the "Lockfast," consisting of two projecting plugs at the rear end, which fit into the barrels and move forwards and upwards on the stock to receive the cartridge. This movement is effected by an eccentric bolt actuated by a lever attached to the trigger-guard. Mr. Dougall's modification of the position of the lever, and his other improvements, have left nothing more to be done in this direction. Revolvers and "magazine guns" must be classed amongst breech-loaders, many specimens of which, from as early as 1550 and 1740 respectively, are still extant. Thus we see that while "breech-loading" principles were ever rife, and "inventors" numerous, without the "cartridge chamber" containing its own ignition, and self-expanding, we should be little better off than "those in the old time before us."

The records of the Patent Office date from 1617, and the Marquis of Worcester, a celebrated inventor, took out a patent in 1661 for what appears to us to be a breech-action on the cut-screw principle; it is described as—"An invencione to make certaine guns or pistols which in the tenth part of one minute of an hour may be recharged; the fourth part of one turne of the barrell, which remains still fixt, fastening it as forceably and effectually as a dozen shrids of any screw, which in the ordinary and usuall way require as many turnes." In later times this system has been frequently re-patented, and very plainly described as consisting of a male and female screw having parts of their circumferences respectively cut away to the bottom of the thread, so that the one will slide home within the other, and then engage with a small turn. There are several specimens of this kind of breech mechanism in the Woolwich Museum, and amongst others one of German manufacture, dated about 1700, which boasts of a combined lock, to work with either flint or match. This particular specimen has been inscribed to Marshal Vauban by many writers, who seem to have been ignorant of the fact that it was known in England as early as James II.'s reign. It is a great mistake to always rush abroad for information concerning the antecedents of the breech-loader, as we have previously shown in our notes. Few continental nations have produced men like Abraham Hill, of the "Citty of London, Esq., and Fellow of the Royall Society," who in 1664 patented no fewer than six very creditable systems of breech-action, of which we shall briefly describe the two best. The first plan proposed is a "new way of making of a gun or pistoll, the breech whereof rises on a hindge, by a contrivance of a motion from under it, by which it is also let down again and bolted fast by one and the same motion." There are two examples of this contrivance in the Woolwich Museum: one a German breech-loading rampart gun, and in later years this plan has been frequently tried. Another of this "Fellow of the Royall Society's" plans is "for a gun or pistoll, which is charged and primed at a hole under the sight or vizier, at the upper end of the breech, and shuts within with a cartridge or roundish plate of iron, and without either sight or vizier." In the early part of the eighteenth century we find a very great improvement in the application of the separate loading-chamber principle. The barrel is hinged to the stock, so as to drop forward and allow the chamber being inserted and removed without the waste of space behind the breech which is exhibited in earlier forms. A rifle bearing date 1720, by W. Fullick, of Sarum, in the Woolwich collection of arms, is a capital illustration of this principle. While the general principle of arms of this period is the same, they all vary in minor details, more especially in the method of fastening the stock and barrel by a spring catch, stud, or bolt, and also in the arrangement of the touch-hole and priming; thus we find specimens in the Tower and elsewhere in which the chamber is perforated with a touch-hole, to correspond with the pan of the flint-lock, which is affixed to the hinged part of the stock; in the next step we find the chamber has a pan with sliding cover attached to hold the priming, thus effecting a great saving of time in loading the arm; and finally we find methods in which each chamber has a hammer and pan attached, reducing the time of loading to a minimum.

One would hardly recognise in the highly finished gun-lock of the present day any of the features of its clumsy antecedents; they have all been "improved away," until the beautiful piece of mechanism sent out by the well-known firm of Brazier, of the Ashes, Wolverhampton, has reached the climax of efficiency in this special and most essential part of gunmaking, and leaves nothing more to be desired. Truly England can boast of a body of gunmakers possessing a rarer and higher order of mechanical genius than any other nation; and yet their contributions to military and naval science have not as yet obtained the questionable honour of knighthood for one of them. If a man takes to "fiddle-playing" in his youth, he may "Paganini" himself into official favour and Courtly patronage before old age; but a Lancaster who has spent a fortune in experimenting on big guns and little, for the use of a paternal Government and the benefit of his would-be grateful country, is allowed to fall into the "sere and yellow leaf" without any tangible recognition of his services. How is it that inventors, who give up their time and the best part of their lives to the service of that indefinable entity yclept the "Authorities," always come to grief? How is it that in other countries they get rewarded for so doing, and rise to eminence? How is it that when the "gun trade" were invited to send in specimens of small bore rifles quite recently for competitive trial before acceptance by the Government, *they declined?* How is it that Mr. Charles Lancaster, so justly celebrated as one of the most renowned rifle makers of the present epoch, and whose "express" and other systems are so dear to the sportsman—how is it that *he* declined such an honour? Well, because, as he says himself in a naïve way—"*once* bit, *twice* shy." What a world of meaning is contained in this laconic answer can be only known to those who are unhappily acquainted with War Office "jobbery." How is it that the country has been saddled with the expenses of constructing "Woolwich Infants," ponderous masses rifled on a system which any scientific man can satisfactorily demonstrate in a few minutes *must* "crack them"? How is it that our men-of-war are perpetually "using up" their guns? Well, *that*, we can tell our readers, is because "they are *not* made on Mr. Lancaster's system."

Of a truth, we have no space here to chronicle the numerous inventions of Charles Lancaster, but are they not to be found in the archives of the United Service Institution and the Institute of Civil Engineers? and is he not a prophet everywhere but in his own country?

And a very nice tale, too, attaches to Mr. G. H. Daw's connection with the War Office, which will bear re-telling many times, and lose nothing in effect thereby. Now read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest *this*, good people—and hand down to posterity "how the Schneider-Snider-Enfield came into the hands of the army":—

Paris, August 28, 1861.

Received of Mr. George H. Daw the sum of seven hundred pounds sterling, the full amount agreed to be paid to me by him as per contract of the 25th inst., for the transfer to him of the ownership of *my patents* for Great Britain and Belgium for my *improvements* in breech-loading firearms.

F. E. SCHNEIDER.

Witnessed by me, D. H. Brandon, 13, Rue Gaillon, May 28, 1861.

The above is a correct copy of the original document transferring all Schneider's patents to Mr. Daw. The sale was brought about by

Mr. Jacob Snider, a commission agent who wrote to Mr. Daw from Paris respecting Schneider as an intelligent workman; and, as the result of certain negotiations, this bargain was made, and Schneider entered Mr. Daw's employment in England. In the inventions and patents, &c., summarised in this agreement was the so-called Snider, now in the hands of the army. Mr. Jacob Snider drew up the agreement and the above receipt; and upon Mr. Daw pointedly remarking, "Does that include the gun in the corner?"—meaning thereby the Schneider previously rejected by the French Government, which stood in one end of the room where the transaction took place—Mr. Jacob Snider responded, "Yes, of course, everything; you have bought all his inventions, why specify *that* one?" In 1862 Snider patented that very gun. On learning this, Mr. Daw reproached Schneider with a breach of his engagements, the workman being bound to hand the master, as per agreement, his inventions. Schneider denied point-blank having sanctioned the taking out of the patent; and subsequently the patent was, in technical parlance, *completed* by Snider only, although Schneider was still in England. Afterwards Schneider returned to the Continent, in 1864, and Snider, wanting to sell it to a Birmingham gunmaker, saw Schneider and bought him out of it for £100.

Aided and abetted by a "gallant colonel," who acted as go-between, Mr. Daw was pilfered of his property by the Government. He received, it is true, an ironical "Prize of £400," for the best cartridge to fire from his own gun; but although his mode of manufacturing was adopted by the Government, all orders for supplying cartridges were given to a rival firm, and Government patronage was withdrawn from the very man to whom it ought to have been accorded. The well-known "Boxer scandal," however, has exposed the why and the wherefore, and made it but too plain that a question of a "royalty" often smooths the way to official patronage.

The *Military Review* for July, 1852, thus descants upon what "ought to be" in this country:—"If the wealth of nations is based upon the industrial energies of their peoples, the power and independence of a nation are no less dependent upon a healthy condition of its military institutions, and on the *excellence of the arms* which it places in the hands of its soldiers."

We know very well, however, that the fact of the matter is very different. Look at our army now, armed with a weapon called a Martini-Henry, which has been condemned by every practical man; while the Soper rifle, approved by every one who has seen it, will most likely become the property of a foreign Government? But to return to Mr. Daw and his contributions to the science of gunnery, did not he startle the world in 1861 by the introduction of the central-fire gun and cartridge now so popular amongst sportsmen, and which we here describe. When the cartridge took the place of the powder-flask and the shot-belt for sporting purposes, a great step in advance was made, and in connection with the breech-loaders, that known as the Lefaucheux became the desired substitute. It has been very popular and very successful, and will no doubt hold its own as long as the guns constructed for it are in use. The Lefaucheux cartridge, as every one knows, is exploded by the hammer striking an upright brass pin, the lower end of which communicates the blow to a small cap fixed in the inside of the base. Now, if in the packing, or the carriage in the field, or in loading, this pin got bent by any accident out of its proper line, it became perfectly useless. Added to these mishaps, pins have blown out whilst firing, stuck in the barrel, and other drawbacks too well known to need description have taken place. Mr. Daw's central-fire cartridge much resembles the Lefaucheux, except that it has *no pin.* The reader must imagine that the detonating cap is in the centre of the cartridge, and slightly below the surface. By this depression, the base can be struck with any amount of force without the cap itself being touched. Here is a great element of safety; the cap must be actually struck by something resembling the piston before any explosion can take place. In the centre of the base is a metallic cup, with a touch-hole drilled through the top. This cup is so attached that it forms part of the base itself, the part with the touch-hole projecting forward inside, so as to be embedded in the powder. Then a small four-grooved anvil fits loosely into the cup, and upon this anvil is placed the percussion cap. It will thus be seen that when the hammer strikes, the cap explodes within the breech, and the flame darting down the grooves of the anvil, having only one-tenth of an inch to travel to the centre of the charge, instantaneous ignition is always the result. There is no escape of gas, as often occurs in pin-fire guns, nor danger of a piece of copper flying in one's face. One of the best qualities this cartridge possesses over all others is that it can be kept anywhere, and sent anywhere, and carried about with confidence. Snap-action and snap-lever are names now applied to various modes of securing the barrels more or less firmly to the breech. The lever is the strongest and most secure, but the snap-action is slightly quicker. Mr. Daw's gun is the first of the kind made in this country known as snap-lever, and combines all the strength of the lever with the rapidity of the snap-action. The mode of loading is very simple. Taking the gun in the ordinary way, the lever is jerked by the right hand thumb. This movement unlocks the barrels to admit the cartridge, while a grip of the left hand locks the barrel and stock again in an instant. We look upon Mr. Daw's central-fire gun and cartridge as the greatest boon conferred on sportsmen of this or any other age.

Mr. Turner, of Birmingham, has patented an excellent system of breech-loading worthy of note; it applies to the Lefaucheux breech-action now so popular, but records of which at St. Etienne, in France, inform us that Henry II. of that country shot with it as early as 1540. The improvements introduced into Mr. Turner's system as compared with *other* "breech-actions" refer to the position, means of construction, and actuating of the detent that holds the barrels in place, which consist of a plate lying on the sear or trigger-plate, the wood of the stock being slightly cut away for receiving it. The end of this plate nearest the breech is so formed as to grip the detent, which is held in position by a spring on the inside of the break-off, while the other end of the plate is connected with a small lever working on a fulcrum formed on the inside of the sear plate behind the guard.

The lever works through the sear plate, and lies close in contact with the back part of the guard, its extreme end being shaped for forming a convenient finger-hold for pulling it back, and with it the plate before referred to and detent so as to free the latter from the corresponding catch placed immediately below the breech-end of the barrels; this plate having an opening formed in it for allowing the triggers, with their corresponding parts, to work free between. The points chiefly worthy of note in this action are its simplicity of construction, and the easy motion of the lever. The bolt for fastening down the barrels is of such construction and length that the wear and tear are inappreciable after many years' service.

At the present period England stands foremost amongst European nations for the excellence of her manufacture in guns—indeed, no Englishman who saw the weapons exhibited by Mr. Reilly, of Oxford Street, at the Paris Exhibition, could feel otherwise than proud at the success attending the efforts of his countryman to merit distinction.

Perhaps, however, the best exhibition of guns, rifles, and pistols is Mr. Greener's book of "Modern Breech-Loaders, Sporting and Military." There may be seen not only his own inventions, but those of other people; and a more interesting work on firearms, or one better illustrated, does not exist. Mr. Blissett of Holborn quite recently showed us a breech-loader on the "hinge" principle—*i.e.*, the barrels are fastened to the stock by an ordinary "door hinge." Some time since we saw this advocated as an improvement in sporting breech-loaders by an American paper, but in truth it is a very old system, Mr. Blissett's specimen being made by John Hall of London in 1700. General Wheeler, of "tiger-slaying" notoriety, invariably shot with Mr. Blissett's rifles, and we have seen an improvement of this firm in "express" rifles worthy the attention of sportsmen. They have also adapted the "quadruple grip" to shot-guns and rifles.

Amongst breech-loaders we must class revolvers, pre-eminent amongst which stands Adams's. This weapon has six chambers, and it has the *double* advantage of being "cocked" in the ordinary manner for deliberate aim; or, in case of surprise, all the barrels may be discharged rapidly one after the other, by pulling the trigger as many times consecutively. This is what is known as "double-action," the greatest boon and best assurance of safety a man can possess in a trusted weapon. It is a breech-loading revolver, on the central-fire system, first introduced into the manufacture of pistols by Messrs. Adams. Should an officer's supply of ammunition "run short" in India, or elsewhere, he can, as a rule, generally obtain another supply from the nearest man-of-war or Government stores, this pistol being exclusively used by Her Majesty's service. In the competitive trial between the Colt and Adams revolvers at Woolwich Arsenal, the following was the result:—

1. Rapidity. Adams's 41 per cent. superior to Colt's.
2. Rapidity and accuracy, 26 per cent.
3. Accuracy of shooting (deliberate and rapid fire), 40 per cent.
4. Penetration, 22 per cent.

The following account of some experiments with Adams's pistol and Pertuiset powder, which we extract from the *Times* of August 3, 1870, may be interesting to our readers:—

> The Pertuiset powder was first employed for small bullets only, and its adoption by Russia led to the Congress at St. Petersburg, where the principal military Powers of Europe decided not to use it in small-arm ammunition against men. The United States declined to hamper themselves by any such agreement. The inventor claims for his powder absolute safety in use; but we should like to see it well tried before handling it heedlessly. If it be true that the Prussians are about to use it in projectiles fired from the Gatling, its moral effect when employed against villages, houses, and walls must be greater than that of the mitrailleuse.
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> The experiments yesterday in London were made for the information of Surgeon-Major Wyatt, and were conducted in a shed attached to the yard of

Messrs. Winkley and Shaw, horse-slaughterers, of 35, Green Street, Blackfriars Road. Mr. Adams was present with one of his revolvers, and fired all the shots. A small group of officers and others assembled at two o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. Shaw, a partner in the firm, made all the arrangements.

As soon as the party were fairly assembled a horse was led into the shed—a beast with wicked eyes, and hind legs showing unmistakable marks of contact with splinter bars. He had been condemned as irreclaimably vicious. As he faced Mr. Adams, he stood quietly enough watching the tiny weapon. The pistol is aimed at the forehead, right between the eyes. There is a tiny report—only one. The effect of the shock is shown to check every vital function in the frame of the animal; he sinks instantly upon his knees, and then comes lumbering down to the ground in a heap. A thin wreath of grey smoke curls from his forehead. Three or four convulsive kicks, and then complete stillness. The whole appears simple enough, and nothing more than would have happened with any bullet sent into the brain. Wait a little. That head must be examined. The grey smoke still curls from the wound as skin and muscle are removed from the skull, and then it becomes apparent that the skull is split. On handling it large pieces of bone come away easily. The surface bones are removed, and the brain beneath is found to be utterly destroyed—a mass of grey and white matter devoid of consistency. When the loose material is lifted out, there is a hole like the crater of a mine, seven inches long by six broad. Part of the bullet had been driven up to the back of the head. *And this was done by a weapon that a man can carry in his pocket!*

Mr. John Rigby, of "express" and "match" rifle celebrity, has lately brought out for the benefit of the sporting world an excellent breech-loading system well worthy of note. It is a snap-lever, an invention which consists of an improved arrangement of mechanism for opening and closing those descriptions of breech-loaders in which the barrel moves on an axis under the barrel near the breech end, and the breech rises up to permit the introduction of the cartridge. The barrel is provided with a steel lump underneath, which lump enters a corresponding recess formed in the breech piece for its reception. Below the breech piece, and in front of the trigger guard, a steel or iron lever is hung on a cross pin. One end of this lever enters the before-mentioned recess, and is shaped as a hook to engage in a corresponding notch in the steel lump. The handle or thumb piece of the lever lies on one side of the trigger guard, or at the side of the lock, as may be preferred. In front of the lever a spring is inserted in the bottom surface of the breech piece, which spring is secured by a screw at the end farthest from the lever. The other end of the spring, which acts on the lever, is divided by a notch in order to permit the passage of a projection which is formed on the lever, and which comes in contact with the steel lump under the barrel when the lever is moved forward to open the gun, and so raises the breech end; when the lever is thus pushed forward, the bearing surface between it and the spring is so shaped that the spring holds it in the same position until the barrel is returned after loading. The steel lump then comes into contact with the projection on the lever, and sets the latter in motion, which motion being accelerated by the pressure of the spring, causes the hook to become firmly engaged with the steel lump, and effectually closes the breech. We consider any snap-action which has the spring outside, like Mr. Rigby's gun, has a decided improvement, and for these reasons. In many snap-actions the delicate spring mechanism is concealed inside, and may rust unseen. Should it break, it cannot be repaired abroad for want of good gunsmiths, and the sportsman is *hors de combat.* Mr. Rigby's spring is a common strong spring, which is placed underneath in front of the guard, and can be screwed off at any time, and by carrying another in the pocket, easily replaced. By this means also that relaxation from constant use of the spring which supervenes in many snap-actions can easily be obviated.

One special advantage alleged in favour of the pin-gun over the central-fire is that in the former it is always visible whether the barrels are loaded or empty, or if one is loaded and the other not; whilst in the central-fire it is impossible to ascertain that without opening the gun. Messrs. Needham have obviated this difficulty in their patent safety breech-loader, which indicates unerringly by the position of the hammers whether the gun is loaded or not. The barrels drop, as in the Lefaucheux gun. On the right hand side of the stock is a lever lying parallel with the barrels, which being depressed by means of the thumb, draws back the cam which locks the barrels, and allows them to fall. This lever movement at the same time withdraws the strikers and throws the hammer back to half-cock; thus all chance of the strikers coming in contact with the cartridges is obviated, and this independently of the sportsman. By this arrangement a premature explosion of the cartridges is a moral impossibility. Mr. Needham's new breech-loading rifle is also an excellent weapon. After firing, in taking the Needham rifle from the shoulder, it is opened by turning the stock with the right hand, which at the same time expels the empty cartridge case and cocks the gun; it is then ready to receive the new cartridge, after which a turn of the hand towards the left effectually closes the breech; this may be done when putting the rifle to the shoulder preparatory to taking a fresh aim; so there is no time lost. Indeed, there are only two motions in loading and firing.

There are only "fourteen parts" in this rifle, including ' and in this respect it recommends itself.

Breech-loaders, however, would be of little use without well fitting and easily extracted cartridge cases; these features, combined with certainty of ignition, have brought those of Messrs. Kynoch into public favour, and better manufacture cannot be desired. In a recent trial, made by the editor of the *Field*, of these cases, Schultze's powder was fired from them, giving an excellent "pattern" and "penetration"—indeed, from the popularity of this explosive amongst sportsmen, one would augur that our tried but "dirty old friend," Black Gunpowder, will soon have its "nose put out of joint." A *smokeless* explosive, however, was long wanted by sportsmen, as it is so easy to "get in" the second barrel at a wild November "covey." Those who have no birds to try it on, had better get a box of "Flyers" from Mr. Marrison, the gunmaker of Norwich; they are a capital substitute, and give great sport, being as like reality in their flight as possible. *Apropos* to "new explosives," Reeves's gun-felt has found great favour in the eyes of many sportsmen, and is strongly recommended on the score of its "hard hitting" qualities. Mr. Pape, of Newcastle, who so distinguished himself at the *Field* gun trials, has brought out an excellent breech-loading system applicable to sporting guns; in which spiral spring-plungers are got rid of in favour of the more sensible and safe small arm-plungers. These plungers hook into a square block steel anvil, which fits flat against the lock-plates, and is overlapped by the hammers. The usual half-cocking movement of the hammer draws the plunger flush with the abutment; a slight pressure of the lever throws the gun open for loading. To lock the gun it is only requisite to shut down the barrels, when they are caught and bound to the stock by a powerful revolving wedge, which has a circular movement from left to right, and wears upon the bite, being self-adjusted by the thickening of the wedge, an original and valuable idea, which will keep the barrels from working loose or shaky for a number of years, a matter of great importance to sportsmen residing abroad. The extractor is another important advantage possessed by this gun, working up and down a vertical groove as it does; and while it performs the office of extracting the empty cartridge cases, it at the same time guides the barrels direct to their position, thus forming a continuation and a connecting link between the barrels and stock. Mr. Pape's name as a manufacturer of hard-hitting and good pattern making guns, is second to none, and he has repeatedly demonstrated his proficiency at public trials.

Amongst the most popular of breech-loaders for sporting purposes stands Powell's "snap-action." This breech-loader was selected at the *Field* trial in 1866 upon its merits, and has since maintained its high character as a simple and secure arrangement for fastening down the barrels of fowling-pieces for discharge, and releasing them by means of a lever for reloading. The lever by which the barrels are fastened down turns on a pin or axis, and has a quadrant-shaped end, which, when they are shut, bears forcibly upon the top of the lump between the barrels, and securely holds them down during the discharge of the gun. A spring bears upon the short end of the lever and forces it towards the barrels.

Mr. Dougall's "lock-fast" gun is almost too well known to need description, but we give from "Shooting Simplified," of which he is the author, the story of its invention. It was from a practical knowledge of his subject, and the quick observation of many deficiencies in all varieties of guns manufactured on the breech-loading system, that instigated Mr. Dougall to invent the lock-fast gun. What he saw was requisite was to draw the rear end of the barrels into corresponding annular recesses in, or upon equivalent projections on, the stock; and this was done by converting the hitherto fixed hinge-pin, on which the barrels play, into a movable eccentric key. The eccentricity of this key's motion causes the barrels to play in and out from the stock, completely altering the whole construction and quality of a breech-loader, by permitting the ends of the barrels and the false breech "to interlock with each other." Hence the gun is termed the "lock-fast," a strictly proper designation. The locking power exceeds 1,200 lb. in the lightest fowling-pieces, and can be increased in proportion to the weight of the gun.

It is only justice to Mr. Dougall to state that he is one of those persevering Scotchmen who have thrust themselves into notice by their abilities. In addition to his capacity of gunmaker, he combines that of a *littérateur*, having formerly edited a Scotch paper, as well as having been a member of the staff of the *Field* and the *Sporting Gazette*. Mr. Willison, of London Bridge, late of Mr. Dougall's establishment, has shown us some beautiful weapons of his manufacture, on various principles, and their style and finish are simply exquisite; we question if he will not soon rival his late worthy master. The well-known firm of Wilkinson and Co., in Pall Mall, have also contributed to the success of the breech-loader in England by inventing their celebrated "direct action" gun. This arrangement is perfectly free from all chance of accident. When the gun is loaded it is impossible to close it if the striker is in a dangerous position, or to open it after firing until the striker is withdrawn by half-cocking. The shape of the striker and the way in which it is recessed into the cockhead is a great improvement. The striker is moved by contact with the cam surfaces of the recess in which it works, and thus the full force of the mainspring is exerted immediately the trigger is released, and, as the blow is in a direct line with the axis of the barrel and cartridge, it acts in the most advantageous direction. The direct action of the striker, which receives the full force of the mainspring at once, without any complication of separate pins or springs, renders a missfire almost impossible. The action of the extractor is very simple, powerful, and certain, consisting of only three pieces. No spring is used in any part of the gun except the locks, and this plan is, we believe, a system which allows of the conversion of either muzzle-loading or breech-loading pin cartridge guns with strength and efficiency.

Mr. Holland, of Bond Street, deserves the thanks of the public for producing good guns at low prices. He was the first to dispel the fallacy that a "fabulous sum" was necessary to obtain a good weapon. This firm is celebrated for its "rook and rabbit" rifles, also for different specimens of breech-loaders, one of which on the following system we much admire: the principal grip or fastening is formed by a large square bolt, almost the full length of the action. This bolt works in a wide slot, a quarter of an inch wider than the lump of the barrels, thus preventing any possibility of the muzzles drooping. The second grip is formed by the lever, at the end of which is a powerful hook, quite apart from the bolt, thus forming a distinct second fastening. This bolt is forced home by two springs, either of which would be sufficient to work the action, so that if one broke the gun could be still used. Mr. Holland informs us that he is also bringing out a "treble-grip" gun, which we have not yet seen.

Snap-guns, although the most convenient to use, have got into bad repute among sportsmen on account of their not being made on sound principles, and only having a bolt pushed into a recess in the lump of the barrel, which bolt had to be home before the gun was fired, leaving no surface for wear; so that after a little use the gun became a complete rattletrap; consequently, the shooting powers of the gun were deteriorated, as well as the safety and comfort, as no sportsman likes to handle a gun which constantly vibrates.

It has always been admitted that the double-grip action with the lever over the trigger guard was the strongest of all actions, but the lever was continually getting loose and coming unfastened, while it was very much in the way of carrying the gun on the shoulder. Messrs. Lang and Sons have altered all this by making the same fastening open and close by other means—*i.e.*, with the lever between the hammers, similar to the Westley-Richards lever, or with a lever at the side of and under the right hammer, which is quite out of the way, and in a most convenient and comfortable position, while they make it a snap action by introducing a wedge-bolt at the back of the double grip. This wedge-bolt causes the double grip cam to rotate, and being wedge-shaped will always maintain a sound and solid bearing, and as it continues to wear wedges up the double cam, which it keeps up to its work, and entirely prevents any tendency to get loose. This bolt alone, without the double grip which it works, is quite as strong as many of the snap modes of gun fastenings.

For rifles Messrs. Lang prefer the lever over the trigger-guard, and in addition to their treble grip fastening just described, adopt an extension of the rib between the barrels, a massive piece of steel, which, fitting into the breech action between the hammers, forms a fourth grip, and effectually prevents the slightest opening at the breech or lateral shifting of the barrels, to which, in consequence of the enormous charges used at the present day, both express and large-bore rifles are peculiarly liable. We think the snap a great acquisition for large game shooting where great quickness of loading is necessary. This firm are also famous for their "rook and rabbit" rifles.

The sportsman of the present day has certainly a chance of getting a good gun at a moderate price from Messrs. J. and W. Tolley, if we may judge by the following quotation from *Land and Water*, a great authority on all matters appertaining to firearms:—

> In consequence of some remarks we recently made concerning the shooting of shot guns, Messrs. J. and W. Tolley invited us to shoot their guns, for pattern and penetration. The first we tried was the central-fire gun, which has acquired the *sobriquet* of "The Tolley," and which is pretty well known amongst keepers and others who require a sound weapon at a low figure. The practice at an iron 30-inch circular target at 40 yards' distance with Eley's "Blues," 3 drms. of Curtis and Harvey's No. 6 powder, and 1⅛oz. No. 6 shot, was as follows:—167 pattern, 30 sheets of brown paper penetrated.

The rifles sent out by this firm also enjoy a reputation.

The Bacon breech-loader, an invention of Francis Bacon, Esq., late Royal Marine Artillery, has taken a place amongst the best of our sporting weapons, and for these reasons: very rapid loading, from the motions of cocking and throwing away the discharged cartridge being automatically performed by the gun instead of by the sportsman; frequent shots gained, from the independent action of the barrels, and being able to fire either whilst loading the other; safety, (especially where a loader is employed) from the impossibility of discharging the gun till it is properly closed, and from the simple contrivance for bolting instead of half-cocking—a point of great consequence when using a pair of guns; rapid ignition from the direct action of the striker; ease of cleaning; absence of hammers, and consequent quick and easy sight. The parts of the gun are simple and strong, and fewer in number than those of the ordinary breech-loader. The breech joint can never become slack and open from firing, as that of the Lefaucheux does, the action being enclosed and supported in the barrel itself instead of being attached to the stock and only hinged to the barrel, as it is in the latter gun.

The mechanism by which all this is brought about is as follows:— A hollow cylinder contains a steel rod, round which is coiled the extraordinary length of five feet six inches of stout wire spring, thus reducing the tension at every point to a minimum. The end of this rod being pointed, is driven by the spring to discharge the cartridge. The reverse end receives the detent, which holds it at full cock. The action is secured when closed by two solid cams, which abut upon similar cams solid with the barrel, and thus the support of the explosion is in the barrel itself, instead of being a separate piece held externally to the barrel, and below the line of pressure, as in the Lefaucheux. The extractor is a simple hook or tooth, which grips the flange of the cartridge and withdraws it along the opening breech. The cartridge then disappears endwise down a hole through the centre of the stock.

The central-fire principle is now generally adapted to everything in firearms requiring strength, precision, and certainty of ignition. We even find it applied to "alarm guns," for disappointing and detecting poachers. It remained for Mr. Burgess, of Malvern Wells, to bring out this desideratum, and it is an invention of great importance to game preservers, and largely used by them. The gun, which is a simple chamber fastened to a fixture, is set on full cock, when a poacher, a fox, or a dog running against it, sets off the charge. The report is excessively loud, and carries terror to the heart of the midnight prowler, but too often indebted to a low public-house for his supply of Dutch courage.

Dress is of vast importance to a true sportsman—we mean the "cool hand" and "steady eye" who makes sport a profession and studies the surroundings of his "beat." He it is who assimilates his dress to that of the moor, and picks the patterns of his habiliments from the truly natural heather mixtures of MacDougall in Sackville Street of "tartan" renown. He it is who gets a pair of well fitting "Idstone" boots from our old friend at Temple Bar, in which he can do his walking with ease and pleasure to himself and friends. *He* is never objurgated by rivals for lagging, and told fiercely to "come on" when they would much rather "run him in" to the lodge or box, and sentence him to "whisky and cigars" for the remainder of his stay. There, in solitude and disgust, he will find ample time to apply Elliman's Embrocation (the best remedy for sprains and bruises we know of) to his inflamed feet and ankles, and vow never to commit such suicidal folly again. Sport this season, alike at deer, grouse, and partridge, has been above the average, and many readers of this magazine will have tested the merits of the various accurate and highly finished weapons we have described in these pages; if we have given them a greater insight into their mechanism than they possessed before, with a view to each sportsman knowing the intrinsic value of his own gun, we have accomplished our purpose in writing "The Sporting Breech-Loader and its Origin."

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLANTS OF BARTON," "THE VALLEY OF POPPIES," &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN WHICH SUSAN TELLS HER TERRIBLE STORY.

"POOR dear soul; why, I should not ha' known you," said Mrs. Titsy to Susan Harley, who sat in Dr. Johnson's easy chair, supported by several pillows.

"I dare say not," said Susan feebly.

"Dear, dear, what must ha' been the sufferings thou's gone through!"

"Poor lass! poor lass!" said Tom Titsy, while Cæsar insinuated his nose between Susan's hand and knee.

"To think of the poor dear fellow being murdered! It gives me the shivers! Well, I never did like that Magar."

"Mother!" exclaimed Tom, "don't say that, it's just what everybody will say: and besides I've heard you stand up for him."

"Be quiet, Tom," replied Mrs. Titsy; "let Susan tell us all about it."

Susan sat gazing into the fire, while Tom's big rough dog blinked his eyes at her.

"Do you feel strong enough, Susan, lass, to talk to us? If not, thou knows we can wait."

"Yes, yes," said Susan, looking into Tom's face with a kindly expression and motioning him to a chair.

"I saw Magar when I was in Liverpool."

"Dear, dear," said Mrs. Titsy, smoothing her apron and preparing to become an attentive listener.

"I did not think so until lately; but I know now that it must have been him. He was disguised, and talking to a bad-looking man who came on board as a passenger."

"Don't fluster yourself, lass," said Tom.

"That man was engaged to push me overboard."

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Mrs. Titsy.

"I know now that he was, though I did not know it then."

Tom set his teeth, and wished he had the scoundrel by the throat.

"He spoke to me more than once in a friendly way, pointed out to me the Welsh coast, and told me when we were passing Cape Clear. He was a blear-eyed, ill-looking man, but he tried to make himself agreeable—for the purpose, no doubt, of putting me into the sea."

"Damn him!" said Tom, half rising from his seat.

"There now, do be quiet," said Tom's mother, "and don't let us hear such language as that when we should be saying our prayers and thanking Heaven for this deliverance."

"We had a pleasant passage until we caught sight of land, which they said was the shore of Long Island; but here the ship tossed a good deal, and the man I tell you of was continually close to me. He wanted me to look over the side to see some dolphins."

Tom could not keep his seat.

"When we were just entering New York Bay he got more friendly than ever. It was evening. The sea was smoother, but the ship seemed to roll a good deal. The pilot had come on board, and some of the sailors had just before been lowered in a boat—I don't know what for. It was getting dusk, and I went to the side of the vessel to see more distinctly a sight which the man I tell you of said I should never forget. I stood upon a coil of ropes. Suddenly the vessel gave a great lurch, and I felt as if I were lifted off my feet and pushed over."

"Lord have mercy on us!" exclaimed Mrs. Titsy. "And did you go into the water?"

"No; thank God! The boat which had been lowered was going to be used again shortly, and was only partly drawn up the vessel's side."

"Capital!" said Tom, rubbing his hands, "and you fell into it?"

"I did," said Susan, "and was not much hurt. When I got on deck again there was a noise between the man I tell you of and a sailor. The man was taking his oath he did not do it. The sailor asked me if the fellow hadn't pushed me. I said I thought not, and I did think not. The man said he had tried to save me. The sailor said he could almost swear the brute pushed me over; but as I took his part, the row ended in the sailor swearing a good deal, and advising me to keep clear of the fellow, which I did. The next day, an hour before we landed, he was taken into custody for a robbery in Liverpool. The police had followed him in a steamer which must have passed us in the night, and the detective came on board in the bay."

"And didn't you think, then, that he had pushed you, Susan, lass?" inquired Tom.

"No! why should he wish to harm me? I have thought so since. I know now that he was engaged to do so. I am sure of it."

"Have you ever seen him since?" Mrs. Titsy asked.

"Never."

"Should you know him again?"

"Amongst a thousand," Susan replied.

"Well, go on, lass—about the landing?" said Tom.

"I looked for Silas," went on Susan in an undertone. "You may be sure I did not know what to do when I could not find him. I made inquiries. I mentioned the address which Magar had given me. There was no address in his letters, because he had moved about so much, he said, and I was to direct to the post-office. Nobody knew the address. I was half mad. People were running and pushing about. It was all I could do to keep my luggage. At last I told a good-natured looking woman my troubles, and by her advice I was taken to an hotel, and the next day I put an advertisement in a newspaper. I wandered about half the night, near where the ferry-boat from the vessel landed the passengers; but no Silas, no Silas."

Susan's voice faltered, and she hid her face in her hands. Tom stole up to her chair and laid his hand gently upon her shoulder.

"There, there, my lass, don't give way; there, there," said Tom.

"Have a little drop of something warm," said Mrs. Titsy, rummaging amongst some bottles in the oak corner cupboard and mixing a decoction of which Susan was induced to sip.

"Nowhere could I find him. I could not sleep night nor day. I could not believe he had deserted me."

"No, lass, he wouldn't have done that, wouldn't Silas; I'll say that for him," said Tom.

"The advertisement did no good. The police did no good. The post-office did no good. Days went on, weeks, months. I could do nothing. At last my money was gone; and, the Lord forgive me! I began to think I had been duped; for why, or for what, I could not think. But Mrs. Gompson said I should be. I thought of that. I remembered, too, what Magar had told me about Silas being a beggar, and in his power."

"When did he tell thee that, lass?" inquired Tom.

"I never heard that before," said Mrs. Titsy.

"No, you would not. I told nobody; but I wished to go all the more for that. At last I thought Silas was ruined, as Magar said, and that he was ashamed to meet me, or that he had done something wrong; I thought a thousand things. I often sat down to write to you all; but my pride would not let me. I could not bear it to be said I had been deceived. People shook their heads and warned me when I went away; I could not bear the triumph they would have in knowing that they had prophesied right; I should have had no pity."

"Susan, Susan, *no* pity," said Mrs. Titsy, reproachfully.

"Yes, yes, from you; and *yours* I could not bear. Oh, Tom! have you forgiven me?"

This appeal to Tom fairly brought tears into his eyes. He took the wasted hand extended to him and kissed it; after which he was obliged to go to the door and pretend to release a pigeon from his capacious pocket. When he returned Susan continued her story.

"My feelings would not let me write. I prayed for you all, and at last resigned myself to my fate. I went out to service; I lost two places because I was not cheerful. Whenever I had a holiday I wandered about looking for Silas. Christmas days were the hardest to me. I thought my heart would break many a time. By-and-by I grew more resigned, and after being two years in two places, I got with an English family who kept a store, and there I lived more peacefully and contentedly."

"And did you never get any letters from us?" asked Mrs. Titsy.

"Never."

"What a plot it is! what a plot it is!" said Tom.

"One day, when I had begun to be a little more like myself, I thought I would paper out a trunk that I had at poor Mr. Martyn's. I got a London newspaper which master sometimes received, and then the awful light burst upon me."

"There, gently, lass, gently," said Tom, noticing Susan's growing excitement.

"I noticed the word 'Middleton,' and I read it till my brain was on fire. I was nearly mad. I raved. Oh! don't be afraid, Mrs. Titsy—mother—for you have been a mother to me, ungrateful that I am. Don't be alarmed, Tom. It is all over now. There, you see, I am quite calm again. Read that."

Mrs. Titsy took from Susan a carefully preserved though soiled extract from a newspaper, and read as follows:—

EXTRAORDINARY DISCOVERY: SUSPICIOUS AFFAIR.—Our readers will remember that some time since it was decided by the county authorities to widen and rebuild Middleton Bridge. The increased traffic along the London road, consequent upon the gradual opening up of the great coal fields of Tipwell, had rendered the bridge unsafe, and on the recommendation of the Bridge Committee, and in consideration of the voluntary assistance of some of the wealthy inhabitants of Middleton, it was resolved to purchase a large piece of land on either side for the purpose of widening the bridge and making a handsome structure worthy of the borough and county too. Mr. Alderman Magar for some time strenuously opposed the scheme; but when he found how strongly the burgesses were in favour of it, and how handsomely some of them had offered to subscribe towards it, he liberally came forward and made the authorities a present of his famous old corn mill, which at the outset they had proposed to purchase at £3,000, being determined to obtain an Act of Parliament, if necessary, to compel owners of property on either side to consent to the proposed improvement. We have previously expressed our high sense of Mr. Magar's liberality, which is duly appreciated by the town. Let us not further wander from the subject in hand. On Monday last, when the masons were removing the last stones of the old mill, a labourer struck his axe upon what appeared to be a vault. Some few Roman coins had been found in the course of the work, and the labourer thinking he had come upon something still more valuable, said nothing of his imaginary good luck except to an old friend, and they agreed to open the vault after the other labourers left work. Their horror and disappointment may be imagined when we state that a ghastly skeleton of a man was the result of their secret search. The body had evidently been interred in quick lime. There was a terrible fracture on the skull, and medical examination goes to prove that the remains are those of a full-grown man, who had evidently been foully murdered. There were no clothes nor linen found; but a ring or galvanic loop was afterwards discovered with the letter "H" upon it. The medical authorities cannot agree as to how long these bones have been lying there. Dr. Smythe is of opinion that they have been interred upwards of fifty years; while Mr. Jones, surgeon, thinks they have not been buried more than ten years. The affair has created a great deal of sensation. Some of the oldest inhabitants in the borough remember the mysterious disappearance of a townsman about thirty years ago; but at present no further light has been thrown upon the affair. The mill has been in the possession of Mr. Alderman Magar for about fifteen years, prior to which the late Mr. Smithson had it for more than half a century. Mr. Magar has himself offered a reward of £50 to any person who can identify the body or give conclusive evidence as to the murderer. On Tuesday evening an inquest was held on the remains, when evidence bearing out the above facts was adduced. The jury returned a verdict of "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown." The police are using strenuous efforts to fathom this horrible mystery. It is to be hoped that persons who have relatives missing will communicate with the police. We trust that through the publicity which will be given to the case by the press the murdered man will be avenged. We have some hopes that the ring may prove to be of more importance than the jury seemed inclined to accord to it. Every effort should be used, at any rate, to find the party who sold the ring. "Murder will out," and justice will claim the guilty sooner or later.—*Middleton Star.*

Susan sobbed while Mrs. Titsy read, though every word had long been impressed upon her memory.

"Can you wonder at my feelings on reading that paragraph? It was my own ring they found. Silas took it from my finger the week before he was to have gone to America."

"Well, by gum! Dear me! What a world it is," exclaimed Tom, striding up and down the kitchen, and then stopping suddenly before Susan. "I set that bit of news up myself. It was the first paragraph as I ever did put into type all through. By gum! And to think as I was tracking the murderer all the time. Why, it's enough to make one daft to think of it!"

"And to think of that Magar," said Mrs. Titsy.

"You used to like him, mother," said Tom, with the faintest symptom of a reproach in his manner.

"Never, Tom—how can you say so?" replied Mrs. Titsy.

"Well, no matter, mother, we are all agreed about him now; and that psalm-singing thief, Jennings, must have had a hand in it."

"That is true," said Mrs. Titsy, "for don't you mind, Tom, how he used to read letters which he pretended he had received from Silas?"

"Aye, and from Susan too, for that matter. By gum, it's been a deep-laid scheme."

At this moment Dr. Johnson entered the house, and the strange story of the day had to be recounted to him; his principal comment upon the narrative had reference to the old calendar on the mantelpiece, upon which "November 15" was still prominent through the pencil marks made on that fatal and never-to-be-forgotten Sunday of Collinson's disappearance.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW.

THE scene shifts to the highways and byways of Cartown. It is a cold, dreary afternoon. The snow is white and hard on the earth. The wind picks up loose feathery particles of the snow and drives them hither and thither in wavy drifts of white. It is winter over all the land. The cold is biting and bitter. It attacks you at all points and enters your very soul like iron. There is no avoiding it.

On the road leading to Cartown there is a solitary wayfarer who marches on defiant of wind and weather. He is meanly clad, but his fur cap and tightly fitting coat give him a comfortable appearance nevertheless. A small bundle is strapped upon his shoulders, and he carries a heavy stick. The wind receives him, at every bend in the road, with an icy gust, which he parries with his arm drawn over his face. Despite the icy shower of snow crystals that meets him he is victorious; for he trudges on with a lithe swing in his gait.

The traveller is Jacob Martyn. You might have expected to find him downcast and despondent. Not so. There are marks of care upon his young face, but pride and energy shine out of the full searching eye, while the compressed lip and well-cut chin give additional evidence of mental and physical vigour.

Arrived at the entrance to Cartown, Jacob pulls his cap over his brow and pauses upon the bridge. The river, which had sparkled in the sun when he first saw it, is now silent as the tomb. It is frozen into lumps, as if its life had been stopped in the height of a wild gambol of pleasure. Jacob's fine imagination at once sees in the picture a likeness to his own frozen hopes and prospects; but in spite of himself he cannot shut out from his mind the thought that some morning the sun will shine upon the river and release the imprisoned waters.

Instead of going straight on into Cartown, Jacob takes a bypath which leads him to a public-house at the back of the principal street—the very house in which Mr. Spawling undertook to protect and assist Spenzonian Whiffler in the days of Petroski the clown.

Lifting the latch, Jacob enters, the wind rushing after him with a bitter hissing. Unslinging his bundle, Jacob seats himself before a great crackling wood and coal fire.

"It's fine and cawd" says the landlord, a stolid, soldierly looking fellow of fifty.

Jacob makes no reply. He puts his feet upon the fender with the air of one who has taken possession of the hearth and has a right to it.

"I said it was a cawd day!" shouts the landlord, with undisguised annoyance at his guest's indifference.

"Indeed!" says Jacob, without turning his head; "the news is somewhat stale. What can I have to eat?"

"Supposing I say 'nowt,' Mr. Surly?" is the reply.

"I can pay for what I have," responds Jacob, turning round and looking at the host for the first time.

"Did I say thou couldn't?"

"Well, well, let us have no fuss."

"Who wants to?"

"Not I."

"Then be civil, and thou'll get civility in return," says the landlord, taking up a huge poker, and raising up the wood on the fire until the sparks leap up the chimney in a swarm, like a cloud of golden bees.

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"I'm hungry," says Jacob, "and have forgotten how to pay compliments; I dare say I'm a brute, but I didn't mean to be uncivil. There! Now what can I have?"

The iron has evidently entered the soul of Jacob. The bitter experiences of life have come upon him in his youth.

"Well," replies the landlord, "if thou'rt civil, thou can have some Irish stew and the best glass of beer in Cartown, and be served by a chap as fought at Waterloo."

"A soldier!" says Jacob quickly, "and a Waterloo veteran!"

"Right you are," says the man.

"Sir," says Jacob, "pray forgive my rudeness; I ask you ten thousand pardons."

"All right; say no more. It's my business to serve you," said the host; and he disappeared, leaving Jacob in the full enjoyment of the roaring fire.

Presently, having done full justice to the *cuisine* of the establishment, Jacob ordered a jug of hot ale, and with an air of politeness which astonished the landlord, begged that he would join him in disposing of the same.

"A man's manners always improve after dinner," said the host.

"And his strength also," said Jacob, smiling. "When a fellow is cold and hungry, his manners are apt to get frozen."

"Yes, you must have been very hungry, master, and cold," said the host. "Here's your health."

"And better manners to me, eh?" said Jacob, his face beaming with good humour.

"Certainly," said the old soldier. "But I'm not so sure that you're reight about a chap as is hungry not being strong. I remember fighting a man of the 20th on an empty stomach; and, by jingo! I should have killed him if he hadna shut up after th' second round."

"Yes, one feels vicious and brutal when one is very hungry," said Jacob. "By the way, can you tell me anything about the public school here?"

"Should think I can," said the soldier, tossing off another glass of his own hot and pungent liquor, which scented the room with ginger and nutmeg.

"Do you know Mr. Spawling?"

"Aye, God bless him, I do," said the landlord, his face relaxing into a genial smile. "Like some other good folk, he's gone."

"Gone!" exclaimed Jacob; "you don't mean that he is dead?"

"No, not as I knows on."

"Thank God for that," said Jacob, fervently.

"Amen," responded the landlord.

"You mean that he has left this part of the country."

"Ah, that's what I mean," said the landlord, looking at Jacob with a puzzled, inquiring air. "Why, where have I seen you before, master?"

"Here, perhaps, in Cartown," said Jacob; "but tell me, my friend, tell me about the schoolmaster."

"Gone away nigh six months back."

"Where?"

"To London they say, but nobody seems to know for certain."

"And Spen, the—the—"

"The actor lad?" said the landlord.

"Yes; the boy who——"

"The schoolmaster took to in this very house, about ten years ago," continued the landlord; "he's a man now."

"Yes, the same," said Jacob; "Spenzonian Whiffler he called himself."

"Ah, he was a rum 'un, and no mistake. Well, he's gone, too; all the lot's gone in fact."

"What! the housekeeper too?" said Jacob, starting to his feet.

"Yes, and th' housekeeper too," said the landlord.

Jacob put on his cap, buttoned his coat, put half-a-crown upon the table, strode about the room, and sighed deeply, the landlord with a glass stopped short in its way to his lips staring at him.

"Look here," said Jacob; "I shall sleep here to-night. I'll pay for what I've had: if there's any change give it to me when I come back. I'm not rich, but I can pay. Take care of my bundle."

And without another word Jacob rushed out of the house.

"Well, I don't know about that," soliloquised the landlord; "perhaps the beds will be all engaged. We're not called on to take in lunatics, and if thou'rt not very like one my name isn't Bill; he's regular crazy, or else in some trouble. Why, he's left his glass full!"

This latter fact quite confirmed the landlord's views, and pondering over the circumstance he laid down his own empty glass, put forth his hand in a vague, puzzled way, carried Jacob's to his lips, and set it down again quite empty.

Jacob hurried back over the bridge and into the white fields, and on over snowy hedge and frozen ditch, leaving a long track behind him, where no other feet had pressed the virgin snow.

It had been his intention to see Dorothy privately at Cartown, and if possible to learn from her whether Lucy's love had changed. He feared for his fate because he had received no letter, from Lucy's own dear self nor from Dorothy or Spen, in reply to communications which he had sent to each. Though he had been wandering about the country for more than a year, obtaining occasional employment in various capacities, he had made arrangements for the receipt of letters. He knew the Cartown postmaster, and had written to him saying that he had instructed some correspondents to address him at the Cartown post-office, and requesting that these letters might be forwarded to him from time to time, according to circumstances. The postmaster had written a kind note in return, gladly undertaking to see that his correspondent's wishes were carried out. Meanwhile Jacob had written a long letter to Lucy, detailing his misfortunes, but telling her that her love would support him under his afflictions, and that so long as he had that bright talisman to cheer him, he would struggle on with the hope that the day was not far distant when a brave reliance on industry and perseverance and an implicit trust in God would bring their reward. Then he told her how to address her letters to him in the future. He wrote thus the very day upon which he left Middleton. A week afterwards he received a letter from Spen, in which Whiffler told him that shortly he would be going to London, and that if Jacob ever journeyed to Cartown and did not find him there, he must write to him "To be left at the General Post Office, London." Jacob, thinking that Spen was romancing as usual, was in no way prepared for the breaking up of the Spawling establishment. He had written to the Cartown post-office and found that no other letters had been addressed to him; he had written to Spen and received no reply; he had also despatched a letter to Dorothy as well as to Lucy. At length he began to believe in the saying about people being friends so long as the sun shines, and deserting each other in the darkness of poverty. But he was determined to satisfy himself concerning Lucy, and thus it was that he came to Cartown. His pride would not let him show himself to any one but Dorothy. With her he could have carried matters with a high hand. But the intelligence which the landlord at the public-house had given him disarranged his plans, and excited fears and forebodings that impelled him onwards through the snow to the house of the Cantrills.

Jacob did not pause until he reached the wood. The loneliness of the place, made more apparent by the moaning of the wind among the trees, appalled him. There were the marks of other footsteps in the path that led to the well-known cottage. Could they be hers? Robinson Crusoe did not look with more curiosity and interest at the print in the sand than did Jacob at the traces of some person who had passed on before him. He contrasted the marks with the impressions made by himself. The feet that had gone before were much smaller than his own. How his heart beat! He hurried on faster, thinking he might perhaps overtake Lucy! On he went, until he saw a figure enter the garden in front of Cantrill's cottage. It was a woman, and about Lucy's height, wrapped up in a dark red cloak—it must be Lucy! No—there was an indescribable grace in Lucy's movements that was wanting here. He concealed himself behind the gate-post at the entrance to the garden. The cloaked figure turned half round, and Jacob saw that it was the gipsy girl whom he had met in the wood when walking with Lucy. Then he saw that the cottage was deserted; the shutters were closed; no smoke went up from the chimney. Even Jacob's desperate energy and schooled will gave way before this realisation of the forebodings that had fallen upon him when he hurried away from the inn at Cartown: he reeled, with an exclamation of pain, threw himself upon the garden step, and sobbed as though his great heart would burst.

Setting down a little basket half filled with herbs which even the snow had not concealed from her, the gipsy ran to Jacob's assistance. With the quick perception of her sex and tribe she recognised him immediately, and knew, as well as if he had told her, that Lucy was the immediate cause of his grief.

It was long ere the gipsy girl could induce Jacob to rise, and when he did comply with her urgent appeal he stood up crushed in heart and spirit, shattered more beneath a fear of misfortune than by its actual realisation. We all suffer more from imaginary than from real calamities. It seemed to him as if Fate had left him alone with Woe.

"When did they leave?—when did *she* go?" he inquired at length, with well-acted calmness.

"A long time since," said the gipsy girl.

"How?"

"In a grand carriage that waited for her in the road near our tents," said the gipsy, watching intently the effect of her words.

"By force?" asked Jacob, excitedly, reanimated by a gleam of hope that Lucy was prevented against her will from communicating with him.

"Force!" exclaimed the gipsy. "When a country girl leans on the arm of a grand gentleman, and is conducted to a carriage in company with her mother and rides away smiling, that doesn't look like force."

Jacob compressed his lips, and groaned inwardly.

"My dream is over, then," he said bitterly. "Oh, my God! have I deserved all this?" The words hissed between his teeth as if his soul were in rebellion against the Deity.

"Sir—sir! you take it too much to heart," said the gipsy girl, alarmed at Jacob's wild looks.

"Heart!" exclaimed Jacob. "I had a heart once. It has been a target for all the fiends in hell! Go away, my girl; leave me."

Mother, father, home, fortune, all gone, Jacob's was indeed a sad fate; but even his dark life had been illuminated by the love of this girl, whose voice had filled his childhood with an everlasting charm. The only real happiness he had ever known had been in her society; all his hopes centred in her; she was the only encouragement he had to work and hope and strive; he clung to her love with the desperation of one who was utterly destitute of friend, home, or fortune; he had doubted her, and that was torture; but to have his doubts endorsed, and so cruelly endorsed as they had been, was an almost unbearable misery. He leaned against the well-known gate, gazing at the house, his thoughts wandering after the grand carriage to London; wandering to the great city which he had never seen—the city of wealth and fame and wickedness, the city of broken hopes and of realised ambition, the great crowded, friendless city whither he had hoped some day to have carried Lucy in triumph, a conqueror in the lists of fame.

"You saw her go?" he said, fiercely turning upon the gipsy girl.

"I did," was the stern reply.

"Was the gentleman young?"

The gipsy nodded, and smiled a half pitying smile, which said more than words. Jacob hated her for it.

"You lie!" Jacob exclaimed. "You are a wicked libeller, you"——

The girl put her hand over Jacob's mouth.

"You must not say that to me. Is it not enough that she has gone without telling you she was going? Come to our tents and rest."

"Forgive me for my harsh words," said Jacob, "and go away—leave me, leave me."

CHAPTER XXV.

A STRANGE ADVENTURE.

Miriam did not obey the imperious command which closed the last chapter. On the contrary, she induced Jacob to accompany her to the gipsy encampment. She led him away like a child. After his outburst of disappointment and grief he became calm and silent. For the time being he was indifferent about his movements. It was a dull sort of relief to walk. The wind had subsided. Evening had come on clear and bright. There were already stars in the sky when he passed down the path from the cottage with Miriam.

The gipsies had fixed their winter quarters at a short distance from the spot where Jacob had seen their tents in the old days. Miriam conducted him through the wood to a deep and shaded valley, that very dale which he had visited on his first day at Cartown. It looked marvellously strange now lying before him under the winter sky, with mock-yellow stars down in the ravine. Arrived at their destination, Jacob found himself in quite a formidable settlement of tents and houses on wheels—of the latter there were several with lights shining through well-curtained windows. Standing apart from the rest was a roomy-looking hut covered with thatch and furze. You could smell the wood faggots that were burning on the hearth. A gleam of light came through the wooden doorway as Miriam thrust open the door.

"A friend of the Cantrills, who claims our hospitality," she said, with a combined air of appeal and command.

Jacob bowed his head before a motley group of men and women who were sitting and lying before the fire.

"Who is he?" asked a bearded fellow, rising and approaching Miriam.

"A wayfarer and a son of sorrow and misfortune," said Jacob, touched by the picturesque interior.

"You are welcome," said the gipsy, looking into Jacob's face; "I have seen you in these parts before."

At a signal from Miriam, Jacob took a seat in the warmest part of the hut, and a man who had been gazing intently at him since his first entrance gathered up a cloak, and went out.

"The Baron doesn't like strangers," said a voice near Jacob; to which another answered, "He'll not be so nice when he skowers the cramprings in Dinsley."

"Ah! ah! the devil claw thee, but thou'll be there before him."

"Muffle your patter; he's only here with his swag to dodge grabbing; his tale won't fadge; it's bam; he'll be at home with the jigger dubbers yet."

This conversation was carried on, in a low confidential style, by two men, who were lying on a bundle of matted straw. Though he understood but little of the gipsy cant in which they were partly speaking, Jacob could glean from it that the man who had left the hut was comparatively a stranger among them, and that there was one of the tribe who had a poor opinion of him.

A rude fireplace had been constructed at one end of the hut. The wood fire and a quaintly-contrived lamp that swung from the ceiling lit up the hut with a lurid glow, reddening the dark faces of the company, making the white teeth of the man who was laughing at the garrulous "patter" of the "Baron's" critic still whiter; casting into shadow the "furzy" corners of the apartment; bringing into relief various rough seats and couches, covered with coats and mats and thick drapery, and giving the whole scene the appearance of a set of deftly arranged accessories to heighten the beauty of Miriam, and make up an artistic picture of a gipsy queen.

A red cloak, which had previously covered the girl's black hair, was now flung carelessly over her shoulders. Her thick cloth dress was short enough to disclose a pair of beautifully rounded ankles, protected by woollen hose. She wore buckles in her thick shoes, but her bright eyes outshone the sparkles which the fire extracted from the well-polished metal.

"Now, cheer up; this will do you good," said Miriam, handing Jacob a hot potation that smelt strong and spicy.

Jacob, who felt weak and weary, nodded his thanks, and Miriam returned his gaze with a look of complete satisfaction.

Soon afterwards Lucy's lover was fast asleep, and dreaming, not of the black-eyed beauty who when he closed his eyes leaned over his couch and covered him with a rug, but of a fair, light-haired creature, by whom he was led a weird chase over hill and dale, through valleys and over rivers; until at last there was a loud mocking laugh, he fell headlong over a precipice—and awoke.

With the imaginary fall Jacob's dream ended; but he started up at its seeming reality and uttered a cry of pain, whereupon a heavy hand grasped him by the shoulder, and the man who had left the hut when he and Miriam entered it said, "Hush—be quiet, for your life."

Jacob looked round. He found himself lying in a corner of the hut alone. He could hear voices hard by, but the hut was evidently silenced for the night. He must have slept some hours.

"You are safe and in the hands of a friend, but we are both in danger," said the man.

"I have heard your voice before," said Jacob.

"Follow me," said the man.

Jacob hesitated.

"Fool!" hissed the man. "Take this, and fear no harm."

Jacob grasped the pistol which the stranger thrust into his hand.

"Will you trust me now? Another minute and we are lost—come!"

Half believing that he was still in a dream, Jacob arose and followed his guide. They passed two or three tents. The lights were out in the houses on wheels. It was a bright starlight night. The white, shining snow seemed to give forth a light of its own. When they were at a safe distance from the gipsy village Jacob's midnight disturber halted suddenly.

"You heard them speak of the Baron?" he said.

"Yes."

"It amused you, no doubt."

"I do not understand you," said Jacob.

"Jacob Martyn," said the man, "you know me."

"Good heavens, yes!" said Jacob, "now that you speak in your natural voice. It is Jennings."

"Enough," said Jennings.

"What means this masquerade?"

"Jacob Martyn, I once tried hard to serve you. As Heaven is my judge, I strove to avert that smash at Middleton."

"I believe you."

"Have I, then, any claim on your consideration?"

"Certainly. But why all this mystery? Why drag me out of a warm corner into the cold (Jacob shivered) to ask me so silly a question?"

"Do you mean to say that you are not here as a spy?"

Jennings turned sharply upon him as he asked the question, thrusting his face close to Jacob's and gripping him tightly by the arm.

"A spy!" exclaimed Jacob.

"A spy!" hissed Jennings; "to track me and take me."

"Track you! take you! what do you mean? You must be mad; that can be the only explanation of this strange conduct. Hands off, Jennings!"

"Swear it," said Jennings.

"Don't be a fool," said Jacob, thrusting the man from him and assuming an attitude of defence.

"Pooh!" said Jennings, "there is nothing in that pistol, but in this there is a bit of lead that would settle you before you could say 'Jack Robinson.'"

"I don't want to say 'Jack Robinson.' Let me go. You are playing a very poor trick upon an old friend."

"I begin to believe you," said Jennings. "Here, take this scarf, tie it round your neck; you are cold. How long is it since you were in Middleton? Answer my questions, and we will return."

There was something so firm and earnest in the manner of Jennings that Jacob felt bound to comply.

"I have not been in Middleton since my father's death."

"Where have you been since then?"

"Everywhere: but let us go back to the fire."

"In good time. What have you been doing?"

"Working."

"At what?"

"Writing, teaching, printing."

"Newspapers?" This latter interrogation was made sharply, and with the speaker's hand once more on Jacob's arm.

"No; with the exception of a poem in the corner of a Darnforth paper."

"How long is that since?"

"Months. It is called 'A Dream of Love;' would you like to hear it?"

Jacob laughed a grim, sarcastic laugh.

"Will you swear you know nothing of what has transpired at Middleton for six months?"

"Yes, madman; anything you like, if you will let me get back to the fire."

"Nothing of that discovery at Magar's mill?" said Jennings, his hand trembling on his pistol, his face once more close to Jacob's—so close that Jacob felt his hot breath, and saw the wild gaze of his sunken eyes.

"No."

"On your honour?"

"On my honour."

"I believe you. Let us return; we can talk as we go."

"Now for my explanation. I am an outlaw. I have made money by criminal practices; I have cheated Magar; the police want me—now do you understand my disguise?"

"Yes, and you may rely on it with that other voice of yours."

"Will you make me a solemn vow for 'auld lang syne;' for the sake of what I tried to do for your father?"

"Name it."

"As you hope for prosperity in this world and happiness in the next, you will not, by word or deed, aid or assist in my capture. Swear me that on your honour and on this Testament (producing a book)."

"It is a great oath."

"Do you reject it?"

"No; why should I? Why should misfortune run down misfortune? There are worse crimes than cheating Magar."

"Will you swear?"

Jacob repeated the oath and kissed the book.

"Signed, sealed, and delivered," said Jennings, pocketing the book. "I keep the Testament with me because my mother gave it to me when I was a boy. I wonder it does not scorch my pocket out and set me ablaze with the fires of hell; but no matter, we do not make our own destiny, it is all chalked out for us—we can't help it."

"And is this mountebank nonsense all that is to repay me for my nocturnal promenade? You said we were in danger."

"I thought *I* was in danger," said Jennings in the other voice. "I am the Baron once more."

"Is your lordship married?" said Jacob.

"My lordship is not," said the Baron; "if I had any sentiment in my soul I should have shot you for the interest which that girl Miriam takes in you."

"Who is she?"

"Our queen-elect; and a fine creature to boot. I suppose you intend to join us, and go in for the throne, eh?"

"Even that might suit my present mood," said Jacob.

By this time they had reached the hut; Miriam was standing at the door.

CHAPTER XXVI.

RETURNS TO THE HISTORY OF LUCY; GLANCES BACK TO THE DAYS OF HER FATHER; AND DESCRIBES THE CONTENTS OF AN IMPORTANT PACKET WHICH CREATED A PROFOUND SENSATION IN PARK LANE.

TAKING up the history of Lucy where Dorothy Cantrill left off, it now becomes necessary that the reader should know what became of her father, and her father's father. The story may be briefly told.

When the British Guards dashed into the Bois de Bossu, and drove out the French, a lieutenant fell mortally wounded; and the soldiers of Napoleon, on the way to Waterloo, some two or three days afterwards trampled over the shallow but glorious grave of Lieutenant Thornton, next to whose cold heart lay a portrait of Lucy's mother.

A week prior to this event the poor lieutenant, who had a presentiment that he would not live to see the end of the engagements which were expected, gave his servant a packet, with directions that in case his gloomy predictions were fulfilled he would find out Mortimer House, Park Lane, London, and deliver it into his uncle's hands.

When the servant reached his native city in the West of England, he made love to a buxom landlady, won her heart and her business, and forgot to deliver the packet of his dead master. Six months afterwards he remembered that it was in his old trunk under the bed; and then he determined to start off to execute his neglected commission: but he got drunk while his good intentions were still warm, and six months more passed away. And so the time rolled on, month after month, year after year, until the unfaithful servant could get drunk no more. Eventually he "drained the flowing bowl" to the dregs, and died of a surfeit thereof, leaving behind him a still marriageable widow, and a reputation for being a "jolly fellow." He was succeeded by a more sober and conscientious person, who made the widow a wife for the third time, rubbed out the former landlord's name from over the door, pulled out the trunk from under the bed, and discovered the packet which his predecessor had neglected. The "blushing bride" had heard something of the "big letter," and handed it to the "happy bridegroom," who had once been a solicitor's clerk, which had made him somewhat methodical in matters of letter writing. The official-looking envelope brought back to him, even in the fulness of his marriage bliss, remembrances of sitting on a high stool to copy letters, and leaving it to see that they were properly posted: so after carefully scrutinising the letter, he ordered Tim, the pot-boy, to have it posted, but not until he had added after the name of Mr. Thornton, in case death might have carried off that gentleman, "his heirs, exors., or assns."

And thus at last was Lieutenant Thornton's letter delivered.

The gentleman who received the packet was the brother of the dead lieutenant's father. The latter gentleman had died, when the news of Waterloo was tossing on the sea off Dover, in ignorance of the death of his son, whose name had not, strange to say, appeared in the lists of either killed, wounded, or missing, so far as either father or uncle had seen. More than six months prior to his death the angry old man had, by a codicil to the will in which his son had been cut off without even the traditional shilling, almost reinstated him in his former position, dividing between his brother and his son the magnificent property of which he died possessed, the brother being left sole trustee.

Just about the time that the mysterious packet arrived by post, Cavendish Thornton, Esquire, had been holding a conversation with his lawyer relative to the property of his nephew. He had long since ascertained from the Horse Guards that the lieutenant was killed at Quatre Bras; and though some years had elapsed since his brother died, he was not happy in retaining property which had not been bequeathed to him. He had understood that his nephew was a father, and had instituted some private inquiries respecting his supposed child, but without any satisfactory result; and the trustee was still in duty bound, as his lawyer advised him, to retain property to which nobody had a greater right. Though he had much of that family pride which had so strongly influenced his brother when the young soldier married Lucy's mother, yet he combined the highest feelings of honour and honesty therewith; and his lawyer found it a difficult task to make him feel that he was not outraging any of these virtues by keeping possession of the fine property to which he had no doubt a high claim. "We have made proper inquiries after the child," said the lawyer, "and find it an imaginary one: we have advertised for the next of kin to your nephew, and find, though we have had a few speculative answers, that *you* are the next of kin."

The mysterious packet put an end to these periodical discussions. It contained the last will and testament of James Cavendish Thornton, lieutenant in his Majesty's army, wherein he bequeathed everything of which he died possessed, or of which he might become possessed under the will of his father, James William Cavendish Thornton, gentleman, of Mortimer House, Park Lane, London, or in any other way whatsoever, and of any property whatsoever, real or personal, whether in lands or money, houses, plate, furniture, linen, or jewellery, deeds, scrip, and all other valuables whatsoever and wheresover, to his daughter, Lucy Cavendish Thornton, who was left in the custody of certain persons named Cantrill, at and in the neighbourhood of Middleton, the relatives of testator's beloved wife, deceased, Lucy Thornton.

The will was written on a sheet of letter paper in the lieutenant's own writing, and was duly signed and witnessed. It was accompanied by a letter addressed

"To my Father if he be still living."

Mr. Thornton, who had dismissed the lawyer, and called in his confidential valet to make some inquiries respecting "these Cantrills," having made up his mind to open and read it at once, asked his advice as to the propriety of examining the letter.

"It is hardly for me to say what is the correct thing to do, sir," said Allen, gravely.

Allen had been in the family for many years, had, in short, grown fat and wheezy and arrogant in the service. He was now something between a secretary and a butler to his master, who, since the death of his brother, had talked a great deal to Allen about old times, and had twice sent for Allen after dinner, when there were no visitors, to drink a glass of wine with him.

"You see, Allen, there is something very extraordinary in this case. It is a letter from the dead to the dead."

Allen wiped two drops of perspiration from his manly forehead, and with a shudder that seemed like the action of a small earthquake beneath his waistcoat, said (wonderful Allen!) "Yes it is."

"Then, do you think I should open it?" said Mr. Thornton, eyeing it curiously through his gold-rimmed glasses.

"Trustee to the defunct's will, sir. Should say you ought to, sir."

"So I think, Allen," said Mr. Thornton; "but again, Allen, I tell you, as I told you yesterday, I dislike that word 'defunct.' There! there! let us have no discussion about it, but don't repeat it."

Allen had duly trespassed, in course of time, upon his master's kindness, and had grown pompous with good living and indulgence; so he replied

"It's a dictionary word, sir; I have it from the one you gave me years ago, when you said I suffered from the western dialect, and I studied pronunciation and language in consequence."

"Very well, very well; then take a pen and erase it from the dictionary, Allen. I object to it," said Mr. Thornton, with his thumb beneath the seal of the dead lieutenant's letter. "I feel I ought to read this. It may relate to business plans which I may carry out on behalf of my poor brother James, who relented about the poor young fellow at last and wished to serve him."

"Certainly; that was my meaning, sir," said Allen.

Mr. Thornton read as follows:—

"*Brussels, June*, 1814.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"We are now covering Brussels, and ere long expect to meet the enemy. Taking time by the forelock, in case I may fall, I have forwarded to my uncle papers which he will show you; and which I look to you, sir, to make of value.

"I conjure you, by the memory of my mother whom you loved, by my own sufferings, and by the days of my boyhood when I sat upon your knee, to find out my dear child Lucy, and let her be to you what I was in the days that are gone.

"Of her mother I will only remind you that she died when Lucy was born, and that she died beloved and revered by

"Your most unhappy son,

"JAMES CAVENDISH THORNTON."

The grand old gentleman did not read the whole of this to Allen; but communicated to that independent and worthy servitor the nature of the contents thereof, coughing once or twice as he did so, and wiping his eye-glasses with evident emotion.

Allen, who was by no means an ill-disposed person or a hard-hearted man, saying it was very affecting, seated himself and waited for some further communication from his master, who laid down the letter from his dead nephew to his dead brother, heaved a sigh, and proceeded to inspect the following letter enclosed for himself, which had escaped his notice until Allen had directed his attention to it:—

"*Brussels, June* 15, 1814.

"MY DEAR UNCLE,

"At last the news has arrived. We have just learnt that the rumour of the advance of the French upon the line of the Sambre is a fact. The army is moving on Quatre Bras, and we who are in Brussels, including Lord Wellington, start for the rendezvous almost instantly.

"I have a strange presentiment that my hour is coming. I have had many narrow escapes. Bloodier work than I have yet seen is, I believe, coming on, and graves are already yawning for their tenants. That we shall be victorious I have no doubt; that every man in this army would die rather than yield I could swear. The Thorntons were never braggarts, uncle, nor cowards; and your nephew fears death no more than he fears the French. But soldiers have their presentiments and touches of superstitious feeling as well as sailors; and the thought has occurred to me frequently of late that in some battle, at no distant date, I shall be amongst those whom Fate has marked down for sacrifice in the victories that are coming.

"I have a child. Until lately I knew not how much I loved it; for a time I could almost have persuaded myself that no affection could centre in a child, the birth of which was destined to rob me of the dearest treasure on earth. I should not write to you thus were I not satisfied, uncle, that you will read it only when I am dead. Few of us know each other when we are living. Of late frequent contemplation of the likeness of her I loved so dearly, and whose spirit is near me whilst I write, has brought me to my proper senses, and restored my love for her child, my poor little deserted Lucy—your relative, uncle, remember that—and I enclose to you my last wishes respecting her, and a letter for my father, whom may God forgive as I do.

"Seek out my child. They said she was like *her;* if so, the whole pedigree of the Thorntons may be searched in vain for one to surpass her in beauty, in goodness, in affection. Plead for her with my father. Give him this opportunity to atone for the past, and for your success I will offer up my last prayer.

"I left my child with the relatives of my wife at Middleton. They may soon be found out; leave no corner of the empire unsearched as you hope for mercy, and as you loved one who never harmed you, and who has upheld the honour of his family on the field of battle and laid down his life for his king and country.

"Your unhappy
"NEPHEW."

"There, Allen!" exclaimed Mr. Thornton, rising from his seat and pacing the room excitedly. "Presentiments! poor boy; poor fellow. Egad, sir! I have had presentiments about this matter. Egad! I shall believe in dreams, and broomsticks, and witches soon!"

"There is one as does a good trade, sir, near the church at Westminster," said Allen, rising also, and looking round him with superstitious awe.

"I have dreamed more than once that there would be a claimant for that property," said Mr. Thornton, breaking out between his remarks into exclamations of "Poor fellow!" "Brave as a lion, sir, to the last," "A Thornton, sir—after all, a Thornton."

"Aye, sir, they was great fighters," said Allen, wiping his face.

"*Were*, sir, *were*—'was' is a gross vulgarism as you too frequently use it; the rule is"——

"Where, sir? Why, in many a battle, even so far back as the days of Cressy," said Allen, pretending not to understand this correction of his grammar.

"Well! well! we will not waste time now," said Mr. Thornton, putting his glasses into a red morocco case. "Order my carriage, Allen. We will find this child. Pack up some shirts and all necessaries, Allen; we may be away several days."

"Yes, sir," said Allen, who always prided himself upon his prompt execution of Mr. Thornton's commands; and was highly esteemed by his master for the care which he exercised in anticipating his wants, and for generally understanding him.

"I'm getting an old man now. I don't know that I ever injured any one; and when I think of the past, I don't know that I ever did anybody any particular good. I have been as liberal as most men in what are called charities. Well, well, nephew. Your last wishes shall be carried out. Somebody shall be made happy. Yes; his father forgave him; and whatever his child may be she shall have her own. Poor dear fellow! Egad! I could almost make a fool of myself. Yes, yes; she shall be found, James Cavendish Thornton—if she lives she shall be found; if she be dead she shall have honour done to her memory. But, after all, that is empty work. Posthumous honours—well, well, I must not change my creed now; but I'll supplement it with a noble action. God grant an old man's prayer, that she may still be living!"

The fine old boy, overcome by his feelings, buried his face in his hands, and repeated the supplication with an energy that had not characterised any other action of his life since he left college.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SHOWS HOW THE CHANGE IN LUCY'S FORTUNES AFFECTED THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE.

It is not necessary that I should describe how Mr. Thornton discovered and brought home his niece and her foster-mother. The adventures of himself and Mr. Allen, their disputes and arguments, their disappointment and final success, present no special features worthy of detail. Jacob's interview with Miriam, the pretty queen-elect of the gipsies, has already posted us up in the manner of the Cantrills' removal, only that Mademoiselle Miriam fed Jacob's jealousy and disappointment with falsehoods. She distinctly planted in his mind, however much he rejected it, the picture of his love going off in a carriage with a young and handsome gentleman. His thoughts easily followed hers, because he had told Lucy that if he were a young rich acquaintance of my lord's coming there to shoot he should certainly carry off the keeper's daughter. Moreover, during Jacob's idle time at the gipsy village, Miriam, with subtle power, had led him to think of Lucy married and settled; for Jacob would talk of her despite Miriam's undisguised aversion to the subject of their conversation.

"It is not to be wondered at," he said one day in reply to the gipsy girl's remarks; "why should a girl fit to adorn any station in life throw herself away upon a beggar?"

"You are not a beggar—even we gipsies are not beggars, despised though we be," said Miriam proudly.

They were sitting by the fire in the hut. Miriam slept in an adjacent house on wheels. During the day, when not abroad, she spent most of her time in the hut, stringing shells and putting in some artistic touches to fancy baskets and other articles which the tribe manufactured.

"A mere peep into the great wide world will sometimes carry a girl's heart away, your sex is so very fickle, Miriam."

"Not ours—not the gipsy; faithlessness is death."

The girl's black eyes flashed with a hot passionate glance. For a moment it embarrassed Jacob. Her undisguised regard for him showed him the danger of his ground.

"How is it, Miriam," he said, changing the subject, "that you are so much superior to the people about you—to your mother, for example?"

"I can read and write. The mysteries and customs of our people are not mere oral traditions to me. I have books, and moreover I have read the poets; our people often buy me books for which they have bartered their goods, and I sometimes read to them a blood-stirring poem—a story of love and vengeance."

"Love is a delusion," said Jacob; "never believe in love—it is only to be found in poetry; and vengeance is not worth the trouble which it involves."

"You only say so because your love is cursed—you gave your heart to that poor fickle thing at the cottage, and you are mad at being deceived."

"Speak respectfully of the lady," said Jacob.

"Lady! she is no lady," said Miriam scornfully. "Am I a lady?"

"Certainly; you will be a queen some day," said Jacob. "I should be ungrateful to quarrel with so charming and distinguished a hostess; but do not speak of that young lady as a fickle thing."

"You are a fool, a poor weak fool," said Miriam, standing before him with anger flashing in her eyes.

"Thank you," said Jacob.

Miriam left the hut to vent the remainder of her passion upon some members of the tribe. These outbursts were frequent. She was not accustomed to have her wishes thwarted. If Jacob had not been attracted to the spot and retained there by the magic of old associations he would have gone on his way long ago. He lingered about the scenes of his early happiness, feeling that his joys were all in the past. He would not harbour in his mind an unkind thought of Lucy. She was inexperienced; she had not known the world when she met him. Sometimes he tried to think that she might be still true to him, but the fact that he had received neither letter nor message from her did not allow him to retain this sweet conceit without many grave misgivings.

Let me disabuse the minds of my readers of any such conflicting doubts and fears as those which Miriam fanned in the mind of Jacob. Lucy Cavendish Thornton was not to blame; who do you think was the chief sinner? The gentleman who closed the last chapter with a vow that he would do a noble action, and a prayer that he might be permitted to make the living happy, in atonement for the faults both of the living and the dead. And yet Mr. Thornton had never been known to be guilty of an unkind action in his life. He had done more generous deeds than he admitted to himself, as I introduced him to you, pacing about, in his library, under a conflict of sorrow and remorse.

When he strung himself up to that pitch of magnanimity which I have previously described, he thought of finding Lucy a poor country girl, ill-bred and devoid of manners, in some outlandish place. Indeed, after discovering her whereabouts, and on their way to Cartown, he had frequently said to Allen that it would be a severe trial to set up a gawkish country woman in an establishment near his own, and introduce her to Society; but he was determined to carry out the first instincts of humanity which had moved him on reading her father's letters. "She's been in a factory, too," Allen had observed, rather deprecatingly. "So it appears," Mr. Thornton had replied with a sigh; but still he was resolute. "Queer characters, sir, factory girls," Allen had rejoined. "Not a word, sir, of reflection upon her honour, for your life; one drop of Thornton blood in her veins is sufficient protection for her, if she be a drudge in a"—— Mr. Thornton had not finished the sentence, but had thrown up the window for air.

So soon as the high-born gentleman saw Lucy, some of his better feelings regarding her evaporated, pride stepping in furious and rampant. Fear to acknowledge her as his niece! she was fit for a princess. In her the glories of the Thorntons would be resuscitated. She should marry as she deserved to marry! All the world should sue at her feet!

But Allen, who had inquired into every particular of Lucy's history, told Mr. Thornton that she had a lover already.

"A lover, sir! How dare any one presume so far, without consulting her guardian, her great-uncle?" said Mr. Thornton, angrily.

"Somebody has dared, at all events," said Allen defiantly.

"Who is he, Allen? who is he?"

"Well, they say he's nothing now," said Allen, calmly wiping his face with an enormous silk handkerchief.

"Allen, how dare you torture and bore me in this fashion? Out with it, sir."

"I were not aware I were torturing you."

"Were, were—*was*, sir, *was*—for Heaven's sake, Allen, don't be so stupid."

"You said quite the contrary, sir, if I may remind you, the other day, when it was—*were*, sir, *were*, sir."

"Damn the fellow. There, Allen! I've not sworn for years."

"It's rather late to begin, sir, and with an old servant," said Allen, while the evidence of an earthquake, beneath his waistcoat, was awful to contemplate. His shirt frill rose with undisguised emotion, and two buttons, which could no longer bear the beating of his tender heart, parted company with his waistcoat.

Mr. Thornton marched about his room (for they had returned to Park Lane, with Lucy, when this scene occurred), and tried to be calm.

"Well, now, then let us see what mildness will do, Allen. There now, I ask you quietly who has dared to seek to win the affections of my niece, without my consent?"

"Jacob Something, they call him," said Allen, picking up the fallen buttons.

"Who is he?"

"Well, I cannot tell; they do say his father died insolvent."

"Monstrous! monstrous!" exclaimed Mr. Thornton. "Was his father in trade?"

"The lovers have written to each other, and there's one of the epistles," said Allen, throwing down the very letter which Jacob had written to Lucy, telling her of his departure, and instructing her where to address him.

"And where did you get this?"

"Well, you see, as I thought nothing should be left undone, I went to the nearest post-office to where the young lady lived, and instructed them to send all letters under cover to you, sir, who was her lawful guardian, and I awed them with some envelopes ready directed, and a sovereign to pay expenses, which they refused, but which I left—and this is the result, sir," after which Mr. Allen regarded his master with an air of triumph, and blew his nose fiercely.

"Good!" said Mr. Thornton. "But to open a letter which belongs to your mistress, Allen"——

"I have not opened it," said Allen.

"I should hope not—to intercept it, Allen, is bad enough."

"Then I'll take it to her," said Allen, seizing the letter.

"No; after all it is my letter. I am her guardian, her trustee, her father and mother, her great-uncle, the brother of her grandfather, her only living relative, her guide, counsellor, and friend. Yes, you are right, Allen."

"Thank you, sir; I should say I were right, looking at all the circumstances."

"*Was* right," said Mr. Thornton; "and damn your circumstances."

"Yes, sir, if you please; but I will not submit to this any longer," said Allen, mopping his face with his handkerchief, blowing his nose, and coughing violently.

"That will do, Allen," said Mr. Thornton.

"No, it will not, sir; I shall leave your service—I insist on it. Ever since my young lady has been found you have treated me like a dog; sir, I gives you warning once for all."

"Give, Allen, give."

"Yes, sir, if you please, sir."

"Now, no more nonsense, my good fellow; I am very sorry I have hurt your feelings; I apologise; there! Never before was a Thornton known to do such a thing; no, not in all their history."

"You shall not do it, sir," said Allen.

"I will."

"No, sir, never. I forgive you, sir."

"Very well, that is right, Allen; we are on the old terms again?"

"We are, sir, and many of them."

"Allen, do you take your wine before luncheon?" said Mr. Thornton.

"Just a drop of sherry and bitters," said Allen.

"Very well," said Mr. Thornton, with a look of doubt in his grey eyes that twinkled behind his heavy eye-glass.

"Yes, sir, it is very well."

"Then once more to the subject in hand. On second thoughts your foresight in this matter of the letters has my best thanks; I cannot reward you after the manner of your present to the local post-office; I would not insult you, Allen. I thank you, Allen, thank you heartily."

Allen thereupon wiped his brow in comfort, and looked superlatively superior to his master.

"And now and for ever we must put an end to this plebeian love-making; it will soon be over; there must be no letter writing, or if there is there must be no posting of letters; you understand, Allen?"

Allen understood all his master's thoughts, wishes, and desires—

understood them often before they were expressed, which is the height of efficiency in a servant.

"She will soon recover herself," said Mr. Thornton. "Girls in country places always have lovers; no wonder Lucy had one; but she will rise with her fortunes; she has the true Thornton blood; she will marry worthily; her beauty and her family and her wealth entitle her to make a good match."

Then the old man's pride set itself to marring and blighting his best resolves, paving the way of a certain place with more good intentions.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE BELLE OF A LONDON SEASON.

She was a mystery. Not after the manner of the present day, though the time is only a few years back. A lady with any mystery in her career nowadays is at once associated with the *demi-monde*. The changes which have taken place in London society are very great within the past few years. Ladies of questionable repute, nay, women of the town, distinguish themselves in all our places of public resort. They are everywhere. They ride the best horses, rival the Court in carriages and ponies, they "walk in the Zoo," display their dress improvers at South Kensington, leer at you at the theatres, flash their diamonds on the grand tier of the opera; now and then they are even presented at Court, they are always conspicuous at the boat-race, and they monopolise some of the best houses in the prettiest suburbs of the town. Society is more and more tolerant of these creatures. Young innocent girls copy their style of dress and manner in the hope of captivating the men who do not marry because of the increased freedom which society has extended towards them. I am not an old man. I do not therefore know how long this present looseness of London society has been coming on; I only know that when a certain belle of the season only a few comparatively short years ago dazzled Mayfair, the shop windows of the metropolis had not burst out into exhibitions of infamous photographs; and it seems to me that this great triumph of Anonyma in London society dates from the time when photographers commenced to take their types of female beauty from the class of women who now fill so large a space in the public eye—here, there, and everywhere.

It almost makes my pen falter to mention my mysterious belle of a London season on the same paper which holds this short discourse upon Circe. Her name was Lucy Cavendish Thornton. You can imagine that fair, round, supple, young, healthy, bright-eyed cottage beauty of Cartown, full of native grace, who looked like a princess even when she was cleaning up the kitchen; you can fancy how this fresh rural beauty would shine and glow in Mayfair! The niece of Mr. Cavendish Thornton, of Park Lane, a gentleman of high family and unblemished honour, Lucy took her place in the foremost rank of society. She was presented at Court, she had an establishment of her own in Piccadilly. Her present wealth was enormous, and as old Thornton's heiress her expectations were equally great. Although comparatively uneducated she was a lady by nature, and readily fell into the ways of her advancement. Moreover, before Mr. Thornton introduced her to Mayfair he surrounded her privately with tutors, male and female; he gave her the benefit of the advice of a professed *chaperone*, who had brought out some of the most fashionable ladies of the time, and more than that, she had the run of the best milliners and dressmakers, jewellers, and lace dealers; he took her over to Paris on a flying visit, coming home through Germany; he told her over and over again the Thornton history, and asked her to do justice to her name and play the part of princess. Old Thornton was as pleased with her as if she had been the special gift of a fairy. She was in all his thoughts. He anticipated her every want. He loaded her with the rarest gifts. She was in an atmosphere of pomp and luxury. If Thornton himself had been a magician in disguise when he appeared at the cottage of the Cantrills he could hardly have made a greater change in the life of Lucy than that which his visit had inaugurated. Silks and satins, lace and diamonds, instead of cotton and woollen, simple ribbon and glass beads. She was mistress of every desire, and she did justice to her position.

It was her first season. She was the rage. Lady Mary Miffits, her *chaperone*, had never received so much attention in all her career. Uncle Thornton was as proud as a Thornton and as jealous as a Turk. He was by Lucy's side in the Row, he was with her at the opera. Fortune-hunting gadflies had not too many opportunities of pouring their pretty nonsense into Lucy's ear, though mademoiselle was quite inclined to flirt. She had made her uncle uncomfortable once or twice, but Lucy replied to his words of alarm with such merry badinage that he declared she was a true Thornton and fit to be a princess.

Young Max Walton was the only fellow who seemed to have the smallest chance of making a favourable impression upon the belle. He had met her at his brother's town house at Queen's Gate. Lord

Folden was his brother. The family were wealthy, and the Hon. Max Walton was the next heir.

"I like Max Walton," said Lucy to her confidante, Dorothy Cantrill, "because he does not treat me as if I were a fool."

Dorothy was sitting with Miss Thornton in the belle's boudoir while the belle was sipping a cup of coffee prior to dressing for a dinner party at Lord Folden's.

"He is very handsome," said Dorothy, "but"——

"But what?" said Lucy.

"Not so handsome as somebody else."

"You mean Jacob," said Lucy; "I don't agree with you. I never thought Mr. Martyn handsome."

"*Mr.* Martyn," said Dorothy, with much emphasis on the Mister.

"You do not think 'Mister' sufficiently familiar?" said Lucy.

"Not if you care anything for him, miss," said Dorothy.

"*Miss!* There you are again. I suppose that means you no longer care anything about me," said Lucy.

"Well, I really feel as if it was not right to call you 'Lucy,'" said Dorothy; "it do seem so wonderful for me to be sitting here on silks and satins, and looking into gold looking glasses, and that, and calling the mistress of it all 'Lucy.' Don't you think me and mother had better go back into the country?"

"If you are not happy, Dorothy, by all means; but surely with your own apartments, dear, and everything you can wish for"——

"Yes, yes, Lucy, that is right enough; but somehow I feel like a fish out of water, or a newt taken out of a ditch and put into a crystal fountain."

"And is this to be the result of my good fortune?—the loss of everybody I love!" exclaimed Lucy, fanning her cheeks that were still rosy despite a score of late nights in hot, stifling rooms.

"No, don't say that, dear."

"I do say it," said Lucy, petulantly. "This Jacob Martyn that you talk of, you give me credit for casting him off; it is not so; he has deserted me; he is too proud to come to me now that I am rich."

"No, dear," said Dorothy, mildly; "he must know that your uncle would not hear of such a match."

"If he had heard so a hundred times, and a hundred uncles stood between him and the girl he really loved, that should make her doubly precious. He ought to fight his way and meet me on my own ground if he cares for me."

"Do not be angry; I dare say Mr. Max Walton will make up for the loss of poor Jacob."

"Dorothy, you shall not talk to me in that way," said Lucy, beginning to cry with vexation. "You will make me hate Jacob Martyn."

Lucy hid her face in her hands, and tossed her pretty little foot up and down, and rocked herself to and fro; while Dorothy patted her head and called her "darling" and "love;" and presently the sweet face which had looked out of the factory window in Jacob's boyhood turned smiling to Dorothy and kissed the kind country woman, and begged her to forgive her ingratitude.

"I am becoming spoiled, Dorothy, I know I am; I feel my heart changing; I am beginning to like this gay, frivolous life; I shall only be fit for some wealthy aristocrat soon."

Dorothy drew her arm round Lucy's waist, and for a few brief minutes the two were once more in the old house among the trees, with the kitchen clock ticking in their ears, and the homely smell of the tarred mantelpiece insinuating itself into the perfumed atmosphere of the belle's fairylike boudoir.

"Ah, poor Jacob!" Dorothy whispered.

Lucy hid her face in the woman's neck.

"If he had only written," said Lucy.

"Does he really know where we are?"

"Does he!" said Lucy, with a little of her former asperity. "Did I not write? Twice, I believe?"

"Did he get the letters, dear?"

"Did he not? Have I not his reply to the first one. That he would write soon—*soon!*"

"Think of his troubles."

"I do, God knows how much! If I only knew that he was not toiling for bread I should be satisfied. If I could help him without his knowledge. I sometimes think I will consult my uncle about him."

"Don't do that, dear," said Dorothy; "Mr. Thornton is so very proud. No, no, not at present, dear; let me advise you in this."

A knock at the door. Miss Thornton's maid had come to say that she feared my lady would be late. Lady Mary was already dressed. Lucy kissed Dorothy and gave herself over to her maid, a bright, clever little lady, who deferentially chatted to Lucy about a hundred incidents of fashionable gossip. Lucy soon regained her spirits under this change of companionship, and Uncle Thornton said he had never seen her look better when she took his arm an hour afterwards, and stepped into his brougham *en route* for Queen's Gate. A little later Max Walton declared upon his soul that Venus was a fool to old Thornton's niece. He vowed the world had never seen such a round, scrumptious, sweet-lipped, dainty beauty as Miss Thornton. Lord Folden, his brother, did not altogether agree with Max; but his lordship was married.

"Have I your lordship's consent to marry her," said Max when the party was at an end, and the last carriage had been called.

"By all means," said his lordship. "Have another cigar?"

"Will your lordship do the correct thing?"

"Give you the Fenchale Estate?"

"That same," said Max smiling, and lighting another cigar.

"I will," said Lord Folden.

"Then, by Jupiter! she is mine," said the Hon. Max Walton.

While this conversation was taking place Miss Thornton was being presented to a Cabinet Minister's wife whose assemblies were famous for their pretty women and famous men. Men and women were talking about the new arrival in every corner of the several rooms which were thrown into each other for conversation and refreshment, the music-room, one of the most exquisitely decorated *salons* in London, being devoted to dancing, which had not yet commenced.

It was curious to hear the various stories of Lucy's career. She was not Thornton's niece at all, some said, but his daughter by an illustrious lady from whom he had been divorced in the East. One who knew all about the story said she was picked up on the road to Waterloo, her mother (the wife of an officer) having been killed by a cannon shot. Her father was Mr. Thornton's brother, and a major in the army promoted on the field of battle for his gallantry. He had married his wife contrary to his father's consent. The child had been discovered in a convent in the south of France. Her grandfather relented before he died and left all his immense fortune to his son, not knowing that he had fallen gloriously fighting for his king. This young lady was his heiress, and in addition to enormous possessions in land and a slice of Piccadilly, she would come in for all old Thornton's money. It was no wonder, they all agreed, that she was the belle of the season—such a combination of money and beauty! It was certainly not true, Lady Mary Miffits told a little group of dowagers, that Miss Thornton had worked in a factory; not true that she had been a barmaid; and it was a gross calumny that she had had no education. She could assure their ladyships that Miss Thornton was in every respect worthy of the distinction of their ladyships' patronage and consideration.

It was morning again when Lucy returned home—a bright summer morning. A light mist hung among the trees in the Park. Early workmen were clattering over the pavement of Piccadilly. Lucy noticed a poor little outcast watching with hungering eyes the scanty business of a coffee-stall planted against the Park railings. Lady Mary Miffits shrugged her shoulders when Miss Thornton, with sympathetic glance, pointed to this wayside picture of London life. He was a crossing sweeper, that poor waif of the streets. He had been busy with his broom late into the night, and at four o'clock in the morning was not rich enough to buy a cup of coffee. The thought struck a sad key in Lucy's memory. When she was alone in her own room she flung herself upon a couch and wept. She could not think why it was that she felt so miserable. It never seemed to her that her melancholy came from sheer overwork. She was tired, worn out, and too much excited for sleep. She opened a cabinet and drew from it a miniature which had been painted by her uncle's order. It was the portrait of her father when he was a young man and before he had entered the army. The only token which she possessed to remind her of her mother, whom she had never seen, was a light brown curl of hair, which Mrs. Cantrill had given to her in the old time.

How completely these relics indicated her position. Although she had never known what it was to dwell in the sunshine of a mother's love, she seemed now for the first time to require a mother's guidance and sympathy. She needed advice and assistance: the affectionate regard of a higher nature than Dorothy's, and of a nobler ambition than that which inspired the spinsterial breast of Lady Miffits. Dorothy only talked of to-day; Lady Miffits of the beneficent laws of society; and her uncle of ancestral glories and being worthy of them. In the midst of all her wealth and honour, despite her woman's triumph in the Row, at Lord Folden's, in Belgravia's halls and assemblies, at Court, and everywhere else, Miss Thornton was not happy. One great drawback to the full enjoyment of her position was her want of education, though this was a blemish only felt by herself, for she was one of those clever girls who learn rapidly, and who seem to fall into a position of distinction with as much repose and dignity as if they had been born to it.

Lucy's window overlooked Piccadilly. It was a bright summer morning. The fresh green of early June gave the park a sylvan look that almost rivalled the Cartown pastures. The coffee stall propped against the park railings was an odd contrast to the wealthy surroundings. That poor little crossing-sweeper was still devouring the humble refreshment with hungry eyes. Cautiously opening her window, Lucy suddenly flung out a handful of silver, which went crashing down upon the stall. There was a sudden panic. Customers, coffee vendor, and crossing-sweeper darted upon the money, and Lucy was presently rewarded by the sight of the outcast making a very hearty breakfast, after which she went to bed and slept until long after Piccadilly had awoke to the life of another day.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WILL TUNSTER VISITS THE GREAT METROPOLIS.

"So this is Piccadilly, is it?" said Will Tunster, standing at the edge of the Circus pavement, with a carpet bag in one hand and an umbrella in the other, and attired in a new velvet coat of the gamekeeper cut, and wearing almost for the first time in his life a tall hat.

"Room for one outside," said an omnibus conductor in reply.

"No, thank thee, lad; I've had roidin' enough for this day."

"Right you are," said the conductor; "come to town in a Pickford's wan, I dessay."

Will did not understand the cad's pleasantry. He smiled, and at the same time turned clumsily upon a street boy who insisted upon carrying his luggage.

"I tell thee no," said Will, "I don't want thee; but thou can tell me where Portland House is—where Miss Cavendish Thornton lives, if thou likes."

"Yessir," said the boy, "show you the way?"

"No thanksta; here's a copper for thee; now tell me and hook it."

The boy gave Will the proper direction, and presently the mail driver of Crossley stood opposite Mortimer House, the architecture and general character of which he took in with all his eyes.

"Dang my buttons!" Will exclaimed, "but this is a foin spot! Th' young queen hersen might make a mistak and fancy she'd gotten whoam here."

Will put his bag down, thrust his hands into his pockets, and lost himself in a reverie of wonder. It was a good thing that his bugle was in his bag, and that the key of the bag was in the deepest corner of his watch-pocket, or Piccadilly would have been considerably astonished during these abstract moments of Will's with a very florid performance.

"Hey, sowdger," said Will, "can thou tell me"——

But Lord Flunkington's coachman, whom Will mistook for a sergeant of Foot, did not deign a reply.

"Oh, them's thy manners, be they? Thou'll be had up before a court-marshal if thou doesna mind, for being too polite and getting mistook for a officer one of these days."

A butcher-boy with a tray on his shoulder next attracted Will Tunster's attention.

"Hey, lad! what's thou gotten?" exclaimed Will; "a leg of mutton in a coffin! Well, I'm danged, you're rum folks in Lundun."

"Walker!" said the boy.

"He thinks I'm axin his name. Dang it, I'm a reg'lar furriner here!"

A policeman coming up, Will asked him if there were any back doors to these grand houses.

"What do you want?" asked the officer in reply.

"T' back door, I tell thee."

"Are you a servant?"

"No; art thou?"

"There's the harea bell—ring it," said the officer, pointing downwards with his thumb, and moving on with a contemptuous toss of his head.

"Well, I suppose I mun go down these steps; it's a rum thing to go into th' cellar before you get to th' house place."

Will knocked at the door, and when it was opened walked in, much to the astonishment of a couple of female servants, and evidently to the great delight of a familiar friend—old Mrs. Cantrill.

"I'm glad to see thee, lad," said the old woman, tottering towards Will with the aid of a stick; "though whether others will be so in this grand place I cannot say."

"Niver fear," said Will.

"Ah! times is changed since my poor man died," said Mrs. Cantrill.

"For th' better, mother, for th' better."

"Aye, aye, if fine gownds and grand livin' can do owt to mak folks happy. Let me look at thee, lad! Ah, thou brings back old times to one."

The two female servants, glancing mutual signs of pity and contempt upon Mrs. Cantrill and Will, left the kitchen.

"Hey! where's them cherubums off to? they look as if they didna like one's society."

"Oh! they're not bad sort of lasses; but thou sees they've no sympathy with an old woman brought to die away from th' old house; I've heerd them say I'm an ungrateful old creature."

"Weel, weel; none of us can see wi' the same eyes. My eye! but this is a grand kitchen; it licks t' County Hotel, and is equal to th' Duke's Palace, or nigh on it, at Chatsworth. But where's Dorothy?"

"Do you wish to see Miss Cantrill?" said one of the two domestics, returning at this moment.

"Aye, lass, I doo; bless her heart!"

"Then come this way, sir, please."

Will followed his leader up two flights of stone steps, then across a wide hall, then down a passage, and at the end was ushered into a pretty little room, where Dorothy Cantrill, the housekeeper and friend of the lady of the house, was occupied with some fancy needlework.

"Bless thee! And how ist thou?" said Will, squeezing Dorothy's hand and giving her a kiss before Dorothy hardly knew where she was.

"Dear, dear, how rough you are, Will," she said, disengaging herself; "and I declare you have been drinking brandy."

"Only i' th' coach and i' this new fangled what-do-ye-cole-it, Puffin Billy; it was a bit cawd, thou knaws, in the raw of the morning, and I just took a bottle to sup on th' road."

"And I doubt not you've supped it all."

"Well, I dur say," said Will, laughing. "Well, was you surprised to have a letter to say I was coming?"

"Yes, indeed I was," said Dorothy.

"And are ye sorry I've come?"

"Well, I cannot say that I am; but I wish you would not shout so, Will."

"Aye—bless thee, Dorothy, I mun shake hands agean, thou looks so bonny!" and Will shook hands so long and so vigorously that Dorothy began to think he would never leave off.

"Now, Will, take a seat, and see if you can sit still a few minutes."

"Ole right! Well, now tell me, how's Lucy?"

"Lucy!" exclaimed Dorothy. "Dear me, Will—you must not call her by that name. Don't you know she's my mistress? She is very well, thank God, and as beautiful as ever."

"Aye, she oleways wos a beauty; but what about th' old sweetheart, Mester Jacob?"

"We hear nothing of him," said Dorothy, sadly.

"Ah! it were a hawkard smash oletogether, I've heered. Nobody knaws owt about Jacob at Middleton, Cartown, or Crossley, though I could almost a swore I seed him a tramping one day; but it couldna a bin him."

"I don't know that," said Dorothy; "I fear he is in very low water somewhere."

"Him i' low watter! nowt at sort. Why that lad had enough brains for a Prime Minister. Him i' low watter, Dorothy! He's ole reight somewhere."

"Do you think so?" said Dorothy, shaking her head.

"I do. Thy mother doesn't seem to care about this high life?" said Will, interrogatively.

"No," said Dorothy; "she is always complaining. I thought it so kind of Miss Thornton, as soon as she heard the good news, to insist on our all coming together to enjoy her good fortune. And ever since she has been my mistress she has been kindness itself, and mother has never wanted for anything, and yet not a day nor night passes but she frets; she will only sit up here now and then; and you know, Will, I cannot be always in the servants' hall, or I should soon lose my control over them. It is a sad, sad trouble to me," and Dorothy looked as if she were going to cry.

"Well, now, I'll tell thee what I've been thinking, Dorothy. I've gotten a proposition to mak."

"Not now, not now," said Dorothy, rising. "You must have something to eat first. And then I am going to assist the maid to dress my mistress for a grand ball."

"Oh, that's the gam, is it—grand doings, eh?"

"Yes, indeed, Will; my mistress, they say, is the belle of the season."

"Oh!" said Will; "and what art thou? Dang it, I mun shake hands agean, lass."

Whereupon Will not only shook hands again, but he made a comical pretence of kissing Dorothy, which she resented on the spot.

"Now, Will, you must behave yourself properly; you shall go into the butler's pantry and have something to eat."

"Ole reight, lass; ole reight," said Will, who shortly afterwards found himself very comfortable, and in the society of a gentleman who knew Cartown and Crossley, which was sufficient to command the respect and regard of the mail driver.

(To be continued.)

TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

HISTORY repeats itself; everything repeats itself, and at very short intervals. On Friday, January 5, 1839, a portion of Oxford Street, which had been "experimentally" laid with various kinds of new pavement, was opened to the public with great formality and show. My contemporary, the *Mirror* of that day, records the event in careful detail, and illustrates it. The whole space between Charles Street and Tottenham Court Road was occupied by twelve different specimens, which were completed in the following order, commencing at Charles Street—viz., 40 feet of Robinson's Parisian bitumen, 24 feet laid in straight courses, and 16 feet diagonally; 74 feet of parish stone paving, 54 feet of which was laid in straight courses, the stones 9 inches deep, and the interstices filled up with Claridge's asphalte, the remaining 20 feet consisting of stones only 4½ inches deep, but laid diagonally, and filled up with the same composition; 60 feet of the Bastenne Gaujac bitumen, part laid in straight courses, and part diagonally; 135 feet of parish stone paving, divided into three sections in the following order:—1st, 70 feet of dressed Aberdeen granite, with concrete bottom, and the joints grouted with lime and sand; 2nd, 40 feet of the same laid diagonally; and 3rd, 25 feet of dressed Aberdeen granite, without concrete bottom, the joints filled in with fine gravel. This was followed by 50 feet of the Scotch asphaltum, entirely the produce of that country, laid down in straight courses; 60 feet of Stead's pavement of wooden blocks of a sexagonal form, 12 inches deep, divided into three compartments—one prepared with Kyan's patent, part dipped in and joints run with asphalte, and part without any preparation whatever. The last specimen, at Tottenham Court Road, was 60 feet of the Val de Travers bitumen, a portion of which consisted of square blocks laid in straight courses, and the remainder consisting of a layer of clean Guernsey chippings, cemented together by boiling asphalte, run among them nearly to the surface, a face made with asphalte, merely showing the chippings here and there in patches. The whole work presented a most even and beautiful road. The portion, however, to which attention was more particularly directed was that of the wooden blocks, the noiseless tendency of which made the vehicles passing along appear to be rolling over a thick carpet, or rug. "Asphalte," "Val de Travers," "bitumen," &c., make the old story seem very modern. When the first asphalte road was made in this city, Paris had the credit of introducing the application of bitumen and gravel to road making. A portion of the Strand has recently been paved similarly to the principle of Kyan's patent adopted in Oxford Street in 1839. When will the noiseless pavement trave west? The city seems to monopolise asphaltum.

WHAT, metaphysically, constitutes the charm of murder? How charming it is—what a thrall it throws over the imagination of most of us—I need not say. All our fiction, all our newspapers, speak sufficiently of this. But what is the secret of this influence? All murders are not equally interesting. Take a London murder, for instance, and compare it with a provincial murder, and as a rule the London murder will make ten times more sensation than a murder in Lincolnshire or Wilts. Yet it is impossible that our feelings can be governed by geographical considerations; and, as a matter of fact, some of the most interesting murders of our time have been provincial murders—Palmer's, to wit, Rush's, Dr. Pritchard's, Constance Kent's, and what is called the Leigh Woods murder. But the horror which is created by crimes of this kind in the provinces is generally far less than that which is inspired by a crime like that of Courvoisier, of the Mannings, of Muller, of Mr. Selby Watson, or even of a woman like Madame Riel's French cook. How is this to be explained? A poor cobbler, out of work and out of spirits in Whitechapel, makes an end of his family, and his crime is forgotten in twenty-four hours. A French cook strangles her mistress in Park Lane, and all London is talking of the crime for weeks, the newspapers publish special reports day after day, it is discussed in every club window, at every dinner-table, in every newspaper for weeks. Is it possible that this difference in the way of looking at murder arises from differences of social position—that the murder of a wife and half a dozen children in Whitechapel is a matter of less interest and of less concern to most of us than the murder of a single lady in Hyde Park? These, of course, are not questions to argue, and I shall not attempt to argue them. All I wish to do is to put them in a plain form as constituting part of the metaphysics of murder. Yet, as a plain matter of fact, it is worth noting that the most interesting single murders within the recollection of most of us were those of Courvoisier and Dixblanc, and generalising from these I should say that a murder, to create the maximum of interest, ought to be perpetrated in the season, when everybody is in town, ought to be the act of a French valet or a French cook, and the victim either the son of a duke or the mistress of an earl.

UPON what principle does the memory act in making its selections? The eye, as we all know, sees only what it looks for, and generally, even in men with the keenest powers of observation, only what it is trained to look for. But the memory is apt to be capricious, to play us false, and even when playing its part well, to make selections, remembering one part of a scene, of an incident, or a theory, and retaining only the faintest recollection of the rest. The story of the Highlander telling his minister that he had a capital memory for most things but sermons, and that if he were to listen to one of his sermons for three hours the chances were that he should not be able to remember three words of what he had heard three minutes afterwards, will of course suggest itself at once to every one; and this is but a piquant illustration of the position of most of us. The memories of some of us are filled with facts, hard, dry facts, statistics, dates, and things of that sort. To others, facts of this kind are as colourless as air, and pass through the memory without leaving the faintest impression. But the memory which refuses to retain facts may be peopled with images from the realms of poetry and fiction, with characteristic phrases or anecdotes, with tints of colour, with airs from all the operas of the past ten or fifteen years. Most people associate the Revolution with the political rights which it secured to us. But how many of us, like Tom Moore, remember it only by a tune, the air of "Lillibulero"!

THIS question suggested itself to me on looking through Brougham's Autobiography; but, looking at the passage afresh, I see that it raises another point. Does the memory, like the eye, grow short-sighted with life? Here is Lord Brougham's confession: "If I have imperfectly performed my task," he says, looking at his pile of MSS.; "if I have appeared to dwell too diffusely on some subjects, while others of equal importance have been passed over; if many statements have been feebly and some inaccurately rendered, let it be recollected that I began this attempt after I was eighty-three years of age, with enfeebled intellect, failing memory, and but slight materials by me to assist it." He saw the faults of his autobiography as well as the keenest of us, saw that he had dwelt longer on this part of his career than he ought to have done to make his sketch perfect in scale; but his faculties had lost their power of perspective. He saw all his facts out of proportion, the events of his youth and of his early manhood standing out in their full proportion, and those of his old age either dwarfing themselves in comparison or making no impression at all upon his memory, or only the slightest. Is this one of the characteristics of memory in old age?

CERTAIN far-seeing anthropologists are of opinion that our American cousins have already begun to assimilate to the Red Indian type of man. Look at the acclimatised American citizen. The hue and texture of the skin, the form of jaw and cheek-bone, the set of the joints, the poise of the frame in rest and in motion—are said to be definite marks of approximation to the aboriginal occupier of the soil. Manners and habits and mental characteristics point the same way. In the true American are modes of address and forms of taciturnity suggestive of the Indian. He listens, he reflects upon your words, he replies, he takes your point or lets it pass in a fashion which you understand all the better when you think of the noble savage of the West. The transformation of the North American colonist into the Red Indian is only a question of time. How long may be allowed for the process? The results so far have been accomplished with marvellous speed. The settlement is hardly more than two hundred years old. Yet the conditions have been extremely unfavourable for even the slightest change of type. The constant influx of immigrants from nearly every civilised land must have kept up a continual warfare with the local elements. There has been nothing to encourage an infusion of the native character into the cosmopolitan throng. The new tenants of the country have never sat at the feet of the old; intermarriage has been almost unknown; intercourse of any sort has been but slight. Nevertheless, a distinct type of man seems to be rising up in the new country, different from that of any people in the old world, and resembling that of the native races. Are we, then, to conclude that the natural influences of the Western Continent upon man are exceptionally powerful? In Europe and Asia and on the borders of Africa changes of race following upon movement from place to place would appear to have been slower and less decidedly marked. Celts and Teutons, Sclaves, Magyars, and Tartars hold their own in the countries of this hemisphere through a thousand years with a striking persistency, while in America the Spanish character seems almost lost in Peru and Mexico, the Portuguese in Brazil, and the French in Canada, though the whole history of Europeans in the West runs back little more than three centuries and a half. How long, then, may it take to prove to conviction that strength of blood and race cannot combat the mysterious forces of nature with the same effect in the Western as in the Eastern World? In how many generations will the Anglo-Saxon and the Dutch, the Irishman and the Highlander develop into the highly civilised Red Indian? When will the Iberian change into the enlightened Aztec or Peruvian? In how many centuries will the land convert and assimilate its conquerors till they shall not be distinguishable in type from the first children of the soil? Ethnologists and anthropologists should hurry on their researches in this momentous study; for if we are to give thought to the fate and fortunes of our sons and daughters of a not so very remote posterity it would be a matter of keen interest to know whether or not we are to imagine them as red-skins, with never a trace of the features and peculiarities of their English ancestors, with nothing in fact but the customs of a civilised people to distinguish them from the wild men of the forests and prairies described by Irving and Catlin, and depicted by Fenimore Cooper and Mayne Reid. It is only right that we should realise what we are doing for our children when we take them with us in the track of the Pilgrim Fathers across the Atlantic.

THE
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ISLES OF THE AMAZONS.

BY JOAQUIN MILLER.

PART III.

Thatch of palm and a patch of clover,
  Breath of balm in a field of brown,
The clouds blew up and the birds flew over,
  And I looked upward : but who looked down ?

Who was true in the test that tried us ?
  Who was it mocked ? Who now may mourn
The loss of a love that a cross denied us,
  With folded hands and a heart forlorn ?

God forgive when the fair forget us.
  The worth of a smile, the weight of a tear,
Why, who can measure ? The fates beset us.
  We laugh a moment ; we mourn a year.

SING songs, and pour wine in oblations,
  Be glad, and forget, in a rhyme,
Mutations of Time and mutations
  Of thoughts that are fiercer than Time.

As a tale that is told, as a vision,
  Forgive and forget ; for I say
That the true shall endure the derision
  Of the false till the full of the day.

I forgive as I would be forgiven ;
  I forget, lest the ill I have done
Be remembered against me in heaven
  And all the days under the sun.

For who shall have bread without labour?
And who shall have rest without price?
And who shall hold war with his neighbour
With promise of peace with the Christ?

Lo! the years may lay hand on fair heaven;
They may place and displace the red stars;
They may stain them as blood stains are driven
At sunset, in beautiful bars.

They may shroud them in black till they fret us—
The clouds with their showers of tears;
They may grind us to dust and forget us,
May the years—O, the pitiless years!

But the precepts of Christ are beyond them;
And the truths in the parables taught,
With the tramp of the ages upon them,
They endure as though ages were naught.

And the deserts may drink up the fountains,
And the forests give place to the plain,
And the main may give place to the mountains,
And the mountains return to the main.

And mutations of worlds, and mutations
Of suns may take place, but the reign
Of Time, and the toils and vexations
Shall bequeath them, no, never a stain.

So, silent, I bide the revealing
Of night, the stern parent of morn,
Sit patient, yet boldly appealing
To Time, who was God's first born.

* * * * *

So they sighed, and they left him alone in the care
  Of faithfullest matrons; they moved to the field
  With the lifted sword and the sounding shield
High fretting their eloquent storms of hair.

And, true as the moon in her march of stars,
  The Queen stood forth in her battle attire
Worn as they trained, or worn in the wars,
  Bright and as chaste as a flashing of fire.

She had girdles of gold and of silver crossed,
  And plaited, and chased, and bound together,
  Broader and stronger than belts of leather,
Cunningly fashioned and splendidly bossed;

With diamonds circling her, stone upon stone,
  Above the breast where the borders fail—
Below the breast where the fringes zone,
  A splendid and glittering garment of mail.

The breastplate, fastened with clasps of gold,
  Was clasped, as close as the breasts could bear,
  The form made hardy and the waist made spare
From her athlete sports and adventures bold;

It was bound and drawn to a delicate span,
  It flashed in the red front ranks of the field—
Was fashioned full trim in its intricate plan
  And gleamed as a sign, as well as a shield,

That the virgin Queen was unyielding still,
  And pure as the tides that around her ran,
True to her trust, and strong in her will
  Of war and hatred to the touch of man.

The field it was theirs or in storm or in shine,
  So fairly they stood that the foe came not
  To the battle again, and the brave forgot
The rage of battle; and they trimmed the vine,

And they tended the fields of the tall green corn,
And they crushed the grape, and they drew the wine
In the great round gourds or the bended horn,
Till their sad sweet lives seemed as half divine.

They bathed in the wave in the amber-like morn
Or they took repose in the peaceful shade
Of eternal palms, and were never afraid:
Yet still did they sigh, and look far and forlorn.

Then down where the wave by the white sands ran
And left them laved with kisses, and these
Had journeyed away with the caravan
Of the grand old tide to the grander seas,

Where the rim of the wave was weaving a spell,
And the grass grew soft where it hid from the sun,
Would the Amazons gather them every one,
At the call of the Queen by the sound of her shell.

They would come in state through the kingly trees,
And train and marshal them brave and well
In the golden noon, in the hush of peace
Where the shifting shade of the fan-palms fell.

They would lean on their long quick quivering swords;
They would rest on their shields in a line at the side;
They would lift their brows to the front towards
Their Queen as she moved in her queenly pride.

They would train till flushed and as warm as the wine,
They would reach with their limbs, would thrust with the lance,
Would attack, retire, retreat and advance,
Then wheel in column, then fall in line;

Stand thigh and thigh with the limbs made hard
And rich and round as the swift-limbed pard,
Or a racer trained, or a white bull caught
In the lasso's toils, where the tame are not.

They would curve as the waves curve, swerve in line;
They would dash through the trees, would train with the bow,
Then back to the lines, now sudden, then slow,
Then flash their swords in the sun at a sign.

They would settle the foot right firmly afront,
Then sound the shields till the sound was heard
Afar, as the horn in the black boar hunt;
Yet, stranger than all, utter never a word.

They were daring of heart, they were supple of limb,
They would test their full strength in the wrestle or race,
They would thread through the forest, would leap and would swim,
And stripped to the cincture would spring to the chase.

They would brave the deep jungle, would beard the wild beast
In the tangle of wood or at bay in his den;
And alone or in troop, at the fray or at feast,
Would bear them as bravely as ever did men.

They were out with the morn, and till mantled in night
They were reckless of danger and careless of toil;
They would bear to the village the shaggy-haired spoil,
And shout and lift hands and return in delight.

When the shadows fell far from the westward, and when
The sun had kissed hands and made sail for the east,
They would kindle the fires and gather them then,
Well-worn and most merry with song, to the feast.

There feasting in circles, they sang of the sun,
Their prowess or valour, in peril or pain;
Till the Isles were awake and the birds were outdone;
And long ere the dawn were up singing again.

So they sang of all things but the one sacred one
That could make them most glad, as they lifted the gourd
And passed it around, with its rich purple hoard,
From the Island that lay with its front to the sun.

Though lips were made luscious, and eyes as divine
As the eyes of the skies that bend down from above;
Though hearts were made glad and most mellow with love,
While the dripping gourd drained of its burthen of wine;

Though brimming, and dripping, and bent of their shape
Were the generous gourds from the juice of the grape,
They could sing not of love, they could breathe not a thought
Of the savour of life, in love sought or unsought.

For their loves they were not; they had banished the name
Of man, and the uttermost mention of love—
The moonbeams about them, the quick stars above,
And the mellow-voiced waves, they were ever the same,

In sign, and in saying, of the old true lies;
But they took no heed; no answering sign,
Save glances averted and half-hushed sighs,
Went back from the breasts with their loves divine.

So they sang with a will of their freedom, and well—
They had paid for it well when the price was blood;
And they beat on the shield, and they blew on the shell,
When their wars were not, for they held it good

To be glad and to sing till the dawn of the day,
In an annual feast, when the broad leaves fell.
Yet some sang not, and some sighed "Ah well!"
For there's far less left you to sing or to say,

When mettlesome love is banished, I ween,—
To hint at as hidden, or half disclose
In the swift sword-cuts of the tongue, made keen
With wine at a feast—than one would suppose.

So the days wore by, but they brought no rest
To the minstrel knight, though the sun was gold,
And the Isles were green, and the Amazons blest
In a splendour of arms, and as pure as bold.

He moved in a legion, yet he lived as alone,
And his bosom arose with a sudden unrest
And the terrible sense of a soul distrest
In intolerable strife at its own hearthstone.

He now would resolve to reveal to her all,
His sex and his race, in a delicate song;
And his love of peace, his hatred of wrong,
And his own deceit, though the sun should fall.

Then again he would linger, and he knew not how
He could best proceed, and deferred him now
Till another day. Then another came,
And still he delayed, and reproached him the same.

Then again he did vow to reveal full soon,
Then deeply he blushed, then upbraided sore
The winds that had blown from the Castile shore,
As he walked by the waves in the great white moon.

But he still said nought; he subdued his head,
And he wandered away in a dubious spell
Of unut'rable thought of the truth unsaid,
To the indolent shore; and he gathered a shell,

And he shaped its point to his passionate mouth,
And he turned to a bank and began to blow,
While the Amazons trained in a troop below,
And as soft and as sweet as a kiss of the South.

And it pleased them well! And they ceased to train
For a resting spell, as the dulcet strain
Fell down from the hill through the tasselling trees,
And a murmur of song like the sound of bees

In the clover crown of a queenly spring,
Came back unto him, and he laid the shell
Aside on the bank, and began to sing
Of eloquent love; and the ancient spell

Of passionate song was his, and the Isle,
As waked to delight with a seraphim's wing,
Came back in echoes; yet all this while
He knew not at all the sin of the thing.

Then the Amazons, lifted with glad surprise,
Stood splendid at first and looked far and fair;
Set forward a foot and shook back their hair,
Like clouds pushed back from the sunlit skies.

Then they bared their brows to the palms above,
But they then looked level in each other's eyes,
And they then remembered that the thought of love
Was the thing forbidden, and they sank in sighs.

They turned from the training, they came in a throng
To the old, old tale; and they trained no more,
As he sang of love; and some on the shore,
And full in the sound of the eloquent song,

With a womanly air and irresolute will
Went listlessly onward as gathering shells,
Then gazed where the waters, with mirroring swells,
Reflected their forms—then they sighed, and were still.

And they all spoke not. Some tapped on the sand
With the sandalled foot, keeping time to the sound,
In a sort of a dream; some timed with the hand,
And one held eyes full of tears to the ground,

As the tide of the years turned stormy and strong
With its freightage of wrecks and impossible things,
And a flood of far memories born of the song
And borne to the heart on articulate wings.

She thought of the days when their wars they were not,
As she leaned and listened to the old, old song,
When they sang of their loves, and she all forgot
Of the hard oppressions and a world of wrong.

Like a pure true woman, with her trust in tears
And the things that are true, she relived them in thought,
Though hushed and crushed in the fall of the years,
And she lived but the fair, and the false she forgot

As a tale long told, or as things that are dreams ;
And the quivering curve of the lip it confest
Of the silent regrets of a soul that teems
With a world of love in a brave true breast.

Then this one, younger, who had known no love,
Nor had looked upon man but in blood on the field,
She bowed her head, and she leaned on her shield,
And her heart beat quick as the wings of a dove

That is blown from the sea, where the rests they are not
In the season of storms ; and by instinct taught
Grew pensive, and sighed; and she thought and she thought
Of some wonderful things, and—she knew not of what.

Then this one thought of a love forsaken,
Thought of a brown sweet babe, and she thought
Of the bread-fruits gathered, of swift fish taken
In intricate nets, like a love well sought.

And she thought of the moons of her maidenhood,
Mellowed and fair with the forms of man,
In her memory set like the shadowy wood
By the beautiful waves that around her ran ;

Fairer indeed than the fringes of light
That lie at rest on the west of the sea
In the furrows of foam on the borders of night,
And dearer indeed than the songs to be ;

Than the calling of dreams from the opposite land,
To the land of life, and of journeyings dreary
When the soul goes over from the form grown weary,
And walks in the cool of the trees on the strand.

But the Queen moved forth, as to smite him at first
With the sword unto death, yet it seemed that she durst
Not smite him at all; and she stood as to chide,
And she lifted her face, and she frowned at his side.

And she touched on his arm, and she looked in his eyes
   And right full in his soul, but she saw no fear
   In the pale fair face, and with frown severe
She pressed her lips as suppressing her sighs.

She banished her wrath, she unbended her face,
   And she lifted her hand and put back his hair
   From his pale sad brow, with a penitent air,
And forgave him all, with an unuttered grace;

For she said no word. Yet no more was severe;
   She stood as subdued by the side of him still,
   Then averted her face with a resolute will,
As to hush a regret, or to hide back a tear.

Then she said to herself: "A stranger is this,
   And sad and alone, that knows not at all
   That a throne shall totter and the strong shall fall,
At the mention of love and its banefullest bliss.

"O life that is lost in bewildering love—
   But a stranger is sacred!" She lifted a hand
And she laid it as soft as the breast of a dove
   On the delicate mouth; it was more than the wand

Of the tamer of serpents; for she did no more
   Than to bid with her eyes and to beck with her hand,
And the song drew away to the shells of the shore,
   Took wings, as it were, to the verge of the land.

But her heart it was heavy. With penitent head
She returned to her troop, and, retiring, she said:
"Alas! and alas! Shall it come to pass
That the panther shall die from a blade of grass?

"That the tiger shall yield at the bent-horn blast?
That we, who have conquered a world and all
Of men and of beasts in the world, must fall
Ourselves, at the mention of love, at the last?"

Was it love or regret so besetting him now?
For the singer was fretted, and farther apart
He wandered, perplexed, and he felt that his heart
Leapt high and leapt hot till it tinged to the brow—

Beat quick and beat troubled, and strong and untamed,
As he saw her move on with a marvellous grace
To her troop as they trained; and he turned from his place,
He averted his head, and he felt him ashamed

That he sat at her board, and day after day
Lived on in her land in the shield of a lie;
That he dared not stand to the front and say
The truth, and die as a soldier should die.

She, troubled at heart, when returned to her troop,
Led minstrel and all to the innermost part
Of the palm-crowned Isle, where the great trees group
In armies, to battle when black storms start;

And took up her retreat from the sun by the trees
That are topped like tents, where the fire-flies
Are a light to the feet, and a fair lake lies
As cool as the coral-set centres of seas.

Here Nature was good, and gave to her lover
Yet warm from her bosom the all that she had,
And only demanded that he should love her
Full well in return, and so to be glad.

In the heart of the Isle her carpet was spread,
All silken and soft with the velvety bloom;
Her couch it was canopied overhead,
And allured to sleep with its deep perfume.

The sarsaparilla had woven its thread
So through and through, like to threads of gold;
'Twas stronger than thongs a thousandfold,
And on every hand and up overhead

Ran thick as the threads on the rim of a reel,
By red leaf and dead leaf, bough and vine,
The green and the grey leaf, coarse and fine,
And the cactus tinted with cochineal.

And every colour that the Master Sun
Has painted and hung in the halls of God,
Blushed in the sky or spread on the sod,
Pictured and woven and wound as one.

The tamarind and the cocoa-tree,
The quick cinchona, the red sangre,
The keen caressa, the sycamore,
Were woof and warp as wide as the shore.

Here palm-trees lorded the copse like kings,
Their tall tops tossing the indolent clouds
That folded the Isle in the dawn like shrouds,
Then fled from the sun like living things.

The cockatoos swung in the vines below,
And muttering hung on a golden thread,
Or moved on the mossed boughs to and fro,
In plumes of gold and arrayed in red.

They held their heads to the side as though
They were weighed with thought, and looked to the eas
Like wiseacres uttering oracles low,
And who wisest seem when they know the least.

The lake lay hidden away from the light,
As asleep in the Isle from the tropical noon,
And narrow and bent like a new-born moon,
And as fair as a moon in the noon of the night.

It was shadowed by forests, was fringed by ferns,
And fretted anon by the fishes that leapt
At indolent flies that slept or kept
Their drowsy tones on the tide by turns.

And here in the dawn when the day was strong
And newly aroused from his leafy repose,
With the dew on his feet and the tints of the rose
In his great fair face, was a sense and a song

That the tame old world has nor known nor heard
Of eloquent wings of the humming bird,
That beguiled the heart; and they purpled the air
And allured the eye, as so everywhere

On the rim of the wave, or across it in swings,
They swept or they sank in a sea of blooms,
The senses filled with the soft perfumes,
As they wove and they wound in a song of wings.

And the senses drank of the fragrance deep,
And the glad soul questioned it whether or no
It had risen above or yet dwelt below,
Or whether to laugh for love or to weep.

A bird in scarlet and gold, made mad
With the sweet delights, through the branches slid
And kissed the lake on a drowsy lid
Till the ripples ran and the face was glad:

Glad and lovely as the lights that sweep
In the autumn time through the awful north
On the face of heaven when the stars are forth—
Or the face of a child that smiles in sleep.

Here came the Queen, in the tropical noon,
When the wave and the world and all were asleep,
And nothing looked forth to betray her, or peep
Through the glory of trees in their garments of June,

To bathe with her court in the waters that bent
As bold and as sharp as a bow unspent,
In the beautiful lake through the towering trees,
And the tangle of blooms in a burden of bees.

And strangely still, and more strangely sweet
Was the lake that lay in its cradle of fern,
As still as a moon with her horns that turn
In the night like lamps to some delicate feet.

They came and they stood by the brink of the tide,
They hung their shields on the boughs of the trees,
And they leaned their lances against the side,
Unloosed their sandals, and busy as bees

That ply with industrious wings the perfumes,
They ungathered their robes in the rustle of leaves
And the nodding of reeds and the beautiful blooms
That enwound them as close as the wine-vine weaves.

But the minstrel had faltered, and further aside
Than ever before he averted his head,
Then he picked up a pebble and fretted the tide,
Then turned with a countenance flushed and red.

Then he feigned him ill, and he wandered away,
And he sat him down by the waters alone,
And prayed for pardon, as a knight should pray,
And rued an error not all his own.

Then the Amazons pressed to the girdle of reeds,
Two and by two they advanced to the wave,
Challenged each other, and bade be brave,
Bantered, and vaunted of valorous deeds.

They pushed and they parted the curtains of green,
All timid at first; then looked at the wave
And laughed; retreated, then came up brave
To the brink of the water, led on by their Queen.

Then again they retreated, then again advanced,
Parted the boughs in a proud disdain,
Then bent their heads to the waters, and glanced
Below, then blushed, and then laughed again,

Till a bird awakened, and all dismayed
They shrank to the leaves and the sombre shade
With a womanly sense of a delicate shame
That strife and changes had left the same.

Then at last came forward a beautiful pair
And bent to the wave, and bending they blushed
As rich as the wines, when the waters rushed
To the dimpled limbs, and laughed in the hair.

Then the fair troop followed with shouts, with cheers,
And they cleft the wave, and the friendly ferns
Came down in curtains and curves and turns,
And a brave palm lifted a thousand spears.

From under the ferns and away from the land,
And out in the wave until lost below,
There lay, as white as a bank of snow,
A long and a beautiful reach of sand.

And clothed alone in their clouds of hair
And curtained about by the palm and fern,
And made as their Maker had made them, fair,
And splendid of natural grace and turn,

Untrammelled by art and untroubled by man
They tested their strength, or they tried their speed,
And here they wrestled, and there they ran,
Supple and lithe as the watery reed.

The great trees shadowed the bow-tipped tide,
And nodded their plumes from the opposite side,
As if to whisper, Take care ! take care !
But the meddlesome sunshine here and there

Kept pointing a finger right under the trees,
Kept shifting the branches and wagging a hand
At the round brown limbs on the border of sand,
And seemed to whisper, Ho ! what are these ?

The gold-barred butterflies to and fro
And over the waterside wandered and wove
Heedless and idle as clouds that rove
And drift by the peaks of perpetual snow.

But a monkey swung out from a bough in the skies,
Whiskered and ancient, and wisest of all
Of his populous race, and he heard them call
And he watched them long, with his head sidewise,

From under his brows of amber and brown,
Patient and silent and never once stirred ;
Then he shook his grey head and he hastened him down
To his army below and said never a word.

But the minstrel he took him apart from the place,
He looked up in the boughs at the gold birds there,
He counted the humming-birds fretting the air,
And caught at the butterflies fanning his face.

Then he sat him down in a crook of the wave
And away from the Amazons, under the skies
Where the great trees curved in a leaf-lined cave,
And he lifted his hands and he shaded his eyes,

And he held his head to the north when they came
To run on the reaches of sand from the south
And he pulled at his chin, and he pursed his mouth,
And he shut his eyes with a shudder of shame.

(*To be continued.*)

LOVE OR MONEY?

A NOVELETTE IN FOUR PARTS,

BY STEPHEN J. MACKENNA, AUTHOR OF "OFF PARADE."

PART I.

A GARDEN PARTY AT RYDE.

"NOW Miss Bell—through this hoop like a bird! and we shall be up to Miss Evans's lot, and stand fair to win." The glass actually dropped from Captain Islebart's eye as he thus gave vent to a very unusual excitement over a close game of croquet at the Evans's. For the massive, handsomely fashionable, and fashionably-handsome captain was of a languid, imperturbable nature, and very rarely allowed any emotion whatever to be more apparent than an elevation of the eyebrows—a long steady stare, or a prolonged stroke of his jewelled hand down the huge black moustache—would denote. But he certainly was excited; so much so indeed as to draw the attention of his subaltern, Ensign Bliss, to the fact, causing that youthful ornament of Her Majesty's Service inconsequently to remark to his partner—fair Angelina Prout—"'Jove! Islebart's temper's up—devil of a fellow, you know, when he's riled!"

"Really?" queried the carefully preserved, if somewhat year-worn beauty, impatiently passing her rich brown hair behind her ears as she beat with one neat foot a *pas-de-diable* on the shaven turf; "Really?—I suppose, then, you poor 'subs' tremble in your shoes when such is the case?" Ensign Bliss subsided into a blushful rage, and remarked at mess the next night in Parkhurst Barracks that "That skinny old Prout was really too bad," and expressed a desire to be performed on by Mr. Calcraft "if she wasn't spoons on Islebart."

Annie Bell was nervous. She was playing for the first time before a large and fault-finding audience, composed of the first rank and fashion in Ryde. She was a new-comer in the midst of a banded host merciless to all who did not defy their small local malice. She was on the weaker side in the game—the stroke to be made was most difficult. She had attracted considerable and marked attention from some old and some new acquaintances among the officers, thereby rousing the demon Jealousy in muslin-covered bosoms that (morally speaking) thirsted for her blood — and therefore small wonder that Annie Bell was nervous. But nervousness was not to subdue her on this or any other occasion. In that small, yet elegantly —nay, perfectly—formed frame, there was a soul and a spirit unconquerable under ordinary circumstances, and you had but to look at the queenly white forehead, surmounted with a coronal of close-braided hair; the straight, decisive nose; the sky-blue eyes with purple pupils; the firm, if winning, mouth; and the glorious fighting-power evinced in every line of the creamy chin and throat, to see that fair Annie Bell would never be humiliated by the mere animal power of the nerves. So she had taken a long thirsty look at the relative positions of the hoop, her ball, and those outlying ones of friends and enemies; and had taken in the whole state of the game. She glanced up with a brave smile of conquest to Islebart's face—he towering over her like some great oak above a silver birch—and gracefully bending, paused a moment, then struck her ball with a sharp, unswerving blow, that sent it flying through its proper hoop into the midst of the opponents' country.

"Bravo! bravo! first-rate—a really splendid stroke!" and other such-like expressions broke in torrents from the bystanders and her own side; while the opposition looked gloomy and crest-fallen, as ominous growlings of anticipated defeat rose to their lips. Captain Islebart was a picture, fine to behold; for while pausing for Miss Bell's successful *coup*, Fan Evans—tall and dark and in scornfully negligent attire, becoming one whose presence required no adventitious aids of dress —had glided to his side and twitted him audibly with his want of coolness, until the remorseful swell became aware that he had lost *caste* by an unbecoming enthusiasm, and strove with great efforts to regain his normal apathy. Thus he stood still, not attending Miss Bell in her further career of knocking her opponents' balls to the farthest corners of the ground, stroking the black moustache, lounging on his mallet in statuesque attitudes, and "haw-hawing" with an energetic laziness that did great honour to his talents in that respect.

Lynn Darley—timid, desponding, small, awkward, and with a constant uneasy feeling that all women laughed at and despised him —saw his chance. Shambling up to Miss Bell, as she stood flushed and elated with her successful raid against the enemy, he poured forth his small congratulations on her victory. Miss Bell was gracious: in fact, knowing so few people at the party, she felt rather awkward standing alone, and was proportionably glad of any one's company to cover her from general remark. Besides, Captain Darley was an old and dear friend, and had known and admired, and been loved with the young beauty's girlish love, when quartered in a small country town where her parents had previously resided; so that there was plenty to talk about without the hideous necessity of having to invent conversation out of the surrounding circumstances. Since the Bells had come to Ryde in the winter time, Darley, who was quartered at Parkhurst, had renewed the former intimacy, found himself oftener than ever calling at the sweet rose cottage ("The Rosery" by name) with its *bijou* grounds overlooking the Solent, had lost his heart irrevocably, and was becoming day by day more unhappy, more self-despising, more despairing, as he contrasted his own misshapen form and weak nervousness with her beauty and grace. For the first few months he had the field clear to himself, but by degrees the Bells began to be better known—people called on them—the Misses Evans (three youngish orphan girls of great wealth) had discovered that Annie was a school-fellow, and foolishly, as they afterwards discovered, introduced her among their friends in society. Other military men, as well from the Depôt Battalion at Parkhurst, as from Gosport, Southsea, and similar places "over the water," got in on his preserve—the result of the whole being that Captain Lynn Darley was rendered a thoroughly miserable man, and began to give up any faint idea he had ever had that Annie Bell would continue to love him as she undoubtedly had in the early days of their acquaintance. Yet he could not keep away from the fascination of her presence, but constantly sought her society at "The Rosery," on the pier, or the band-stand—finding a valuable ally in old Lawrence Bell (to whose windy stories no other man in Ryde could be persuaded to listen), but a relentless foe in the mamma, who saw in her sharp motherly wit no apparent means of bringing Darley to the point, and wisely disliked and feared a suitor who had not courage to come forward, but yet was sufficiently intimate to hinder the advances of bolder if less eligible men—at least in a moneyed point of view. For Lynn Darley was tolerably endowed with the mammon of iniquity, and could show his clear thousand a year—a sum which, as the wise mother knew perfectly well, is not to be got every day in the ranks of the British infantry. But Captain Islebart was mamma's favourite of all the Parkhurst garrison for many reasons—but chiefly for his money. His money was great, beating Lynn Darley's financial position hollow. Again, Darley's money had been made in trade—coffee, or alum, or hides, or indigo, or some such rubbish—while Islebart's gold was land. Where is the mamma that will not despise mere lucre in the Funds, and cling wildly, desperately to the real thing—Land? Then the two men were not to be compared—Darley was nothing to look at in face or person. The countenance was good in expression, but wretched in the matter of looks. He was small, ill-made, and a heart-breaking bashfulness and nervousness of body could be detected in every motion of the twitching frame. Certainly he had fought and starved, and starved and fought in both the Crimean and Indian wars as well as the most stalwart; he rode as straight and true to hounds as the most dare-devil "whip" in Leicestershire; yet he could never give an order in the barrack-yard and look as if he thought it would be obeyed; he was mercilessly chaffed by his brother captains—sneered at by cynical lieutenants, long past the romance of their first uniforms, hopeless of promotion, and dearly loving to affect a contempt for all above them—and laughed at but liked by the shaky little ensigns, to whom he was always kind, gave good advice, and (strangest weakness of all) actually lent money! Not that they ever paid him back within months of the time they had promised, but that he cared not for, as long as they liked him. Something to like him—something to love him—that was all he wanted, and yet it seemed to him he could never hope for the latter. Mrs. Skiffer—the inevitable widow of the watering place—laughed at him dreadfully, nicknamed him "Captain Stickleback," and abused him like a pickpocket in his absence; but there were not a few in Ryde who considered that the pretty, *piquante*, cream-coloured-pony-driving-creature, would have been very glad to take Darley for a husband, and thus recruit finances that were suspected of a tendency to run low.

Mrs. Skiffer, too, flirted her gay bonnet strings in Captain Islebart's face, and would most decidedly have accepted that gorgeous warrior at a moment's notice; but he—grand, impassible—proceeded on the even path of cool swelldom, flirting and being flirted with, and not sustaining one heart-pang the while :—

"The moon looks down on many brooks,
The brook sees but one moon."

Of late, however, he had changed a trifle. He cultivated eagerly the intimate run of that most charming of villas Linden Grove, causing a fluttering and petty jealousy in the hearts of the three fair owners, Fan, Winny, and Liz Evans, that threatened to destroy the home peace of those maidens. He sought and found welcome shelter in the world-worn heart of Angelina Prout. He worked his satellite and hanger-on, Billingay (a dissipated, conscienceless, but plausible lieutenant in his regiment) almost to death in sending him from place to place getting up boating parties, croquet, concerts, *et id genus omne*, with a view of meeting in turns *all* the *élite* in Ryde. He made desperate efforts to increase the natural party-giving proclivities of dowagers whom he had previously ignored and despised. He begged everywhere, and made his subaltern beg, for invitations for Miss Bell, and putting all these signs of his great captain's emotion together, the aforesaid Billingay imparted in confidence to Sam, a harum-scarum naval cousin of Annie Bell—just returned in a rickety gunboat from the Persian Gulf—that 'Bart was "going a regular mucker—head over heels in love with your cousin."

And thus stood matters at the Evans's May-day croquet party, where Annie Bell first came into prominent notice, and was henceforth and for ever taken to the bosom of "Society" in Ryde. She was elated; she stood straight up in the pride of complete success; she was triumphant, for she had attained the desire that had gnawed at her heart for months; had made a visible mark in the new world of an upper life now first opening before her; and felt a conviction of success in her future career. Annie Bell was well born, but her parents were wretchedly poor. Now in a select watering place like the elegant capital of the "Garden Isle," where wealthy families reside all the year round, where poverty of the genteel sort is almost unknown, where every one looks to refined pleasures as the only occupations of life, where there is a king, constitution, and people all acting with one accord to maintain a conservative cliqueism; in such a place good birth unaccompanied by tolerable wealth has but small chance of recognition, unless the new comer has patient and pushing energy sufficient to force his much-snubbed way into notice, or happens to have friends already within the magic circle who may be able and willing to give a helping hand towards entering the elysium. Both these aids Miss Bell found after some few months. The Evans girls and Lynn Darley had first brought her into notice. Islebart and Billingay pleaded and obtained invitations for her in every quarter; her mother (as also, indeed, her own self) energetically made footholds out of every finger-clutch offered, and after a while nothing was needed but this success at the first croquet party of the season to land Annie Bell fairly in the bosom of the high heaven to which she had aspired. For though she looked, when in repose, soft, sedate, and gentle as a kitten—though she really was a fondling, loving, and true-hearted woman; yet there was a clawishness and hankering after money, not for itself, but for the power, position, beauties, and all good things it could bring; a desire to be queen of all in the magnificent details of carriages, horses, dresses, jewels, tours abroad, yachts—in fact, a cupidity not to be satisfied without the fabulous wealth of Monte Cristo, that bid fair to burn up all the strong, healthy love for home, parents, and early friends, unless checked and brought into due submission by external circumstances. In dress alone you could see this. Hers was by necessity the plainest of the plain, though chosen and fitted with the most accurate taste; but the eager, searching, longing glances she threw on the more richly devised garments of girls in this new society could not be mistaken, and it pained many an old and wise heart to see so fair a creature a prey to a degrading covetousness. Women, with their keen perception of evil in others, found out this vice on a very brief acquaintance, but to men it was almost unknown, and where, through the kind offices of spiteful tongues, known, not believed in. To total strangers this fair golden beauty seemed quite perfection—simply adorable; to those who knew her better she was interesting, beautiful, fascinating; to intimates, who were *not* smitten with her many charms, she was a fair, sweet tempered, true girl, in whose beautiful outward form there seemed no defect, while in the soul there were some flaws, some unguarded spots, through which sin might find an easy entrance.

The croquet party was over—Annie Bell's raid had won the game for her side—and the tall dark figure of Fan Evans (eldest and chief of the hostesses though she was) quivered with annoyance as Islebart, unable to hold out any longer, left her side and lounged to join Lynn Darley and a whole crowd of men who had gathered round the victrix. There was of course to be the usual extraordinary collection of solids and delicacies that goes to make up the eating portion of croquet; so while the guests were broken into little knots about the grounds discussing the game, the three sisters met together indoors to see that the housekeeper had provided in due style.

"Oh, Liz, what *did* possess you to introduce that conceited thing?" queried poor Fan as she sank down in an easy chair, half tired, half passionate.

"Well, it wasn't my fault only—Winny picked her out as a schoolfellow first—wanted to study her character, I suppose, for her next novel!" half-excused, half-sneered out the quick, clever-looking, bright-eyed Lizzie Evans as she fidgeted round the long glittering table, arranging flowers and fruit and glass.

Now be it known that Winny Evans had written and published a trashy novel full of personalities, under the flimsiest of coverings, concerning prominent members of society, and in consequence the sisters had been very deservedly cut for a considerable period, and were but now beginning to regain their lost position. So that sharp Lizzie made the latter part of her remark to withdraw blame from herself, as she knew the novel was a subject all three were bound to quarrel over.

"Am I never to be let alone about that wretched"—— Winny was commencing, when through the French window opening on the lawn she spied Lynn Darley gazing disconsolate at the great red sun setting in crimson majesty over the New Forest, and broke off in her lamentations to trot out and console the bashful captain, who had been easily driven from Annie Bell's company by Islebart and other imposing men. Lizzie laughed at this clever escape of her sister, and treated the remaining one to a dissertation on the evil effects of love on the female system—especially when bestowed from one family on two such opposite men as Captains Darley and Islebart.

"Stuff and nonsense, Liz," broke in Fan Evans, rising to ring the bell; "do you think either of us care for these mere flirts?"

"Well, 'Bart,' as Mr. Bliss calls him, certainly *is* a flirt; still I admire your taste, Fan; but as for poor 'Stickleback,' he hasn't the pluck to flirt with a goose—and how Winny, who came out so strong in her book about 'massive, muscular, brazen-faced, giantesque men,' can endure such a wretched crooked mite, I can't perceive. Besides, he hasn't"——

"Hush, Liz, here's Mrs. Barton and the servants." And they settled down forthwith to domestic details, resulting in an immediate call of the company to "tea," as it was their pleasure to call a heavy banquet of dainties and a profuse outpouring of many and rich wines.

PART II.

"PITY A POOR PRISONER!"

THE Depôt Battalion at Parkhurst had just finished morning parade. A hot July sun streamed down on the gravelly ground, that threw back its rays with interest, so that men were glad to "break off," unbuckle their sword belts, loosen tunics, and stroll away in twos and threes to the mess-house, there to indulge in the refreshment of bitter beer and a concomitant pipe in the cool doorway.

"Well, how did you fellows like that?" asked Sam Bell, coming out of the mess-room after a hearty late breakfast, and alluding to the marchings and counter-marchings which his military brethren had been undergoing.

"None of your chaff, Sam," replied his host Billingay, removing a well-coloured claw pipe from his mouth as he lounged against a window-sill; "I didn't bring you over here to crow at our misfortunes."

"Confound that old Murrell! I thought he would never stop," interposed young Bliss, who, being the latest joined ensign, felt it incumbent on him to affect a horror of drill and a contempt of his commanding officer that he was really far from feeling.

"Bliss, you'll have to go and pay the company—Roden has money!" drawled out Islebart, emitting a long spiral column of smoke from his lips. And the obedient ensign trotted off behind Sergeant Roden, who saluted his captain—and him only.

Just then the orderly corporal came up with the post letters, and proceeded to distribute them according to seniority with the sedateness of a man knowing and doing his duty.

There was one for Sam Bell from Ryde, directed to the care of Billingay, and the young sailor's countenance showed no small signs of perturbation as he finished the note and replaced it in its envelope.

"'Bart, look here a moment," he said, walking a little aside, lazily followed by the great captain, muttering to himself about a "confounded baw;" "didn't you say you were going over to Ryde to-day?"

"Was; but I am for court-martial duty, and can't."

"What an infernal nuisance! I wanted to ask you for a seat over—had a letter from Annie—something wrong with her old governor—and she wants me."

"The doose she does!" ejaculated Islebart with some appearance of warmth as he removed the cigar from his lips.

"Yes. Can't you get some fellow to exchange duties with you?"

"Might—but it's a great baw!" and he stroked the huge moustache with a world-weary air.

"Do—there's a good fellow—I'll trot off to get ready," and Sam Bell made the best of his way to Billingay's quarters to change his flannel pea-jacket for a more reputable garment.

"I say, Darley, will you do my court-martial for me?" asked Islebart, approaching the group at the mess-door.

"I really can't, 'Bart; I am going to Ryde to-day I think," was the answer Darley made, quivering his shoulders with a nervous twitch peculiar to him.

"What a doosid disobliging fellow you are—never do anything for a fellow," was the most unmerited reply as Islebart turned away to look for a substitute.

"I'll change if you like, 'Bart," interposed Warren—a brisk yachting man who cut the soldier and affected the sailor whenever he got a chance. "I shall be 'on' next Friday, and I want to go with Garnew for a trial cruise in the Viking that day."

"All right—you make it square with Tibbitts—and I'll be off."

"What's up, Sam?" asked Billingay, loafing some half-hour afterwards into his own quarters, where Bell was hastily decorating his slim and active person.

"Oh, nothing," was the answer, "only Uncle Lawrence has got into a devil of a mess, and Annie wants me over;" and he tugged viciously at an obstinate necktie that would *not* come straight. Billingay blew a meditative whiff from his pipe before he queried—"Money?"

"Yes, money, and be hanged to it! It, or rather the want of it, has always been the curse of the family. Poor old bloke! he was nabbed yesterday evening, and is safe in Winchester Gaol by this time."

"Whew!" escaped in a long, subdued whistle from Billingay.

"Now then, Bell, ready?" asked Islebart, entering the room attired in gorgeous mufti; "the trap's at my quarters."

"All right, 'Bart; ready in a moment," and Bell bustled into his coat, hunted up some cigars, gloves, and so forth, and declared himself prepared for the drive.

"Better have a liquor before you go, Sam," suggested Billingay, suiting the action to the word and producing a brandy flask and some soda water from his canteen.

"Hum—don't mind if I do; I am rather down about this job," answered the sailor, who was never known to want a healthy thirst when strong drinks were proposed.

"Oh, bother! what a fellow you are for 'stims,' Billy," interposed Islebart with far more impatience than usual, for in the intervals of dressing Sam Bell had crossed and re-crossed the passage on the lobby to his rooms and told him in worrying detached pieces the story of his Uncle Bell's arrest.

"Don't you be a muff, 'Bart, but stick your nose in that," replied Billingay, handing a large tumbler sparkling and dancing over with that pleasant sin called "Soda and B." Islebart sucked it down with the cool composure of indifference; Sam Bell swallowed his with a thirsty delight; and Billingay helped himself to an extra dose of brandy and sputtered fearfully over its fizzing strength.

"*Now* I'm your man, 'Bart," said Sam, putting down the tall glass. They went down stairs—clambered to their seats in Islebart's high dog-cart—the sheet was hastily snatched from the loins of the blood mare—a switch of the long whip, and away they dashed down the incline of the barrack square—out in the high road—through quaint old Newport—and hey! for the high road to Ryde.

"Do you know where those two are off to, Darley?" asked Billingay, meeting the former looking out of the lobby window at Islebart's trap as it swung down the barrack hill.

"Ryde, I suppose, from what Bell said."

"Ay—but do you know what for?" Billingay put this question curiously, or rather, as if insinuating that there existed some peculiar reason out of the ordinary course. Indeed, he wished to excite Darley on the subject of the Bells, since being involved with Islebart in money matters, he could not afford to allow the latter to come to any actual understanding with a penniless beauty like Annie, and would gladly see Lynn Darley remove her from his captain's path.

"No; some party I suppose. There's a pic-nic one day this week I know," answered Lynn Darley, in his quick, timid way.

"They are not going to any party, Dar. Much worse than that, I can tell you." Billingay paused, as if to pull up his pipe to full smoke-power, but really to observe the strange changes of expression passing over his listener's mobile face. "Something that I fear will give you a start; something gone queer with old daddy Bell."

"With Mr. Bell? What? Ah, you are only chaffing, Billy," Darley answered, with a deprecating smile, as though suspicious of a plan for needlessly "taking a rise" out of him.

"Honour!" said Billingay, solemnly; "it's a fact, I tell you—the poor old chap is in Winchester Gaol this moment. And what's more, as far as I have heard about his affairs, he is deuced likely to stay there."

"Good heavens!" ejaculated Lynn Darley, paling and shuddering in his nervous compassion for an old friend and the father of his unhoped-for love. "But are you quite sure, Billy?"

"Certain as you stand there. Sam Bell showed me the letter he got from his cousin, and he is off to see what he can do; and to consult with 'Bart, I suppose." This last was a cruel insinuation, and told home on the sensitive listener.

"Perhaps—maybe—I was going to-day you know—an old friend of Mr. Bell's. Don't you think I ought to go over, Billy?" stammered out Darley, in his hesitating way.

"Well," considered the other, slowly emitting clouds from his pipe, "perhaps you ought. You are the oldest friend they have got, at least with old Bell and the girl; but the mother, she is not very partial, is she?"

"No, she never could bear me—at least of late," he added after a pause, as he thought how she had in early days not objected to his love for Annie when none more wealthy appeared on the scene.

"She'll be glad enough to see you now perhaps. By Jove! Why shouldn't we catch the twelve to Cowes, and go on by boat to Ryde? I want to make a call or two."

"All right—I'll go and get into 'mufti.'" Darley eagerly caught at the suggestion, and shambled off, glad of any action that would at least bring him nearer to Annie, even if he could not see her.

"Shouldn't wonder, now, if poor 'Stickleback' makes a good job of this," half muttered the cold, selfish Billingay, as he turned into his room to dress, "and prevents 'Bart making an ass of himself with that pretty pauper;" and in both train and boat he studiously set himself to work Darley up to a proper pitch of courage for visiting Annie Bell and her much-dreaded mother, with a view to helping them in their trouble.

For Lieutenant Billingay began to smell danger. In the two months that had gone by since the croquet party a good deal had come to pass that was very different from what he had desired or anticipated. In the first place, he had lost on the turf, gambled, spent, flung away more money by many hundred pounds than he could afford. Islebart had done the same, but on an infinitely larger scale; living, in fact, quite *en prince*—so much so, indeed, as to satisfactorily prove to all Newport, Cowes, and Ryde that he was possessed of boundless wealth in actual money, as well as large rentals from his landed estates. Then Billingay was mixed up with Sam Bell in accommodation bills, with all their train of accumulating worries, that were gradually working to a crisis, and, as the two were quite unable to meet their engagements, they trusted to Islebart's lazy generosity to help them out of their troubles, as he had not unfrequently done before. In fact, the lieutenant was so intimately acquainted with Islebart's pecuniary position, had so worked himself into his captain's confidence, and so managed to ferret out all his private family affairs, that it was boldly stated in Parkhurst Barracks that "Billy is old 'Bart's managing attorney, by Jove!" But his principal had for some time past been giving the "attorney" considerable anxiety, and was, in fact, kicking over the traces in a most uncalled for manner. He was spending far too much money on horses, yachting, play, parties, theatricals, &c., and, worse than all, he was flirting desperately—though still in the *blasé* style of a thorough indolent swell—with Fan Evans, Annie Bell, Mrs. Skiffer, Angelina Prout, and, in truth, with a host of others of all sorts, in an utterly shameless style. Billingay could not make up his mind whether it would be better for his interests that 'Bart should remain a bachelor or take up with matrimony and a large addition of fortune. Fan Evans was quite mistress of her own wealth, and would any hour lay it all down devotedly at Islebart's feet; but as for the others, they had absolutely nothing worth having, and Billingay sometimes shuddered with fear lest his too susceptible captain should succumb to the wiles of Widow Skiffer, the soothing, purring devotion of the sentimental Angelina Prout, or the fascinating beauty and sparkling *esprit* of Annie Bell. Still, he had great hopes in 'Bart's indecisive mind putting off the evil day, and nearly determined that if he *did* marry, it would probably be Fan Evans (whom, and whose fortune, in a great measure, he thought he would be able to influence in his own favour), when no great harm, if not positive good, would be done. But Annie Bell—he could *not*, of late, get Annie Bell out of his head; and though Billingay felt sure that she really loved poor Lynn Darley, he ever and again dreaded that her too plain desire for the showy wealth of this world would lead her on more and more in her already too successful attempts on Islebart's heart, and then (with such a clever girl at the head of the house), good-bye to all his own influence over his captain and his purse.

Captain Islebart did not spare his blood mare, but put the beautiful creature to her very best speed up hill and down wooded vale, through the lovely stretch of country between Parkhurst and Ryde. He did not say much to his companion, nor did Sam Bell offer to break the long silences, both being too much taken up with their own thoughts. Islebart was seeking to force the small intellect with which Heaven had endowed him to frame a plan whereby the present state of affairs might lead to the accomplishment of desires that no one—no, not even his general confidant, Billingay—was aware existed in any real strength. His brain was not by any means of an imaginative or inventive description, and on this occasion positively refused to evolve an idea, even by the time its owner pulled up the foam-covered mare, and handed her over to the admiring tenderness of the ostler at the Pier Hotel. Sam Bell felt a sincere pity for his uncle, from whom he had received many a kindness—many a "tip" in better days gone by when he was a little roguish midshipman, full of mischief, but empty of pocket. Of late they had not been such very good friends, for the old gentleman thought he noticed a too warm devotion to Annie, and had felt bound to warn the young sailor that, even if his means were sufficient, he could never be allowed to marry his first cousin, and Sam thought proper to resent his uncle's decision, until harsh words had arisen between them. He loved Annie truly and deeply, loved her with far more than cousinly affection; but though he had never definitely contemplated marriage, or hinted his love to her, or even hoped for a successful termination, he could not bear the idea of her being the wife of any other man, and was now wild that his poverty was so great as to effectually prevent him from materially aiding her father, and thus laying a claim to a little of her affection.

"Thanks, 'Bart," he said, as he jumped down from the trap, shook off his stiffness of limb, and turned towards the road leading to "The Rosery;" "thanks, old fellow—I must go up at once; I suppose you could hardly come with me?"

"Haw—no; hardly the thing to call just now. Can go with you as far as the club."

"Come along—and I wouldn't talk about this affair, 'Bart. May be all settled without people knowing much."

"Hope so—and, if I can be of any use, pray tell Miss Bell to command me."

They parted at the club, and Islebart stood on the steps watching Bell striding up the hill, and envying him with all his heart.

(*To be concluded next month.*)

LIFE IN LONDON.

I.—ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE HOXTON MYSTERY.

"ANOTHER tragedy in Hoxton!" The newspaper placards last month only stimulated my remembrance of Wednesday, July 10. The new incident of Hoxton history occurred within call of the shop where, in the middle of a bright summer day, Mrs. Squires and her daughter were done to death with a plasterer's hammer. And the murderer is still at large. The latter fact has made me shudder whenever I have found myself even as near to Hoxton as Clerkenwell Green. This terrible crime has been allowed to drop out of public memory with a calm resignation which does not add to one's peace of mind. When the Marrs were assassinated in Ratcliff Highway, in 1812, all England thrilled with the horror of the scene. The murderer left no clue behind, and the police were helpless; but London was wild with fear. The subject was never allowed to rest. The knowledge that the criminal was at large made the very heart of the nation beat with anxiety. When the "great artist" (as De Quincey called him in that marvellous essay, "Murder as a Fine Art") followed up his first awful stroke of bloody business by a second crime, the populace of London seemed to arise *en masse* against him. Are we in these days becoming callously accustomed to foul deeds, or is the business of life so much more engrossing than it used to be, that we see criminal after criminal slipping away from justice, without some stirring protest? The police of London do the duty of keeping order, regulating the traffic, and catching ordinary thieves; but as a detective force dealing with "artists" in crime they are notably deficient. There is something singularly like the Marr murders in the Squires tragedy, only that the latter was done in the daylight, and in an open shop. A hammer was used by the modern assassin; a mallet served Williams's purpose. The Ratcliff villain inflicted unnecessary injuries upon his victims; the Hoxton murderer beat his after they were dead. Williams got clean away and beyond suspicion after his first work; the Hoxton tiger is still abroad. Where? A half-witted fellow told one of the police magistrates the other day that he knew him, and was continually on his track. Once he had nearly caught him. Did the murderer smile sardonically as he read this statement in the papers? Is he in London, or has he escaped beyond the seas? Perhaps he is living in Hoxton. He may occasionally visit Hyde Road to contemplate the scene of his awful labours. If he is a student of De Quincey, he will grow cynical over the importance which this street has assumed since his great performance in July. Painting and plastering, and patching up of broken shutters are going on all around the closed blank tenantless shop. The street has received so much public recognition that it has grown ashamed of its dirt. The shops of Mrs. Squires and her three commercial neighbours were the tidiest places in the locality. The well-known stationer's store stands out now like a rebuke to the rest; the name of the dead stares at you from the doorway as if the letters were traced in blood; the blinds are closed against the daylight; the dumb windows seem still to shut in the scene of blood; the whole house pleads to the passer by for vengeance. If the Hoxton tragedy were a chapter in fiction, the son of Mrs. Squires would devote his life to tracking down the culprit; but we are in real life, and Mr. Pritchard (he is the son of her first husband, and a musician) is going to take the shutters down, and open the shop as a music warehouse!

But to the *raison d'être* of this article. The "other tragedy in Hoxton" induced me to visit that part of London, the atmosphere of which would seem to engender foul deeds. The only feature in which the Northport Street business differs much from that of Chelsea, is in the fact of Augustus Elliott being jealous of Ellen Moore. Jealous! This strange passion seems equally strong, whether the object of it be Traviata or Desdemona. Elliott had spent his money, and he could not endure his "fair acquaintance" visiting another man! This is the police theory of the story, and there is every reason to believe it is the correct one. Elliott declines to speak about the circumstances. When Ellen Moore thought she was dying, she said, "'Gus did it." The pair were carried fearfully mutilated to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, the woman much more desperately injured than the man. Let the young gentlemen who hang about the haunts of Circe lay this and the Chelsea lesson to heart. A life of immorality must end miserably.

Northport Street and Hyde Road lie in the very midst of that dense quarter of London called Hackney, like a district apart. Northport Street is the outcome of a shabby locality of dirty houses and fifth-rate shops; and it leads to nowhere—I beg its pardon, it leads to the very street of all others which *should* hem it in and stop its free current of air; it leads to Hyde Road, where Mrs. Squires and her daughter were murdered at noon in presence of the miscellaneous traffic of that very miscellaneous district. No. 9, Northport Street is a freshly-painted one-story house, with suspicious reddish moreen curtains at the bedroom windows. With the exception of the next house, the other houses are dingy-looking, poverty-stricken places. The street is macadamised and dusty; dusty with last month's dust, "nubbly" with last year's repairs. Nothing is so demoralising as badly kept thoroughfares. Foul paths extend their influence to doorsteps, from doorsteps to windows, from outsides of houses to their insides. Dirt is the offspring of crime and misery and death; it would be easy to charge it with murder.

"Is that the house in which the affair of Monday took place?" I asked a painter who was at work on the other side of the street.

"Yes," he said, resting on his ladder.

"Is it a lodging-house?"

"It is, and something more, and has been this two year."

The man laughed, as he eyed the quiet-looking house.

"Queer neighbourhood this?" I suggested.

"Some of it," he said, laughing again. "Lodgings is easily found here."

"These poor people are likely to get better, I am told."

"Yes, they say so; the young fellow is getting on fast; that man yonder" (pointing to a man in his shirt sleeves on the other side of the street) "is the man who went in first; he held the fellow, and he can't get the blood off his arm now."

"Is that so?" I asked of the other person.

"Yes," he said; "won't wash off;" and he exhibited some stains on his flesh.

I have done Northport Street another injustice; I intimated that No. 9 was the best painted house in it. The street has its Bar or Gin Palace, which towers up above the dirty surroundings with plate glass, showy sign, and polished lamps. It is the only really clean-looking thing in the shadow of the Hoxton tragedies. Working men's wives who wish to keep their husbands at home should compete with the Gin Palace on the score of cleanliness and civil words.

For cleanliness and a look of prosperity, the Bar in Northport Street might have been in the sunshine of Mayfair instead of the shadow of Hyde Road. The landlord, a courteous, merry fellow, served us promptly with a foaming tankard of stout, and commenced to chaff a slippered slovenly woman who was taking her morning nip.

"Got a paper? No," he said. "These exciting scenes in Hoxton seem to drive people mad for papers."

"I wanted to see the *Hackney Gazette*," said the woman.

"Ain't got it; you must wait for the *Police News*, that's the paper for you."

"Yes," said the woman, her eyes expanding with anticipation; "I do like that paper; ain't it a good un? sich pictures, lor! there ain't nothin' to come up to that."

"It almost makes one ready to commit a murder for the sake of having one's portrait a-doing of the deed," I said in a reckless sort of way, secure under my slouch hat.

"Lor it do!" said the woman in a maudlin fashion; while the landlord laughed heartily, and said that was looking at it in a new light; "but it is an interesting paper, mind you."

A plasterer entered here, evidently an intelligent working man, followed by a couple of lazy-looking fellows, to all appearance having no particular calling.

"They're getting better, I hear," said the plasterer.

"Don't know, don't care," said the landlord.

"Oh," was the reply, "this is becoming a nice neighbourhood; these murders and things have taken a hundred a year off the value of your house."

The landlord laughed, and served several customers in "The Bottle and Jug Department."

"It don't matter to me what such cattle as them comes to; they may all shoot themselves if they like."

"Rubbish shot here," said the plasterer; and the company laughed loudly.

One of the other fellows said he wouldn't mind shooting some people; he did not want to commit murder, but he should have nerve enough to do it; whereupon he went into a rambling criticism of men who are afraid "to go in and stop a murder."

"Alexander, as went into No. 9, wasn't afraid," said the landlord.

"I shouldn't be afraid," said the Sloucher, "though I were once asked to do a thing; it was in Moorgate Street, four o'clock in the morning; a bobby, he found a door open, and says he to me, 'There's something wrong here,' says he, 'come in with me,' he says. 'No, thankee,' says I. 'But you must,' says he. 'I'm going to my work,' says I. 'Then I charges you in the Queen's name,' he says. So says I, 'If that's it, go in,' and in he goes, and I follers. When he gets halfway upstairs, I follers three steps; and then, when he thinks I was a goin up three steps more, I was a going three steps down, and I bolted into the passage, out into Coleman Street, and goes home."

Thereupon the Plasterer commenced to chaff the Sloucher as to the probability of the policeman wanting him for other reasons than the door being open. "That bobby got dismissed for letting a prisoner escape," he said. "He had an eye to your going up some other stairs."

The Plasterer climbed an imaginary staircase that revolved. The Sloucher joined in the general laughter at this very personal joke, and I left them ordering "another go of gin and bitters."

"And it was a plasterer's hammer that killed the women in Hyde Road," I thought, as I betook myself to the scene of the tragedy of July, which, for various reasons, I found well worthy of a visit.

It is curious to note, in spite of its general accuracy, the small exaggerations and mis-statements of the London press. The scene of the latest Hoxton tragedy is described as within fifty yards of the house where the Squireses were murdered. The distance is at least two hundred yards, about "within call." When the first tragedy was enacted, the reporters described the business of Mrs. Squires as a news-agency. It had always been in my mind that the boy who discovered the murder went in to buy a paper. I had often wondered in a half-morbid, half-curious way, whether it was *Bow Bells*, the *Boys of England*, the *Police News*, or "Jack Sheppard" that he wanted, building upon this some fanciful ideas of the impression of the scene on the boy's mind, and connecting the crime by a very fine hair-link with the literature of the shop. But Mrs. Squires and her ill-fated daughter did not sell newspapers at all. This discovery had a singular effect upon my previous notions of the quality and character of the murder. But what astonished me more than anything was the generally busy aspect of Hyde Road. It is hard to believe that in the middle of the day a murder could be committed in an open shop situated in a public street, and that, being committed, no one should know anything about it until the criminal had done his work, plundered the house, and escaped. This Hoxton tragedy is a mystery which becomes all the more startling and appalling the more it is looked into.

Turning to the right out of Northport Street you come into Hyde Road. On your left are four respectable-looking shops. The fourth is closed. Over the door is painted "S. Squires, Wholesale Stationer, Printseller. The Trade Supplied." Even now there is an evidence of cleanliness about the place. The windows of the two stories over the shop are furnished with green Venetian blinds ornamented with brass rods. Adjoining the shop is a row of smaller houses. On the other side of the way the street has a more shambling look than on this side, where I contemplate the scene, standing on the door-step of the fatal house. The road is not more than thirty-five feet wide. Directly opposite is the greengrocer's shop mentioned in the sad, familiar story; a small shop partly overflowing into the street with potatoes and greens. Then there is a thoroughfare, flanked on the other side by a butcher's shop, which is adorned with placards of the "East London Theatre" and the "Cambridge Music Hall." Farther on is a flaring sign announcing "Cartes de Visite, 3s. dozen," and on the other side of the greengrocer's is a tumble-down little house, which rejoices in the following announcement—"Gent's Boots Soled and Heeled—Unitarian Christian Worship held here." As a rule the Unitarians are a well-to-do denomination. They are in very low water here, at all events. Beyond the house which so strangely combines "Gent's Boots" and "Christian Worship" is "The Flint House," a "Public" well known, it seems, in the district. It will be remembered that a drayman said he saw a man run out of Squires's on the day of the murder. When I first stood on this doorstep awe-struck and wondering, it occurred to me what sort of a van could be passing along Hyde Road, when there trotted past a dray loaded with oil casks and empty oil-cans. A huckster's cart plunged after it, a watercress man passed me, and after him came a vendor of groundsel. Other persons passed by; two customers went into the greengrocer's, the butcher came to his door, a half-drunken fellow lounged out of the Flint House, a woman looked at me from the "Gent's Boots" establishment, and there were other indications of life in the street which makes the event of three months ago all the more strange and mysterious. The murderer, I should say, lived close by; he not only knew the habits of the women, but he knew Hyde Road well. Darting over the way by the greengrocer's he would soon be lost in the great tide of London. But not to be heard, not to be seen, to leave no trace, except the inference that he did his work with a plasterer's hammer!

I dare say Hyde Road was busier than usual during my visit. Everybody seemed to be painting and mending houses. Even "Gent's Boots" was having his shutters repaired. He might at the same time have cleaned his windows. What does all this polishing mean in Hyde Road? Has the murder added a new dignity to the locality? Do the inhabitants feel that they owe something to fame? Have the visitors to Hyde Road grown so numerous that poor Mrs. Squires's neighbours have become a little ashamed of their dirty doors and shutters? Mrs. Squires got nothing, poor soul, by being clean and tidy. Her bright windows and neat blinds only made her envied. Clean linen in such a district as this is a rebuke to so many that it must always be dangerous, and the more so when it is coupled with the boast that you have always £20 in your till.

If the murderer visits the scene, the closed, dark, dismal, ghost-haunted shop must be a terror to him, unless he is of the Williams type. Williams used to go out at night in a fashionable coat, carrying his mallet and knife, with a cynical smile on his face. He was a mild, cold-mannered man, with yellow hair, and his face was pallid. De Quincey, in his wonderful "Postscript," tells us that one gentle sort of girl (Williams was a beau in his way), whom he had undoubtedly designed to murder, gave in evidence that once, when sitting alone with her, he had said, "Now, Miss R., supposing that I should appear about midnight at your bedside, armed with a carving-knife, what would you say?" To which the confiding girl replied, "Oh, Mr. Williams, if it was anybody else, I should be frightened; but, as soon as I heard *your voice*, I should be tranquil." If she could have heard his real voice, and seen his real face, she might have been ready for a home in St. Luke's madhouse, where a pale, wild face looked out upon us as we came through Old Street, on our way to stand for a short time in the shadow of this modern Williams, this bold, mysterious murderer of 1872, who defies all our police organisation, and counts his blood-money at his ease.

The sun began to give token of setting as we took our last glance at Hyde Road. A few hazy glares of red struggled through the dun atmosphere above, as if reflecting back, in a dark, dirty, wretched sort of way, the marks of Cain at our feet. The shop fell back into the growing darkness; the lamplighter hurried by "Flint House" with his wand; "S. Squires" became more and more indistinct; my thoughts were beginning to get a little confused with comparisons of the Ratcliff Highway artist and this new tiger of Hyde Road. I could not restrain a smile of pity at the sight of a helpless policeman who passed me; a little puff of wind came sighing up the ghostly area of the closed shop; I shuddered, and at once retraced my steps beyond the shadows of Hoxton.

ANCIENT GLASGOW.

WE do not know a more useful or a more poorly-paid toiler in the field of literature than the topographer. In the midst of a dull and unpoetical age, the writers of our own County Histories—the Ormerods, the Nicholses, the Morants, the Hasteds, the Clutterbucks, and the Blomfields of the last century, have gleaned by patient industry a mass of information which is and must be of the greatest service to the English historian, the annals of our country itself being largely made up of an aggregate of local chronicles; and there is no class of compilers to whom such writers as Macaulay and Froude and Freeman owe a larger debt of gratitude.

Up to the present hour, however, we fear that while almost every English county and many an English city has found its historian, in this respect Scotland and Ireland are still sadly deficient, and that large antiquarian works, as distinct from mere popular guide-books, are a great desideratum north of the Tweed.

Dr. Gordon, however, has done his best to wipe away this reproach from the fair city of Glasgow; and the book* lying now before us is a tangible proof at once of that gentleman's editorial industry and of Mr. Tweed's enterprise as a publisher.

The book itself is intended to be a compendium of the substance of all the histories of Glasgow hitherto published, and accordingly is open in places to the charge of being put together rather piecemeal, and not upon one consistent plan and scale. But for all that, Dr. Campbell's two volumes comprise a store of information about the city of Glasgow which it would be difficult to find elsewhere in as narrow a compass. It is, indeed, confessedly to some extent a reprint of a work issued from the press at Glasgow in 1736, by one "Dr. John Mure, alias Campbell, Clerk to the Registration of Seisins and other Evidents (*sic*) for the district of Glasgow." The first portion of the work is devoted to a recapitulation of the terms in which Glasgow is mentioned by various writers, from Camden and Johnston down to De Foe (who in his "Tour" describes the city very minutely and exactly), and even to our own day. But these "testimonies to character" we may fairly pass by without notice.

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* Glasguæ Facies; A View of the City of Glasgow; or, An Account of its Origin, Rise, and Progress, &c. 2 vols. (Glasgow: John Tweed. 1871-72.)

The first feature which strikes the reader in the early history of Glasgow is the ecclesiastical nature of its beginnings. Before it was erected into a Royal burgh we read that, like Durham, it "heritably appertained" to the Bishops and Archbishops of Glasgow, whose broad lands were so extensive that they came to be called a "spiritual dukedom." The tradition has never become quite extinct; for down to the present hour, in spite of Presbyterianism, the Reformation, and the Great Rebellion, there is not one among the many handsome buildings of Glasgow in which the citizens take a more honest and laudable pride than the Cathedral founded by St. Kentigern and dedicated to their tutelary saint, St. Mungo, which, as Dr. Gordon tells us, stands very near a spot once tenanted by the priests of the Druids. We are favoured with a full account of monastic legends regarding these two saints, but space would not allow of their reproduction here.

From Saints Mungo and Kentigern we are brought, by a long leap over four centuries and a half, to the year 1050, when a Bishop of Glasgow was consecrated by the Archbishop of York: from that date the order and succession of the Bishops is carefully and regularly recorded. So also are the stormy days of the Reformation, and that long series of troubles in which Scotland was involved through the ill-fated Mary Queen of Scots, and in which the citizens of Glasgow bore their part. To the account of the Reformation era is subjoined a chapter giving a history of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland during the last three centuries under "vicars apostolic," and also a general outline of the progress of Episcopacy, of the "Kirk," and of Presbyterianism. In these chapters the work is developed into a general history of Scotland, rather than a local chronicle of religious matters in Glasgow. The Memorabilia taken from the Borough Records and those of the Kirk Session are full of interesting and amusing matter of an antiquarian character: the following, for instance, will serve to show that the Presbyterian clergy of Glasgow in the year 1586 could wield the rod of discipline as well as those of the Roman obedience:—

> The Session enacted that the punishment for adultery should be to satisfy six Sabbaths at the pillar, barefoot and bare-legged, in sackcloth, and also be carted through the town.
>
> The Session enacted that a man excommunicated for relapse in adultery, upon trial of his behaviour, is relaxed in manner following: He is to pass from his dwelling-house to the Hie Kirk every Sunday at six in the morning at the first bell, conveyed by two of the Elders or Deacons, or any other two honest men,

> and stand at the Kirk-door barefooted, with a white wand in his hand, and bareheaded, till after the reading of the text; and then in the same manner to repair to the pillar, till the sermon be ended, and then go out to the door again, till all pass from the Kirk; and after that be received.
>
> Bernard Peebles, Vicar of Inchinnan, divorced a man and a woman by putting the man out of one Kirk door, and the woman out of another—which at that period was equal to a bill of divorce.
>
> It is appointed that all the poor are to be marked with the town's mark that they have been within this town remaining and lodging for five years bypast. All that are marked to compare [*i.e.* appear] in the High Kirk at 10 hours next Sunday to hear prayers; and that none be suffered to beg on Sunday, but those that have licence to do so.

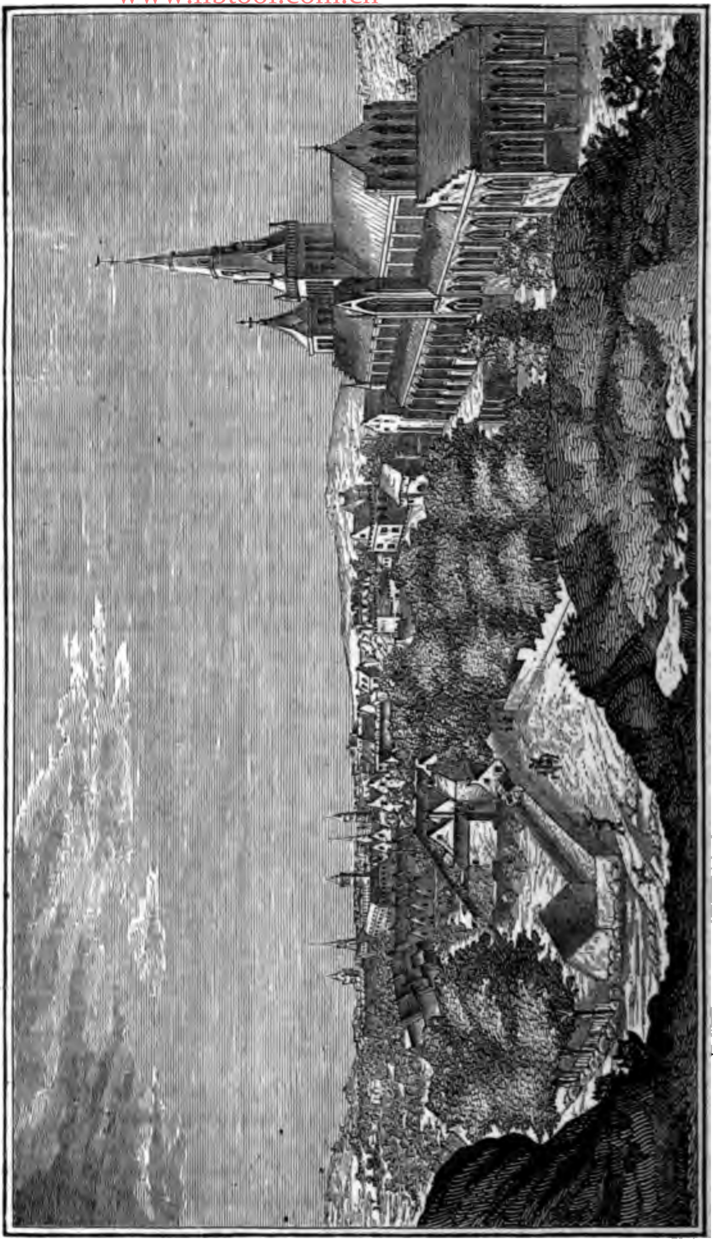
Again, in the following year a like discipline was extended to the single of either sex, as well as to the married; at all events we read:

> 1587. The Session appoints that . . . . . servant-women for single fornication pay 20 lbs. for her (*sic*) relief from Cross and Steeple. The man-servant 30 lbs. or else be put in prison 8 days on bread and water, thereafter to be put in the Jugs. As for the richer sort of servants, to be exacted at the arbitrement of the Kirk. This Act shall not extend to honest men's sons and daughters, but they to be punished as the Kirk shall prescribe. Men-servants on release to pay 40 shillings, women 30 do., or else to be fed 15 days with bread and water, and to be put in a cart one day and ducked in the Clyde, and in the Jugs at the Market Cross on a Market Day, and the richer sort of servants fined higher.

We pass by a collection of these and like examples of ecclesiastical severity, and another long catalogue of offences against the laws which came under the cognisance of the magistrates. It is not a little strange, however, to find that while the "misfortunes" of maid-servants were so heavily punished, the smotherers (or "snoozers" as they are called in the chronicles) of infant "bairns" are sentenced to no more severe penalty than "to make their repentance two Sundays in sackcloth, standing at the Kirk door." We pass also by some interesting notices of John Knox, Archbishop Leighton, Burnet, the "Saints" who suffered under the Reformed Episcopacy, and the Episcopal clergy, who in their turn fell under the hands of their Presbyterian successors; and we rise from the perusal fully persuaded of the truth of Byron's caustic lines:—

> Christians have burnt each other quite persuaded
> That all th' Apostles would have done as they did.

The general appearance of the city of Glasgow as it stood two centuries ago is faithfully rendered in the frontispiece to the first volume, which is a reproduction in *fac simile* of a scarce print published in 1685, and drawn by John Slezer, a native of Holland. It



GLASGOW CATHEDRAL IN 1693.

shows the Cathedral, the Bridge, the Steeple of the Merchants' Hall, the Tron Church, the Tolbooth, and the College, all familiar objects to the traveller of the present century; but though the river is there, the shipping and the great mercantile palaces of more recent days are wanting. Dr. Gordon next proceeds to give topographical accounts of most of the ancient houses, churches, &c.; and we are favoured with a picture (of the same date already mentioned) of "Glasgow from the Merchants' Park," which we are enabled, by the courtesy of Messrs. Tweed, to lay before our readers.

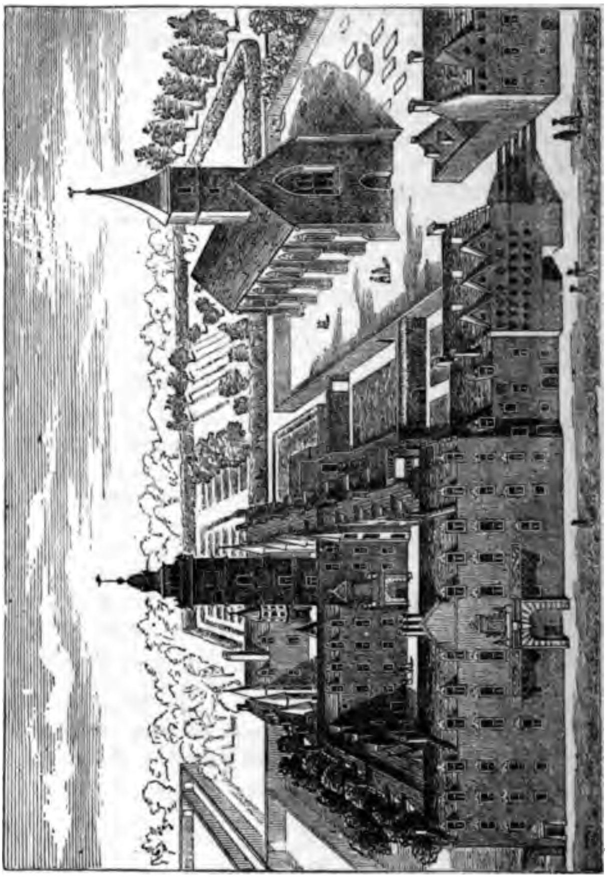
We wish that our space allowed us to enter into some detailed account of the old Bishop's Palace, or rather Castle, which rose so proudly hard by his Cathedral, in the proud days of Archbishop Cameron, but which, having for some time served the purpose of a prison, was demolished piecemeal some hundred years ago.

The Cathedral of Glasgow, the Prebendal Houses or "Manses" attached to it, the Hospital of St. Nicholas and that of Rowland Blackader, St. Roche's Chapel, the "Lodgings of the Duke of Montrose," the Old Cross or Tron Stone,—now, alas! no more—the Convent of the Black Friars, the Monastery of the Grey Friars, the Old Tolbooth, its Steeple and its Chimes, the old "Justiciary Room," and the modern Court Rooms and Gaol, are next described *seriatim:* and the description is interleaved with a rich store of amusing anecdote and other antiquarian lore. Among the latter we may reckon the story of the Earl of Glencairn, and his marriage with the heiress of the fiddler Mr. William M'Crae, as perhaps the best, as showing the ways and manners of Scottish society, both high and low, in the middle of the last century. We would also draw attention to a series of amusing extracts from the marriage and baptismal registers of various churches in Glasgow, which are to be found on pp. 565-8.

The following anecdote we quote, as showing the strength of the prejudices against dramatic entertainments in general which the good citizens of Glasgow in the middle of the last century had inherited from their Puritan fathers:—

> The first theatre in Glasgow (a wooden booth), in 1752, was placed against the wall of the Castle; but the popular aversion at that time was so strong that, to escape insult, ladies and dress parties had to be escorted to it by a military guard. In 1754 the famous George Whitfield, who happened to be preaching in the High Church Yard, in the heat of his fanatical declamation pointed to the shed and denounced it as the abode of the Devil; which was no sooner said than the erection was demolished by the mob.

In the second volume will be found a most complete and carefully written account of the University of Glasgow, and of the learned and distinguished personages who from time to time have been educated within its walls; with Dr. Campbell's anecdotes of its members, its professors, its class and lecture rooms, and, in a word, the old college memories of those ancient buildings which have so recently given place to a more sumptuous and commodious edifice. Many of the anecdotes which cluster round the names of Professors Ramsay, Lushington, and Blackburn will be thoroughly enjoyed, not only by members of Glasgow College, but by Oxford and Cambridge men. Take for instance the following account of the way in which the Greek chair was won a generation ago by Professor Lushington:—



COLLEGE AND BLACKFRIARS.

> The story runs that there were two candidates of supreme ability and profound scholarship, Messrs. Lushington and Ramsay. Somehow or other (it is not explained how) the chair was to be decided by an examination of the candidates,

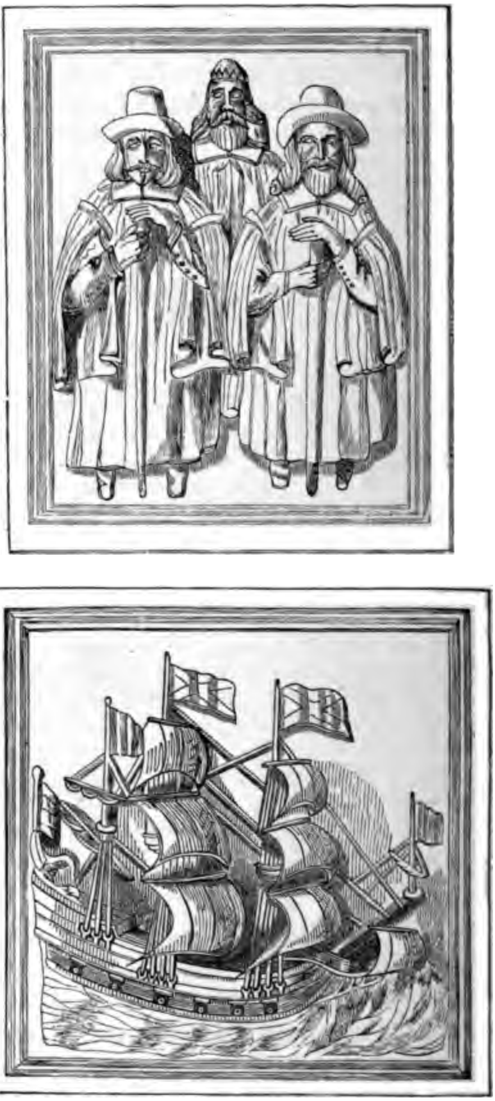
> who were required to *profess* beforehand the number of Greek works in which they were willing to be examined. Accordingly Mr. Ramsay entered the Fore Hall, at the head of a string of porters, with barrows laden with ponderous volumes—a whole Greek library in short. "There," he cried triumphantly, pointing to the tremendous pile, or series of piles, "I *profess* all these!" The learned examiners were astonished at the presence of so much knowledge, as they well might be, for the "profession" comprised three-fourths of the Grecian literature. This surprise had hardly time to cool when Mr. Lushington appeared without a porter or even a book. The examiners immediately said, "Well, Mr. Lushington, you see what your rival *professes; what do you profess?*" The learned Grecian gave a contemptuous glance at the heap of books, and replied with a look of ineffable scorn at his confounded rival, "I *profess* the literature of Greece." This was too much for poor Mr. Ramsay, who gave in on the spot. The origin of the story is doubtless Professor Lushington's immense reputation for scholarship. We students used to say that, while other professors spoke Greek, Lushington thought it.

But other memories besides those of the College crowd upon us. The following, however, relating as it does to the noble house of Argyll, may serve as a specimen of its fellows:—

> In 1756 Mr. Fleming, wood merchant, purchased a large quantity of timber growing on the banks of the Holy Loch, and he occasionally repaired to Kilmun to look after the cutting down of the timber. The accommodation at the hamlet was so miserable that Mr. Fleming was induced to get a temporary bed put up in the burial vault of the Dukes of Argyll, and there to sleep surrounded by the coffins of departed dukes and duchesses. While occupying this dark and dingy "bedroom," he on one occasion stepped out rather early on a fine Sunday morning in his white night-shirt; and while indulging in stretching himself and giving a loud yawn, he was perceived by some sailors, who were loitering near the tomb waiting for a tide to carry off their small craft. The superstitious mariners, appalled by the apparition issuing from the charnel house, instantly took to their heels and, hurrying into their boat, set off to Greenock, where they gave such a connected and circumstantial account of the resurrection of one of the Dukes of Argyll as to induce the authorities to make a formal inquiry into the circumstances.

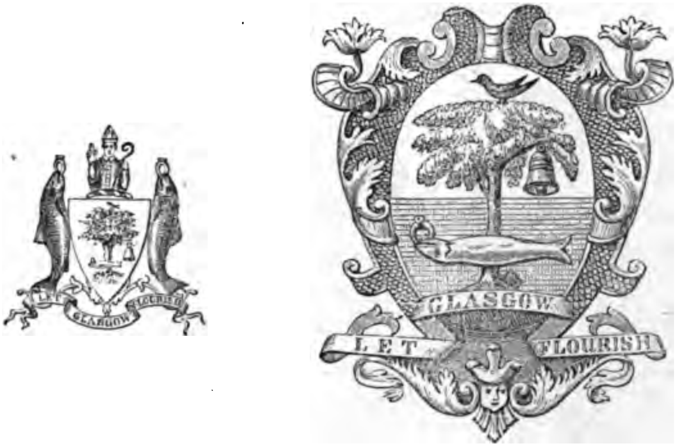
Glasgow is proud, and deservedly proud, of the position which its citizens have achieved for it by their energy and industry, as the first mercantile city north of the Tweed: and their pride very naturally extends to the ancient Trades Hall, or Merchants' Hall, which among them answers more or less exactly to our own Guildhall. We learn from Dr. Campbell's work that it still remains very much in its ancient condition, and exhibits two pieces of sculpture, the one consisting of three portraits of old and worthy citizen merchants, and the other a beautiful model of a ship in full sail, both clearly of the sixteenth century.

With respect to the civic arms of Glasgow—of which two representations are given on the opposite page—a twofold tale is told.



SCULPTURE IN THE TRADES HALL, GLASGOW.

One version makes out that the Queen of Cadzow was suspected b her husband, King Roderick, of being too intimate with a knight who he had asked to hunt with him. The King waited his opportunity t abstract from the satchel of the knight, when asleep, a ring, which Queen Cadzow had presented to him. King Roderick in furious jealousy threw it into the Clyde. When they returned to the Palace at Cadzow after the day's hunting, the King, in the course of the evening, asked the Queen where the ring was. It could not be produced; and death was threatened if it were not forthcoming. The Queen sent one of her maids to the knight for the unfortunate ring; and being unsuccessful, a bearer was sent to Cathures (Glasgow) to St. Mungo, making a full confession of the entire affair.



ARMS OF THE CITY OF GLASGOW.

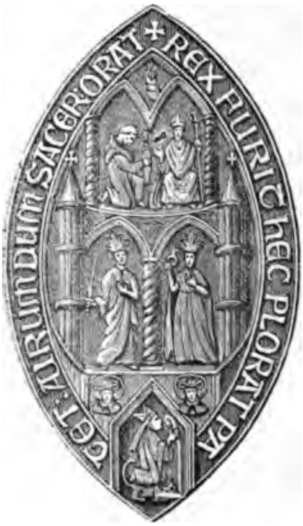
The Apostle of Strathclyde commiserated the Queen. Forthwith he sent one of his monks to the river to angle, instructing him to bring home alive the first fish he should take. This was done. St. Mungo ("dear friend") found the annulet in the mouth of the miraculous fish, and speedily sent it to the Queen, who restored it to her husband, and thereby saved her life.

The other version of the miracle, albeit perhaps not quite so poetically told, is thus given by Dr. Gordon, on the authority of Archbishop Spottiswoode's "History of the Church of Scotland":—

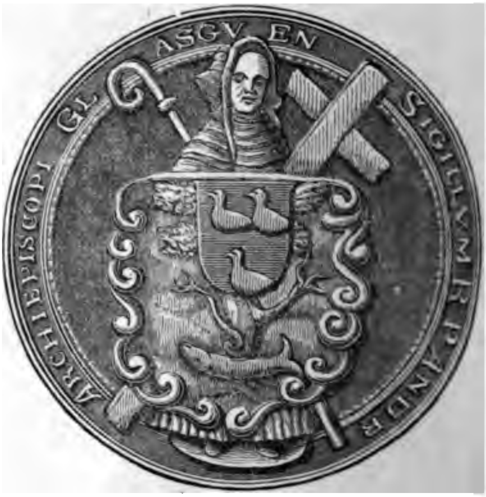
> A lady, of good reputation in the country, having lost a ring which had been given her as a present from her husband, upon that, growing jealous, as if she had bestowed it upon a gallant, he was uneasy to his lady; whereupon she applied to St. Mungo, and implored his help, for the safety of her honour, and to preserve her innocency against the resentment of her jealous husband. Not long after, that pious man, walking towards the river, as he usually did, to recreate himself after his devotions, desired one whom he saw a-fishing to bring him the first fish he should catch, which was done accordingly; and in the mouth of the fish he found a ring, which he immediately sent to the lady, to take off her husband's suspicion.

It is observable that the arms of Glasgow are repeated, though with some difference, on the great bowl which once belonged to the Saracen's Inn, a relic of jovial days which have long since passed away.

It would appear that Glasgow is rich in antiquarian treasures of one kind at least; namely, in seals of ancient ecclesiastics. We are permitted to reproduce here two specimens of these, the one that of Robert Wyschart or Wishart, who sat in the Archiepiscopal chair at the close of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century, which represents in its design the story of the fish and the ring, as marked above. The other is that of Fairfoul, one of the ex-Presbyterian ministers who were consecrated to the Episcopal office in Westminster Abbey in 1663. In the latter may be seen a repetition of the heraldic bearings of the city already described by us in detail, and interpreted for the benefit of modern readers.



Seal of Wishart.



Seal of Archbishop Fairfoul.

E. Walford.

PHEASANT SHOOTING.

"WHAT have you got in your basket, boy?" This question we innocently asked of the keeper's eldest son, who was wending his way to the market town with an enormous covered basket. From his hesitation in answering so natural a question we suspected that something was wrong, and suddenly lifting the cover were soon satisfied as to the cause of the hesitation; for to our surprise and consternation we discovered four or five fine pheasants, and these, without further questioning, we naturally concluded were being conveyed to market for sale. It is a great thing to be seen wending your way home from office with a brace of pheasants for your *placens uxor* on the First of October, and many is the clerk you may see on London Bridge on that day so distinguished. But those gentlemen would be greatly surprised to learn how their game was procured—that they are little better than receivers of stolen goods—and would certainly be astounded to find with what contempt they are regarded by sportsmen.

By sowing a little buckwheat on a commanding hill between two splendid preserves, we always had a tolerable supply of pheasants, and as they had had a considerable supply of our corn we did not see any particular harm in appropriating a few of them once or twice in the year. Our man-of-all-work, whom we dignified by the style and title of keeper, had, besides his regular wages, plenty of privileges—such as selling rabbits, breaking pointers, and so forth, and we thought it rather hard that he should steal the pheasants, which we regarded as our especial perquisites; but we had long suspected him of playing foul with our interests, and were soon to be sufficiently satisfied upon the matter, though very unexpectedly.

We believe it is Colonel Hawker, whose authority none will dispute, who says: "We can never be at a loss in knowing where to go for pheasants, as we have only to send some one the previous evening, for the last hour before sunset, to watch the different barley or oat stubbles of a woodland country, and on these will be regularly displayed the whole contents of the neighbouring coverts. It then remains to be chosen which woods are the best calculated to shoot in; and, when we begin beating them, it must be remembered to draw the springs, so as to intercept the birds from the old wood. If the coverts are wet the hedgerows will be an excellent beginning, provided we here also attend well to getting between the birds and their places of security. If pheasants when feeding are approached by a man they generally run into covert, but if they see a dog they are apt to fly up." He goes on to say, after giving some directions, which are extremely serviceable to the inexperienced, for recovering their own game if unhandsomely driven from them, that the sportsman, in order to intercept the birds, may be obliged to work down the wind, "and it therefore becomes necessary that he should have only one steady old pointer or setter, who will keep within gun shot, and quarter his ground with cunning and caution, so as to work round every stem of underwood, instead of hastily ranging forward; and above all be well broke, either to face to the gun or lie down when he has brought a bird. There are but very few old sportsmen but who are aware that this is by far the most sure method of killing pheasants or any other game, when they are tolerably plentiful in covert; and although to explore and beat several acres of coppice it becomes necessary to have a party with spaniels, yet on such expeditions we rarely hear of any one getting much game to his own share, except when some sly old fellow has shirked from his companions to the end of the wood, where the pheasants, particularly the cock birds, on hearing the approach of a rubble, are all running like a retreating army, and perhaps flying in his face faster than he can load and fire."

It would be all very pleasant and agreeable if we could all pursue the sport of pheasant shooting in that manner; but in woody countries the pointer is not of much service, and a couple of really good spaniels will be found much more to the purpose. "These," says Mr. Daniel, "for pheasant or cock shooting cannot be too strong, too short upon the leg, or have too much courage; the thickness of the coverts will oppose, and sometimes almost overpower, even this combination of form and spirit. Upon no account accept or keep a spaniel (it is needless to tell a sportsman not to breed from) which has any taint of the hound in his pedigree, although for generations back; they will be sure to hunt hare in preference to winged game. And the stock may be crossed everlastingly, may attain beauty, strength, symmetry, yet this latent spark of the harrier will never be extinguished."

Such a brace of spaniels was ours, or rather one of them was of that kind, the other being what the men in our district called a salmon setter, and rejoicing in the name of "Sam." A well-broken brace of spaniels, that may be depended upon for keeping within range, and whose obedience to the hand may be relied on, are undeniably serviceable, and by many sportsmen are alone used.

Still, whatever the qualifications of the spaniel, if he cannot be prevailed upon to hold his tongue when he flushes his game, he may do a vast deal more injury than good. Sam was very much given to the propensity of questing when there was the smallest pretence for its indulgence; and if he started a hare, he would drive him single-handed better than any harrier I ever saw. From what I have since ascertained concerning the keeper, I am convinced that Sam learned this custom of driving hares, from his master's nocturnal escapades in netting those animals at gates, Sam doing the necessary business of driving them from their feed. The noise he made in the prosecution of this work was of very little consequence in a sequestered neighbourhood.

"You look rather fishy about the gills, keeper?"

"Well, sir, to tell you the truth I have not been in bed to-night. It was Jem's birthday yesterday, and we had a bit o' supper and a game o' cards at the King's Head, and I didn't think it worth while to turn in, having to be up so early in the mornin'."

He had evidently "been up" early, for the bottoms of his gaiters and his boots were conspicuously wet and dirty. Up to some purpose, thought I, but not exactly an honest one.

"Blood on your coat, too! What game have you been up to, eh? And—the deuce, why here are pheasants' feathers by the bushel! What is the meaning of all this?"

"Nothing sir, nothing. Only don't ask me no questions, and you'll maybe find out afore the day is over."

We were ourselves very early, for we knew as well as our guide, philosopher, and friend, the advisability of making the most of the morning in pheasant shooting. For success in pheasant shooting, a different line of tactics is very often necessary to be pursued from that of partridge shooting. In the latter case, the very early morning is objectionable, and a much greater chance of bagging numbers, and indeed sometimes of destroying whole coveys, is had, by waiting until the dews have evaporated and the birds are off their feed. When feeding, partridges are liable, when frightened, to take wing all together, and being once so disturbed are not so easy to disperse as they would have been if left alone until the sun had dried off the dew. In pheasant shooting, on the contrary, the morning is generally favourable for the sport; for during the day pheasants are given to be in very high covert, where it would be next to impossible to bring them down before the falling of the leaf.

Sam proved unusually obstreperous, and, as ill-luck would have it, found a hare almost immediately. His chasing this time was attended with the happiest results, for he brought the hare through a gap to my side of the hedge, and I bagged first blood for the day, the keeper shouting all the time, "Sam, Sam! to heel, you devil! 'Ware chase, —— your liver!" This last form of objurgation was never used but as a sort of last and despairing denunciation upon the crime of chasing, against which no sensible spaniel would venture to contend.

"Look out, sir, look out! There's a pheasant coming in a minute your way. I see him running—Down the hill, sir, run. The infernal dog will be upon the scent in a minute, and then 'twill be too late. Sam, Sam! You brute!"

It was too late, and my friend, to whom the warning was given, was not prompt to take advice or the right direction. Sam was upon the pheasant by this time. Whirr! There he goes, a fine cock bird to be sure. Bang, bang, both barrels, as the bird sails majestically across the river to his native preserve. No execution done.

"Why, sir," said the keeper, "I'm blowed if that pheasan' warn't in the t'other county afore you fired."

The river did divide two counties, and I am of opinion that the keeper's derogatory remark was strictly true. He had an extraordinarily keen eye, this keeper of ours, and it was not long before he discovered another pheasant to which he directed my friend's attention. He levelled immediately.

"What, sir, going to shoot him on the ground! Sam, here boy, hi, wind him, Sam!"

Dead for a ducat, and a fine shot! Sixty paces if a quarter of an inch. And my friend's reputation was redeemed, for his bird, this time, was brought down in a most orthodox manner.

What a pity it is that the hen pheasant should be so much more favoured as a table delicacy than the cock! "The hens," says Mr. Daniel, "are certainly more juicy, and every way preferable; still, the real sportsman feels a twinge whenever he sees a hen pheasant destroyed. They are best roasted; and the most eligible way of dressing an old cock is (after being kept a proper time) to stuff him with the lean of the inside of a sirloin of beef cut into pieces of the size of dice, and well seasoned; the gravy issuing from the beef gradually diffuses itself through the flesh, and renders it less dry and hard than when destitute of this supply."

"'Ware, hen!" shouts the keeper, but it was too late, and my friend and I had both discharged a barrel before the words were well out, and a fine hen pheasant found her way into our bag, but neither of us could decide to whom she properly belonged. But that was a matter of small consequence, as we were anxious only to make a respectable bag. Rabbits galore! We had plenty of firing at them and potted not a few, and Sam was becoming more amenable to reason since the keeper had belaboured him to a rare tune. "Soho! Here's a hare in her form. Stand a little to the right. She has got her head towards you; I'll turn her out, and you'll have a splendid shot." It was a dried fern, by all that's vexatious, and the laugh was against me for the remainder of the day. We were in covert now, and the dogs were working famously, but the keeper was very unwilling that we should try the best part of the shooting, the plantation near his own residence. We well knew that the pheasants were most plentiful there, and that they would even come down and feed with his common poultry. Of course this reluctance on his part only made us the more determined to enter the plantation. But what have we here? A pheasant in a gin. This one I bagged "unbeknownst," and set the gin again as if nothing had happened, revolving in my mind the mysterious appearance of the boy with the basket in the morning.

Scent grew worse and worse, and, strange to say, in the very best part of all our ground we could not spring a single bird. Groans! I'll swear I heard a groan. "What's up, keeper?"

"It's no use I s'pose humbuggin any longer. Come here, sir."

Following the keeper some yards farther into the plantation we were not long in ascertaining the cause of our surprise, for handcuffed round a tree was a man who, despite the precautions of the keeper, and against sound policy, could not refrain from groaning in the extremity of his sufferings.

"Looks neat, don't he?" questioned my henchman, now utterly reckless of consequences and no longer seeking evasion.

"Looks neat! But what's the meaning? Stop, I see it all. You have been stealing a march upon us, and that fellow was going to split upon you because you did not give him a proper share of booty." The man was royally drunk and embracing the tree with great ardour. Notwithstanding these mishaps we contrived to shoot another brace of pheasants, and shot several rabbits, so that our bag, after all, was not so despicable. It was necessary to play Othello with this keeper of ours, and I sternly declared, as did that popular and sable hero to his lieutenant, Michael Cassio, that he

> Should never more be officer of mine.

But he was prepared for instant dismissal, and had already procured an appointment as warder at a prison on the occurrence of the first vacancy. On the principle of "setting a rogue to catch a rogue," the keeper should be eminently successful in his new and congenial occupation.

SIRIUS.

THE REPUBLICAN IMPEACHMENT.

MANY excellent persons, who are horrified at the thought of examining the religious and political creeds which they were taught by their fathers, are just now considerably alarmed because they see the rude and remorseless hand of scepticism laid menacingly on the most sacred and most venerable institutions. They do not apprehend that the crash will be immediate. Church and State will last their time; but, woe unto our children when Superstition and Infidelity will by turns be rampant in the Church, and when the fell spirit of anarchy will reign in the State.

No doubt we live in an age when the whirlwind of daring criticism tries all institutions. Those that are built upon sand or are decayed will be swept away, but against those that are built upon a rock and are flourishing the fierce tempest will rage in vain. If, for example, the Throne has no other title to continued existence than traditional respect its days are numbered, even straitly numbered. If the monarchy is a useful part of our political system, and is conducive to the well being of the nation, it will not be overthrown. I propose to offer a few observations on the subject of the British monarchy, and perhaps timid people will derive comfort and confidence from a short investigation of the arguments adduced by the numerically and socially insignificant section of the community who profess republicanism.

Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, who is the brains and soul of English republicanism, has lately published a pamphlet which he calls the "Impeachment of the House of Brunswick." Mr. Bradlaugh is clever, zealous, and unscrupulous, and has done the best that can be done for the cause he advocates. The weakness of his plea is, therefore, the more surprising. When his statements are literally true they are utterly irrelevant, and his conclusions have no connection whatever with his premises. Mr. Bradlaugh's essay is replete with coarse, vulgar, and immoral stories, or it would be an excellent school-book to teach children how little can be urged against our monarchical government.

Mr. Bradlaugh blunders absurdly about the constitutional powers of Parliament. He says "The object of the present essay is to submit reasons for the repeal of the Act of Settlement, so far as the succession to the Throne is concerned, after the abdication or demise of the present monarch. It is therefore submitted that, should Parliament in its wisdom see fit to enact that after the death or abdication of her present Majesty the Throne shall no longer be filled by a member of the House of Brunswick, such an enactment would be perfectly within the competence of Parliament." By competence Mr. Bradlaugh means not merely power, but constitutional power. Now Parliament, for enacting purposes, consists of three parts, the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and the Sovereign. An Act of Parliament is a measure that has been voted by the Commons, voted by the Lords, and assented to by the Sovereign. The Commons have no more constitutional authority to make or to change a law without the concurring vote of the Lords and the assent of the Sovereign than the Lords and the Sovereign have to make or change a law or laws without the concurring vote of the Commons. Therefore, unless Queen Victoria assented to a Bill for a repeal of the Act of Settlement, that Act could not be repealed by the constitutional authority of Parliament.

But setting aside this practical difficulty, and assuming that the Queen would assent to a Bill for cutting off the succession of her heirs to the Throne, we come to the other difficulty, that Parliament has no constitutional power to subvert the Constitution. Supposing that the present Parliament passed an Act declaring itself a permanent Parliament, that money Bills were to be originated in the Lords, that spoken or written words without an overt act should constitute treason, and that any person who ventured to adversely criticise the conduct of the Government should be tried for the crime by a Committee of Parliament, and, if convicted, hanged. Would such an Act, trampling on the Constitution and depriving us of our political freedom, be within the competence of Parliament? Certainly not, yet as fully within the competence of Parliament as an Act for preventing the succession of the lawful heir to the Throne on the demise of the reigning Sovereign. Of course it is competent for any person or any assembly to do anything that he or it has the force to do. If the Queen had the physical force at her command, she might dismiss her Parliament, decline to convoke another, and raise the revenue by Royal Warrant. Or on the like conditions the present House of Commons might abolish the monarchy and set up a republic. Or on the like conditions Mr. Charles Bradlaugh might cause himself to be crowned at Westminster as Emperor Charles I. of England and her dependencies. That is to say, the right of revolution is co-extensive with the power to effect it. If Mr. Bradlaugh asserted that Parliament might if it could prevent the Prince of Wales becoming King on the death of his mother, the proposition would be equally childish and indisputable. When Mr. Bradlaugh asserts that it is within the constitutional competence of Parliament to abolish the monarchy, the proposition is as false as it is ridiculous. Any schoolboy who has carefully read an elementary history of England could readily demolish Mr. Bradlaugh's constitutional argument. The monarchy cannot be abolished, or the House of Brunswick set aside, except by a revolution which might or might not be bloodless.

Mr. Bradlaugh is an avowed Republican, but in his pamphlet he seeks to get rid of the monarchy by an indirect attack. He prefers an indictment against the House of Brunswick, but he does not tell us if he wishes the succession to the Throne to be vested in the House of Odger or the House of Bradlaugh. His object, however, is perfectly clear, and he intends it to be clear. We are not only to be rid of the House of Brunswick, but also of the monarchy. The most cunning advocate is beaten by an utterly and manifestly bad case. What can English Republicans urge against monarchy in the abstract? They cannot allege that we do not enjoy the completest political freedom, because the fact that they are free to preach republicanism is a conspicuous refutation of the allegation. Seeing that the House of Commons, chosen by a household and lodger suffrage, which is in effect a registered manhood suffrage, has the undisputed control of the national purse, they cannot aver that the taxes which the people pay are not imposed by the will of the people. Mr. Bradlaugh may say that we have not always had a household and lodger suffrage, and that the national debt was contracted when the franchise was restricted, but we presume that Mr. Bradlaugh does not intend to repudiate the national obligations, and further, if that were deemed expedient, the repudiation need not involve the overthrow of the monarchy. Having nothing whatever to say against the monarchy as it now exists and works, Mr. Bradlaugh indicts the House of Brunswick.

The greater part of the pamphlet is taken up with a recital of the scandalous stories that have been told or invented about the Georges and William IV. I will not be at the pains to examine these charges against the private characters of the kings and princes of our royal family. Some of them may be true, but assuredly many of them are false, for so far from escaping calumny, kings and princes are the most calumniated of mankind. The slanderer is chary about calumniating a private person, because he is liable to be punished for so doing, but kings and princes cannot notice the wicked stories that are told about them. But I will assume that Mr. Bradlaugh's statements are true, and then I ask what they have to do with the question of monarchy or no monarchy, or with the proposal to oust the House of Brunswick. Suppose that Mr. Bradlaugh's ancestors had been very abominable persons, that would be no reason for punishing Mr. Bradlaugh, or for declaring him incompetent to hold a public office. Let us grant that George IV. was a very bad man, yet that is surely no ground for cutting off the succession of the Prince of Wales to the Throne. Mr. Bradlaugh would be a stern lawgiver. He would visit the sins of the father not only upon his children, but upon his descendants for all time to come.

However, the proper answer to this part of the Republican indictment is that a monarchy is not to be estimated by the private virtues or the private vices of the Sovereign. Charles I. was a faithful husband and a good father, yet his subjects were right in resisting his attempts to levy taxes without the consent of Parliament. James II. was in private life a moral man, yet few persons nowadays deny the justice and the expediency of the 1688 Revolution. The personal virtues of Queen Victoria cause her to reign in the hearts of her people, and make her name respected, venerated, and loved throughout the civilised world; yet, if Her Majesty essayed to trample on our free Constitution, the most loyal of her subjects would oppose her erring will. It is no doubt an inestimable blessing when such an exalted personage as the Sovereign is virtuous. The good and noble conduct of Queen Victoria in her domestic life has been a beneficial influence in all our homes. But the English nation will not permit a Sovereign to violate the Constitution, even though he or she be spotless in private character. It is important that the King should be an upright man, but it is of paramount importance that he should be faithful in the discharge of his kingly duties.

Now those who study the history of England since 1688 cannot fail to perceive that we are indebted for upwards of a century and a half of civil concord very much to the public conduct of our monarchs. No doubt during the greater part of the reign of Anne the Government was virtually the Government of an oligarchy. No doubt the Georges now and then contended for what they deemed to be their prerogatives. But they never finally opposed the will of the people; or, to be more exact, the development of the Constitution. When the crisis came, the Sovereign gave way, and thus the freedom that other peoples have vainly striven to win by revolution we have achieved by reform.

Mr. Bradlaugh says that since the accession of the House of Brunswick fifteen-sixteenths of the national debt has been created. For what purpose? To carry on wars which were sometimes necessary and always popular. But how does the fact adduced connect itself with the impeachment of the House of Brunswick? The immense expenditure was voted by the House of Commons, and certainly at this time the Sovereign has not the power of adding to the national debt. Besides, the English national debt is not the only national debt that has been incurred in the last hundred years. The House of Brunswick has not reigned in France, yet the national debt of France is larger than ours. The United States is a republic, yet the interest on the debt of the United States is larger than the interest of our national debt. The English Government borrows at a cheaper rate than any other Government. If there were any force or relevancy in the national debt argument it would be an argument in favour of the House of Brunswick.

It will be sufficient to notice one more of Mr. Bradlaugh's reasons. He says that "in consequence of the incompetence or want of desire for government duty on the part of the various reigning members of the House of Brunswick, the governing power of the country has been practically limited to a few families, who have used government in the majority of instances as a system of machinery for securing place and favour for themselves and their associates." It is amusing to hear a professed Republican finding fault with the Sovereign for not doing enough in the way of governing, because Republicans are supposed to be implacably hostile to personal rule. It is true that the British monarch does not make the law or interpret it, and in that sense reigns without ruling; but the British monarch has a great deal of heavy governmental work. But we will let pass the remark about the indolence or incapacity, and test the statement "that the governing power of the country has been practically limited to a few families." Let us glance at the present Ministry. Have the members thereof been selected from governing families? The Prime Minister is the son of a merchant, and is the first of his family who has held office under the Crown. The late Lord Chancellor (Lord Hatherley) is the son of a City merchant, and is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown. The present Lord Chancellor (Sir Roundell Palmer) is the son of a country rector, and is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown. Mr. Lowe, the Chancellor of the

Exchequer, began life as a tutor at Oxford, vainly tried for a Greek Professorship at Glasgow, went to Australia to seek a fortune, and is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown. Mr. Cardwell, the Secretary at War, is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown. Mr. Goschen, the First Lord of the Admiralty, was a London merchant, and is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown. Mr. Childers, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, like Mr. Lowe made his name and fortune in Australia, and is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown. Mr. Stansfeld has lately retired from the brewing business, and is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown. Mr. Forster is the son of a manufacturer, is himself a manufacturer, and is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown. Sir George Jessel is the son of a merchant, and is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown. Mr. Winterbotham is the son of a country banker, and is the first member of his family who has held office under the Crown.

Thus the assertion of Mr. Bradlaugh is false and an inexcusable falsehood, because it is contradictory of well known and indisputable facts. So far from the government of England being in the hands of a clique, it is a government exceptionally open to men of ability irrespective of birth or social influence. We have a democratic aristocracy, an aristocratic democracy, and a Government which is both aristocratic and democratic, but in which the democratic element preponderates.

Suppose that any member of the Royal House thought it worth while to answer the "Republican Impeachment" he would speak in this wise:—"You assert that my family is to be judged by the condition of the Empire. I accept the challenge. Look at the vastness of the Empire, and reflect how much less it was in extent and population when my House was called to the Throne. Consider the marvellous growth of commerce and the multiplication of riches since the last revolution. Remember the century and a half of peaceful progress. You know that the English people are free to express and publish their opinions, so that you are permitted to denounce the Constitution of your country. Before the law there is perfect equality, and there are no class privileges or monopolies save those of honour without profit. At this moment there is not a richer, freer, or more prosperous people on the face of the earth than the English. I do not say that our unprecedented national glory and prosperity are due to the wisdom and conduct of my family, for I render willing homage to the genius and conduct of the people, but if my House is to be judged by the condition of the Empire now as compared to the condition of the Empire in 1688, then I claim the verdict for my family and the hearty applause and gratitude of the nation."

I doubt not that many persons who justly deride English republicanism will be surprised to learn that the clever chief of the scanty band of disloyalists has not been able to adduce a single valid argument against the monarchy, although he has perverted facts and misinterpreted the Constitution to help his case. Until I read Mr. Bradlaugh's essay I confess I had no idea that the professed foes of the monarchy had so little, or rather nothing, to urge in defence of their disloyalty.

JOHN BAKER HOPKINS.

A HAMPSHIRE GHOST STORY.

THE existence of the following narrative is alluded to in the recently published life of the Rev. Richard Barham, but the version therein given is incomplete, and consequently erroneous in some particulars.

It therefore appears to the possessors of the two manuscript copies made by Mrs. Ricketts that it is now desirable to publish the original MS., and that they are fully justified in doing so with the addition of extracts from letters of relatives and friends, which bear strongly on the subject.

The following letter from the Rev. John Sargent, of Lavington, near Petworth, addressed to Mrs. Palmer, embodies so admirably the feelings of herself and of her relatives that it will render any further remarks unnecessary.*

[Copy.]

Thursday Evening.

MY DEAR MADAM,—I am truly obliged to you for allowing me the perusal of the interesting MS. which you have kindly sent. It is one of the most convincing proofs of an agency more than natural that I have ever seen, and I have myself no doubt of the truth of Dr. Johnson's observation on such occurrences, that they are sometimes permitted in order to keep in us of this world a more vivid notion of an invisible world.

Those who discredit such testimony as this, must discredit all human testimony.

With respect to her who was the subject of these alarms, the fortitude and self possession she manifested is almost as much out of the natural order of things as the events themselves, and her remarks are most wise and good. It was permitted, for wise and good ends, and it is of God's goodness that our days are passed for the most part without such perturbation. What she remarks of the children is true of all. I have not yet shown the MS. to any one. My daughters had heard that I expected a more minute account of what they had learnt before through Mrs. Dyson, and indeed from other quarters. I could not well conceal from them that I had been allowed access to this document, and of course their curiosity is whetted to the finest edge upon the subject. I write, therefore, to ask whether I can read them an extract or two, they promising (and I may depend on them) that they will not talk about it, nor state whence their information was derived. Should you desire me to read nothing, nothing shall be read.—I remain, my dear madam, with best compliments to Captain Palmer, your sincere and obliged, JOHN SARGENT.

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* The Lord Bishop of Winchester (with whose kind permission this letter is published) married Emily, eldest daughter of the Rev. John Sargent.

To Mrs. Palmer (possessor of one copy of the MS.)

Mary Ricketts was the youngest child of Swynfen Jervis, Esq., and Elizabeth Parker, his wife. She was born at Meaford, near Stone, in Staffordshire, in 1737-8. From her early childhood she evinced a love for reading, and an aptitude for mental improvement, which were developed by the wise training of Nicholas Tindal, the learned continuer of Rapin's History of England.

Her veracity was proverbial in the family. Her favourite brother and companion was John Jervis who for his distinguished naval services was created Baron Jervis and Earl St. Vincent. Though his junior by three years, she rapidly outstripped him in book learning, and to her superior acquirements may be traced the unwearied pains which John Jervis took to make up for lost time, when, at the age of eighteen, he devoted his spare hours to study, instead of sharing in the frivolous amusements of West Indian life.

She married in 1757 William Henry Ricketts, of Canaan, in Jamaica, Esq., whose grandfather, William Ricketts, Esq.,* was a captain in Penn and Venables' army at the conquest of Jamaica. Mrs. Ricketts was called upon to accompany her husband in his visits to the West Indies, or to remain alone in England. The charge of her three infant children determined her to accept the latter alternative in 1769.

The children were :—

1. William Henry, born 1764, Capt. R.N., assumed the surname of Jervis by sign-manual in 1801, as heir to his maternal uncle, Earl St. Vincent. He was drowned in 1805, when in command of H.M.S. *Tonnant*, leaving two daughters, to whom Mrs. Ricketts bequeathed the MSS.—1. Martha Honora Georgina, died 1865, whose only child, by her marriage with Osborne Markham, Esq., is Mrs. Wm. Henley Jervis, the editor of this narrative. 2. Henrietta Elizabeth Mary, married Capt. Edmund Palmer, R.N.

2. Edward Jervis, born 1767, who in consequence of the death of

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* See Burke's "Landed Gentry."

his brother without male issue became Viscount St. Vincent. He inherited the fine and powerful intellect of his mother, and died, aged ninety-two, at Meaford Hall, Sept. 1859.

3. Mary, born 1768, married William, seventh Earl of Northesk. She died 1835, leaving a numerous family, and the example of piety and unwearied benevolence.

During the absence of Mr. Ricketts in Jamaica, his wife continued to inhabit the old Manor House of Hinton Ampner, and it was there that the following series of strange disturbances occurred, the effect of which was to render her continued occupation of the house an impossibility.

Mrs. Ricketts was a woman of remarkable vigour, both physical and mental. Her steadfast faith, and sense of the ever abiding presence of God, carried her through many bitter trials, and preserved her intellectual powers unimpaired to the advanced age of ninety-one, when she calmly resigned her spirit into "the hands of the God who gave it."

MRS. RICKETTS TO THE REV. MR. NEWBOLT.

Hinton, Wednesday Morning, August, 1771.

MY DEAR SIR,—In compliance with my promise to you of yesterday, I would not delay to inform you of the operations of last night. It was settled (contrary to the plan when you left) that John, my brother's man, should accompany Captain Luttrell in the chintz room, and they remain together till my brother was called. Just after twelve they were disturbed with some of the noises I had frequently heard and described, and so plainly heard by my brother that he quitted his bed long before the time agreed on, and joined the other two; the noises frequently proceeding from the garrets, they went up just at break of day, found all the men servants in their proper apartments, who had heard no disturbance whatever. They examined every room. Everything appeared snug and in place, and, contrary to usual custom, the opening and shutting of doors continued (after the other noises ceased) till five o'clock. My brother authorises me to tell you that neither himself nor Captain Luttrell can account for what they have heard from any natural cause; yet as my brother declares he shall never close his eyes in the house, he and Edward are to watch to-night. At the same time that I derive satisfaction in my reports being fully accredited, I am hurt that the few days and nights he hoped to enjoy repose should be passed in the utmost embarrassment and anxiety.

To the Rev. Mr. Newbolt, Winchester.

CAPTAIN JERVIS TO MR. RICKETTS.

Portsmouth, August 9, 1771.

The circumstances I am about to relate to you, dear Sir, require more address than I find myself master of; it is easy to undertake but difficult to execute a task of this delicate nature. To keep you longer in suspense would be painful. I therefore proceed to tell you Hinton House has been disturbed by such strange, unaccountable noises from the 2nd of April to this day, with little or no intermission, that it is very unfit your family should continue any longer in it. The children, happily, have not the least idea of what is doing, but my sister has suffered exceedingly through want of rest, and by keeping this event in her own breast too long.

Happy should I have been to have known it earlier, as I might have got rid of the alarm with the greatest facility, and dedicated myself entirely to her service and support till your return; but engaged as I am with the Duke of Gloucester, there is no retreating without the worst consequences. You will do me the justice to believe I have, during the short space this event has been made known to me, employed every means in my power to investigate it. Captain Luttrell, I, and my man John sat up the night after it was imparted, and I should do great injustice to my sister if I did not acknowledge to have heard what I could not, after the most diligent search and serious reflection, any way account for. Mr. Luttrell had then no doubt of the cause being beyond the reach of human understanding.

My sister having determined on the steps necessary to pursue, of which she will acquaint you, I think her situation ought not to accelerate your return, at least till you are gratified with proving the utility of the laborious alterations you have made. The strength of judgment, fortitude, and perseverance she has shown upon this very trying occasion surpass all example, and as she is harassed, not terrified, by this continual agitation, I have no doubt of her health being established the moment she is removed from the scene of action and impertinent inquiry, or I would risk everything to accompany her to the time of your arrival in England; for which and every other blessing Heaven can bestow you have the constant prayer of

J. JERVIS.

[Addition in Mrs. Rickett's hand.]

This letter has just come to hand, and I hope will be in time for Mr. Lewis. Since my brother saw me, I am so extremely recovered both in health and spirits that there is no longer room for apprehension, and to the truth of this Mr. and Mrs. Newbolt, who have been beyond measure kind to me, have set their hand.

J. M. NEWBOLT.
S. NEWBOLT.

As I wrote you so fully two days ago, I have no particulars to add, save that the dear children have passed the day here, and are very well.—Adieu, my dearest life,

M. R.

Hinton, August 18.

I omitted to mention there are several people will prove similar disturbances have been known at Hinton many years past.

To William Henry Ricketts, Esq.,
Canaan, near Savannah-la-Mar, Jamaica.

CAPTAIN JERVIS TO MRS. RICKETTS.

Alarm, *off Lymington, August* 16, 1771.

Our being wind-bound here, gives me an opportunity to repeat my extreme solicitude for the removal of my dearest sister from the inquietude she has so long suffered to the prejudice of her health. The more I consider the incidents, the stronger I see the necessity of a decisive step, and I almost think there will be propriety in your giving up the house, &c., at Christmas. As you have a long quarter's notice to give of this, your own judgment is a better guide than my opinion, but I beg you to resolve never to enter it again, after your London residence. . . . . God Almighty bless and preserve Mr. R., you, and your lovely children,

JERVIS.

MRS. RICKETTS TO W. HENRY RICKETTS, ESQ.

Winchester, August 17, 1771.

The captain took his final leave of me last week, and greatly hurt I was to part with him—he has acted so very affectionately to me, and taken that true interest in everything that concerns me, as I never can forget; and most extraordinary is the subject I have to relate. Without the utmost confidence in my veracity—which I believe you have--you could not possibly credit the strange story I must tell. In order to corroborate my relation, the captain means to write to you, and I hope his letter will arrive in time for me to enclose. You may recollect in a letter I wrote about six weeks ago I mentioned there were some things in regard to Hinton you would not find so agreeable as when you left it, and I added that I could not satisfy your curiosity; nor did I intend it till you came over, had it been possible to have rubbed on till then, but when it was thought absolutely necessary by my brother and all my friends that were consulted that I should quit the place, and that the reason of it was so publicly known that you must hear it from other hands, we concluded it much more proper you should receive the truth from us, than a thousand lies and absurdities from others; and much will you feel for what your poor wife has undergone, though I cannot in writing transmit all the particulars.

On the 2nd of last April I awoke about two in the morning (observe, I lay in the chintz room, having resigned the yellow room to Nurse and Mary) and in a few minutes after I heard the sound of feet in the lobby. I listened a considerable time at the lobby door; the sound drew near; upon this I rang my bell; my maid came, we searched the room, nothing to be found; Robert was called, and went round with as little success. This appeared to me extraordinary, but I should have thought little more of it; had I not, and all the servants in the house, except Sleepy Jack, heard the strangest noises of knocking, opening and shutting of doors, talking, explosions, sometimes as loud as the bursting of cannon.*

I kept it to myself, tremendous as it was, except telling Mrs. Newbolt, till four months were almost expired, when, as I was so hurt for want of rest, and thought I could not support it much longer, I took the resolution to tell my brother, who upon that determined to sit up; Captain Luttrell and his own man with him. The noise was heard in the lobby, and in different parts of the house; they went all over it, every door shut, every person in his room; they were astonished, and the next morning they both declared that no house was fit to live in where such noises were heard, and no natural cause appeared. You know how much the notion of haunted houses is exploded, and how careful any man would be of asserting it, and in that I think them right; as for myself, I am not afraid or ashamed to pronounce that it must proceed from a supernatural cause; but why, except as Darby imagines—who passed some days with me—there has been a murder committed that remains yet undiscovered, or for some other wise purpose, though not yet manifest? I am at a loss to explain the noises increasing and coming in the daytime. At length I determined quitting the place, and be assured, my dearest life, I did not take this painful step while it was possible to continue there; and I thank God I am as I am; the want of rest created a little fever on my spirits, which the quiet life I have passed with the Newbolts, and Dr. Walsh's prescription, have removed, so that you need not have the least uneasiness about me. Whatever the cause of these disturbances is, I am sure there has always been something of the kind since we have lived here; you must recollect often hearing the doors open and shut below stairs, and your going down sometimes during the night, and finding no person there. The servants have behaved so well, and been so cautious, that the children have heard nothing of it, which was my great dread; they are now at Wolsey, which the Bishop desires I will command as my own, and I mean to go there next week, when I shall be able to get some necessaries from Hinton, and I can stay at Wolsey till the cold weather sets in. Sainsbury has behaved in the genteelest manner, and is certain Lady Hillsborough would not wish us to keep the house a moment longer than it would be a convenience. He has wrote to her, and when he receives an answer, will communicate to me; indeed, my dear, we cannot think of living there. Strange and recent *(sic)* as this must appear to you, be assured no means of investigating the truth has been left untried, and that it is no trick —though that is the current belief, and that Witerr (?) is concerned—but I know neither he nor any human being could carry it on. I have received the greatest friendship and attention from all my neighbours; the Shipleys have been particularly kind in offering me the house in town till the middle of January, and doing everything to contribute to my peace of mind, and so have the Newbolts. I shall not attempt to fix myself till you come over, as I can have Wolsey, I daresay, till that time, but if we should determine on going abroad, it will be very inconvenient to have any besides our own family, and by a letter from the lieutenant (G. Poyntz Ricketts), I forgot to mention, that the same noises have been heard by the servants since we quitted the house.

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* This by me only once.

Mr. Sainsbury (Lady Hillsborough's Agent) to Mrs. Ricketts.

Marelands, September 18, 1771.

Madam,—At my return home, Sunday, I found a letter from Lady Hillsborough, in consequence of which I am this day going to Hinton with two of her men to sit up, under the permission you gave me.

Her ladyship desires me to present her best compliments to you, and to inform you that she is very sorry you have been so much disturbed and frightened, and to assure you that she will do everything in her power to find out who have used you so ill, and to beg your leave for me and two more to sit up, and shoot at the place whence any noise proceeds, and if nothing can be discovered by those means, then to advertise a reward of fifty guineas to any person that will discover the contriver of this wicked scheme.—I am, with great respect, madam, your most obedient humble servant,

JNO. SAINSBURY.

ROBERT CAMIS TO MRS. RICKETTS.

Henton, Sunday Morning.

HONOURED MADAM,—Mr. Sainsbury left our house about eleven o'clock, fryday, but he talked with Mother some time before he went of, and asked her a Great many questions Concerning the Noises. She told him Everything as She Could think of, that she had heard you and all the Rest of us say, he said he had not much notion of Spirits, but he Could not tell what God would pleas to send to find things out.

Dr. Dunford Gave me the notis to fasen it to the Curch, so I wrote a Coppy of itt, and sent itt to you. there is one att Henton, one at Bramdean, and one at Kimson. Dr. Dunford told me Mr. Sainsbury gave itt him. but I do not no what day itt was— . . . . which is all at present from your Dut. Servant,

ROBERT CAMIS.

"THE NOTIS.

"WHAREAS some evil disposed person or persons have for severel Months past freequently made divers kinds of noises in the Mantion house occupied by Mrs. RICKETTS, att Henton ampner. This is to give notis that if any person or persons will Discover the Auther or Authers thereof to me, such person or persons shall Receive a reward of Fifty Guineas, to be paid on the Conviction of the offenders, or if any person Concerned in makeing such Noises Will Discover his or her Acomplice or acomplices therein, such person shall be pardoned, and be intitled to the same Reward. to be paid on Conviction of the Offender. "JNO. SAINSBURY.

"*Marelands, September* 20, 1771."

ROBERT CAMIS TO MRS. RICKETTS.

March ye 8th.

HONOURED MADAM,—I hope you have received a letter that was directed to Hinton. I am very sorrey that we cannot find out the reason of the noise, that we might come to Hinton again, as we have not heard anything since. My mother came one morning last week, and told me she had dreamed three nights after one another that she was upon the great stairs up at the landing-place that leads into the garrots, and was troubled in her dreams, and was rambling about a great way, but att the end she was always there. One of the nights she dremed she was in the road from Cherreton, and found a large pair of stuf shoes laceed with silver very much, and a pair of gloves with a great deal of lace upon itt, and she brought itt to you, and shewed itt to you, and then she carreed it to the top of the great stairs.

So she was there in the greatest part of her dreams. So my mother and I went up and searched every part we coud think of. I pulled up a board in the dark closet in the first garrot where there was a little hole, but found nothing, so we went into the lumber garrot that is over the best bedroom, and lookt every place we could think of, but found nothing.

There was a iron chest lockt that we could not open. I took it up, shook itt, and there was something like iron rattled, and something like a role of paper with itt. So I wrote this to know if you new what was in itt—if the key is lost itt will be very difficult to open itt. My mother gives her duty to you, and hopes you will not be angry for mentioning her dreams to you. My Mother and all of us is very well, and joyns with me in duty from your dutifull servant,

ROBERT CAMIS.

[Note by Mrs. Ricketts.—The chest was afterwards forced open, and nothing found in it save old accounts of no consequence.]

ROBERT CAMIS TO MRS. RICKETTS.

Henton, Nov. 24.

HONOURED MADAM,—I have not heard any noises in the house myself, but my mother and sister Martha was in the kitchen on Wednesday last about twelve o'clock, and of a sudden they heard a dismal groaning very loud—one thought it was in the housekeeper's room, and the other thought it was over the meal bin—they ware both surprized very much, and thought they had better go out of doors to see if any body was there, but they found no body, and when they came in again they heard no more of itt . . . .

ROBERT CAMIS TO MRS. RICKETTS.

No Date.

I have heard no noise myself, but on Satterday about eleven a clock my mother went home to make her bed, and left sister Martha in the chicking att work with her needle. She heard a noise like a roleing clap of thunder; it did not surprise her because she thought it was thunder, for it gered (jarred ?) the windows, but she went to the gardner to no if he herd it thunder, and he said he did not. About twelve o'clock my mother came into the house and said she did not here any thunder. The noise apeared to she to be towards the yallow room. Itt seemed to role along, wich made her think itt was thunder.

Hinton Parsonage, July, 1772.

To my dear children I address the following relation, anxious that the truths which I so faithfully have delivered shall be as faithfully transmitted to posterity, to my own in particular. I determined to commit them to writing, which I recommend to their care and attentive consideration, entreating them to bear in mind the peculiar mercy of Providence in preserving them from all affright and terror during the series of wonderful disturbances that surrounded them, wishing them to be assured the veracity of their mother was pure and undoubted, that even in her infancy it was in the family a proverb, and according to the testimony of that excellent person Chancellor Hoadly she was *truth itself;* she writes, not to gratify vanity, but to add weight to her relation.

To the Almighty and Unerring Judgment of Heaven and Earth I dare appeal for the truth, to the best of my memory and comprehension, of what I here relate.

MARY RICKETTS.

The mansion-house and estate of Hinton Ampner, near Alresford, Hampshire, devolved in 1755 to the Right Honourable Henry Bilson Legge in right of his lady, daughter and sole heiress of Lord Stawell, who married the eldest daughter and co-heiress of Sir Hugh Stewkeley, Bart., by whose ancestors the estate at Hinton had been possessed many generations, and by this marriage passed to Mr. Stawell on the death of the said Sir Hugh.

Mr. (who on the death of his elder brother became Lord) Stawell made Hinton his constant residence. Honoria, the youngest sister of his lady, lived with them during the life of her sister, and so continued with Lord Stawell till her death in 1754.

On the evening of April the 2nd, 1755, Lord Stawell, sitting alone in the little parlour at Hinton, was seized with a fit of apoplexy; he articulated one sentence only to be understood, and continued speechless and insensible till the next morning, when he expired.

His lordship's family at that time consisted of the following domestics:—Isaac Mackrel, house steward and bailiff. Sarah

Parfait, housekeeper, who had lived in the family near forty years. Thomas Parfait, coachman, husband to said Sarah, who had lived there upwards of forty years. Elizabeth Banks, housemaid, an old servant. Jane Davis, dairymaid. Mary Barras, cook. Joseph Silbey, butler. Joseph, groom. Richard Turner, gardener, and so continued by Mr. Ricketts. Lord Stawell had one son, who died at Westminster School, aged sixteen.

Thomas Parfait, his wife, and Elizabeth Banks continued to have the care of the house during the lifetime of Mr. Legge, who usually came there for one month every year in the shooting season. On his death, in August, 1764, Lady Stawell, so created in her own right, since married to the Earl of Hillsborough, determined to let Hinton Mansion, and Mr. Ricketts took it in December following. Thomas Parfait was at that time lying dead in the house. His widow and Elizabeth Banks quitted it on our taking possession in January, 1765. We removed thither from town, and had the same domestics that lived with us there, and till some time afterwards we had not any house-servant belonging to the neighbourhood. Soon after we were settled at Hinton I frequently heard noises in the night, as of people shutting, or rather slapping doors with vehemence. Mr. Ricketts went often round the house on supposition there were either housebreakers or irregularity among his servants. In these searches he never could trace any person; the servants were in their proper apartments, and no appearance of disorder. The noises continued to be heard, and I could conceive no other cause than that some of the villagers had false keys to let themselves in and out at pleasure; the only preventive to this evil was changing the locks, which was accordingly done, yet without the effect we had reasonably expected.

About six months after we came thither, Elizabeth Brelsford, nurse to our eldest son, Henry, then about eight months old, was sitting by him when asleep, in the room over the pantry, appropriated for the nursery, and, being a hot summer's evening, the door was open that faces the entrance into the yellow bedchamber, which, with the adjoining dressing-room, was the apartment usually occupied by the lady of the house. She was sitting directly opposite to this door, and plainly saw (as she afterwards related) a gentleman in a drab-coloured suit of clothes go into the yellow room. She was in no way surprised at the time, but on the housemaid, Molly Newman, coming up with her supper, she asked what strange gentleman was come. Upon the other answering there was no one, she related what is already described, and desired her fellow-servant to accompany her to search the room; this they did immediately without any appearance of what she had seen. She was much concerned and disturbed, and she was thoroughly assured she could no ways be deceived, the light being sufficient to distinguish any object clearly. In some time after it was mentioned to me. I treated it as the effect of fear or superstition, to which the lower class of people are so prone, and it was entirely obliterated from my mind till the late astonishing disturbances brought to my recollection this and other previous circumstances.

In the autumn of the same year George Turner, son of the gardener of that name, who was then groom, crossing the great hall to go to bed, saw at the other end a man in a drab-coloured coat, whom he concluded to be the butler, who wore such coloured clothes, he being lately come and his livery not made. As he passed immediately upstairs to the room where all the men servants lay, he was in great astonishment to find the butler and the other men servants in bed. Thus the person he had seen in the hall remained unaccounted for, like the same person before described by the nurse; and George Turner, now living, avers these particulars in the same manner he first related them.

In the month of July, 1767, about seven in the evening, there were sitting in the kitchen, Thomas Wheeler, postilion; Ann Hall, my own woman; Sarah, waiting woman to Mrs. Mary Poyntz; and Dame Lacy; the other servants were out excepting the cook, then employed in washing up her things in the scullery.

The persons in the kitchen heard a woman come downstairs, and along the passage leading towards them, whose clothes rustled as of the stiffest silk; and on their looking that way, the door standing open, a female figure rushed past, and out of the house door, as they conceived. Their view of her was imperfect; but they plainly distinguished a tall figure in dark-coloured clothes. Dame Brown, the cook, instantly coming in, this figure passed close by her, and instantly disappeared. She described the person and drapery as before mentioned, and they all united in astonishment who or what this appearance could be; and their surprise was heightened when a man, coming directly through the yard and into the house the way she went out, on being asked who the woman was he met, declared he had seen no one.

Ann Hall, since married to John Sparks, now living at Rogate, near Petersfield, will testify to the truth of this relation, as will Dame Brown, now living at Bramdean. The postilion is since dead.

Meanwhile, the noises continued to be heard occasionally. Miss

Parker's woman, Susan Maidstone, was terrified with the most dismal groans and rustling round her bed. At different times most of the servants were alarmed with noises that could no way be accounted for. In the latter end of the year 1769 Mr. Ricketts went to Jamaica; I continued at Hinton with my three infant children and eight servants, whose names and connections were as follows:—Ann Sparks, late Ann Hall, my own woman, the daughter of very industrious parents. Sarah Horner, nurse, sister to a substantial farmer of that name, and of a family of integrity and property. Hannah Streeter, nursemaid, of reputable parents and virtuous principles. Lucy Webb, housemaid, of honest principles. Dame Brown, cook, quiet and regular. John Sparks, coachman. John Horner, postilion, aged sixteen years, eldest son to the farmer above-mentioned. Lewis Chanson, butler, a Swiss of strict integrity. Richard Turner, gardener, but did not live in the house.

I have been thus particular in the description of those persons of whom my family was composed, to prove the improbability that a set of ignorant country people, excepting the Swiss alone, should league to carry on a diabolical scheme imputed to them so injuriously, and which in truth was far beyond the art and reach of man to compass.

(To be concluded next month.)

PLAYERS OF OUR DAY.

XXV.—BURLESQUE ACTORS AND ACTRESSES.

IN every age has flourished a low department of amusemen which addresses the eye or ear—not the mind. A procession or a regiment of soldiers passes in the street, and every one runs to the window. A band of Ethiopian serenaders halts before the door and begins its antics, a picture of the pig-faced lady is hung outside a booth, and the crowd stops to stare. This is the secret of the pleasure found in a favourite modern entertainment which is merely a collection of dances, songs, gaudy dresses—where dresses *are* used—of human limbs where they are not, with some free and easy mumming (more of freedom than of easiness), and a general confusion. Such is the "burlesque" of our day, unmeaning and incoherent in everything, even to the title; for nothing is burlesqued. A wide gap separates it from the drama, whose interest and power of pleasing is strictly independent of all these things; which can delight, without scenery, dresses, paint, footlights, or any theatrical adjuncts. Even in this destitute state, and reduced to the Thespian cart, it would still please without giving satiety, and though feeling the incongruities of time and place, would absorb our attention in spite of all drawbacks. It is founded on life, on the passions of life; and these are always new and absorbing. But if a regiment went by, or the Ethiopians came, every day, we should soon grow weary. If some one were to exhibit himself or herself in a new and more magnificent dress every day, the round of personal decoration would soon be exhausted; we should grow fatigued, even though the spectacle became more and more magnificent. Colours, gold, and silver can, after all, only be interchanged a certain number of times. We see this in the gorgeous "transformation scenes" at Drury Lane and Covent Garden Theatre, which were the town talk some years ago. Those exquisite scene painters Grieve and Telbin exhibited triumphs of art in glades that dissolved, crowds of nymphs that floated in the air, and gorgeous and melting glows of rich and effulgent light. The result was that the powers of these great artists soon became exhausted; nymphs can be suspended in the air, after all, but in few ways, and now we look on tranquilly and without excitement at prodigies of scenic effect, but which are found to be no more than ingenious repetitions of the old story.

Burlesque being thus bounded in its powers of entertainment, its professors and expounders must be of inferior order. *Their* stock of arts and tricks is also bounded, and as they find themselves at the end of their resources, sheer desperation leads them into antics and extravagances that bring down both actor and art to a still lower level. It may seem ungracious to speak harshly of those who are certainly the most laborious of the servants of the public, and who in sweat, dust, dirt, paint, and smirch strive frantically to extort a laugh. But still a just criticism must class the burlesque actors and actresses with pantomimists, gymnasts, "bounding brothers," and circus showmen. A cold German philosopher, to whom the case would be submitted impartially, would certainly so discriminate. There is of course such a thing as genuine burlesque, as the "Grande Duchesse," the "Belle Hélène," which, with much extravagance, is constructed on the true principle. Indeed, any one can readily see the difference between the true and the false article for himself by comparing one of the many English extravaganzas on the subject of "Blue Beard" with the French "Barbe Bleue" set to music by Offenbach. But this would be a long subject to enter upon.

These professors, then, are beginning to feel the fatal result of the limited range of the art they follow, and, male and female, are fallen upon evil days. The public know their stock of entertainments by heart, and instead of reigning at every important house in a sort of exuberant revelry, their ranks have dwindled, and they are now but a meagre band. Mr. James, Mr. Thomas Thorne, and Mr. Righton, among the men; Miss Parkes, Miss Amy Sheridan, and Miss "Nellie" Power, among the ladies, are the only names of note that recur. There are others of minor importance—Messrs. Terry and Paulton, Miss Jenny Lee, Miss Goodall, and a crowd of ladies, young and middle-aged, who are of course styled familiarly Annie, or Carry, or "Louey," or even "Lardy," which latter would scarcely seem an enticing name. The exertions these laborious performers go through seem incredible, and whatever be the defects of their peculiar style, they well earn their slender stipend. The ladies and gentlemen of the circus are often supposed to be the most hard-working of the servants of the public, but we must give the palm to the burlesque actors. Both are indeed lightly clad—wearing "fleshings," &c.; both strain their muscles severely, and it must be said with all delicacy, perspire in generous competition. After some energetic breakdown, preceded by a gymnastic song, where the "patter" of words is almost as fatiguing, the gymnasts, male and female, may be seen gasping, their chests heaving in spasms, while a thoughtless public tumultuously calls for a repetition. Would we see vigorous dancing, grinning and grimacing that is independent of a horse-collar, we need not go to the fair booth, where by tumbling, face-making, and general buffoonery the public is invited to enter—we have only to apply to the houses where the competing artists exhibit their powers. It is, indeed, no exaggeration to say that what is called burlesque acting is borrowed from those out-door mummers who tickle the midriffs of a crowd by pulling odd faces, putting their legs round their own necks, singing queer songs, and repeating buffooning jokes. It is nothing but a development of the pantomime, and your burlesque actor is little more than another shape of the *clown*.

This language will not seem too strong if we analyse the average burlesque. In every company there is the forward, good-looking young woman who makes her lower limbs flourish like the Isle of Man Arms, who can sing a pert and almost impudent song, and above all is most at home in a spangled page's dress—that is, a *stage* page's dress—for in no Court in Europe, at least frequented by decent ladies, would such a costume have been tolerated. This young person must figure in every foolery as Prince Pettytoes or the young Marquis, with an eye-glass and umbrella, accompanied by the spangled satin tights. The wretched monotony of these characters, and the invariable repetition of the points, show how poor and limited is the capability of burlesque. There is a miserable round of conventional tricks, chiefly taken from the music halls—and, indeed, many of these young ladies graduate at the "halls" and bring these stale devices from their Alma Mater, which are repeated *ad nauseam*. For instance, when a secret is to be communicated there is but the one "common form"—the two parties stepping down to the front with grotesque steps, as if in time to music, "bobbing" their heads, looking round mysteriously, and conveying the effect of doing something very droll. The heart sinks when we see this poverty-stricken programme beginning. There are scores of burlesques, too, where the situation is that the characters go tripping round, crossing each other, not forgetting the regulation formula for getting off, at the end of some grotesque dance—viz., by jumping like a kangaroo. Another conventional character in the burlesque is the storming or raging king, with his queen (usually played by a gentleman); while another is the leading comic character, some monstrosity of "making up"—some terrible *chef-d'œuvre* of smearing, smirching, and masquerading. A combination of a modern hat with a Roman dress—a modern dress with a Roman hat—some such night-mare of costume is all that is required. All, of course, wholly outside the regions of fun; paint, patches, and dress being hardly recognised as elements of genuine humour. These, indeed, belong to the mountebanks, and it is an unfair "poaching" on their manors. Burlesque is as unchanging as some old Tory, and cannot succeed without repeating its old devices. Outside these it feels insecure. Accordingly the old characters and their old tricks are repeated in each effort with but little variety. It will be said, perhaps, that though this entertainment bears the conventional name of "burlesque" it aims at a different order of amusement. It intends to entertain by mumming simply. It does not mean to "burlesque" a story in the strict sense of the term. This is the only way of defending the entertainment; but it is at the expense of its dignity, for it is thus reduced to the level of Punch and similar shows. When the case is thus plainly stated, there is no more to be said; but the title had better be rectified forthwith. A trifling question, however, remains behind, which may interest the public, who after all is the chief party concerned—viz., whether burlesque written on the true principle would not be a far more delightful sort of entertainment—whether by following these false gods it has not lost the delight of a truer faith. Would we know what this is we have only to go over to Paris, or even read some of the burlesques of those agreeable partners MM. Meilhac and Halévy. There we learn the meaning of the fun that can be extracted from a *real* travestie. Take the subject of "Blue Beard," for instance. Recently it has been put on the boards after the conventional fashion—the hero a sort of dancing grotesque, with a false nose, singing comic songs; his wife "dancing off," every character being a sort of clown, and the story generally incomprehensible. The same subject is put on the stage in Paris, but there it is travestied, treated according to the principles of genuine humour. Any one who has seen Offenbach's "Barbe Bleue" will understand this. The conception of the character of Blue Beard as that of a tender, affected, and refined being, who required *change*, who was not in the least truculent, but only fickle, was in itself highly humorous. So, too, with the notion of the last wife—a coarse country girl, who would not stand this treatment. All this is amusing and comic. So with the "Grande Duchesse," the "Princesse de Trebizonde," and the "Belle Hélène," where Calchas alone is simply perfect. But our burlesque actors, being *mummers*, require pieces of another description to be written for them. Last year Mr. Gilbert brought out "Thespis" at the Gaiety, an agreeable piece of humour, turning on the "Pagan god business" being "used up." But the players did not seem to understand it. The "fun" did not tell; the clever pantomimist Mr. Payne brought his legs to the rescue—every three or four minutes spinning them about, converting them into compasses—and thus secured a laugh. The lively Toole "gagged" and "gagged" again. He got hold of a phrase, "I don't *know* you," and ground it like the handle of a barrel-organ. A foreigner, Mdlle. Clary, was among them, and with her beaming, intelligent looks, and expressed enjoyment of what was going on, conveyed some intelligence and imparted some coherence. Such is true burlesque by the side of English burlesque.

Mr. D. James is fairly at the head of the corps. There is a certain drollery about him: and he must be admitted to be a clever *mime.* He has a stock-in-trade of grotesque antics and grimaces, and a husky voice, always effective for dry drollery. This gentleman made a signal success in a burlesque at the Vaudeville, where he played an idiotic "page boy"—a truly painful exhibition of street tumbling. There is no reflection intended here on Mr. James's talents—he is a clever, hard-working actor—but the *character* was simply degrading. It was impossible to make out his connection with the story, or indeed his connection with coherence or intelligence. All that was intended was a grotesque exhibition "to make people laugh." Mr. James could count up a long list of these fooleries in which he has taken part, first at the Strand Theatre, later at his own house. Formerly there was, indeed, some attempt at what was intelligible, when he played Guy Fawkes, and conveyed an odd and quaint idea of that hero. His masterpiece was the French King in the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," a piece that approached tolerably near the true principle of burlesque. There has been an attempt lately to make him a reputation in legitimate comedy, founded on his rendering a sort of imbecile character in "The Two Thorns." Never was there a greater mistake. The only ground for calling it a success was its verging on the pantomime of a burlesque character. He made it a sort of queer oddity, without conceivable meaning or coherence. But the dramatic critics of the newspapers are fond of making these discoveries, and actors are equally fond of attempting on a sudden something wholly different from their accustomed line. It looks *discerning* thus striking out and recognising a new vein. Years of gymnastics and the "high rope" cannot train a man into being a comedian. Mr. James's voice, too, is singularly against him—there is a curious twang, joined with a huskiness as odd, and this is not suited to the elegant and airy inflections of comedy. But he is a hard-working, painstaking actor, and certainly spares neither energy nor study nor wind to please his "patrons."

His friend, coadjutor, stage partner, and now fellow manager is Mr. Thomas Thorne, another of the untiring and unflagging, a school whose exertions might be transferred to "a bare backed" steed without much want of harmony. This gentleman revels in the costumes of the opposite sex, and has made his reputation by the delineation of burlesque queens and comically forlorn spinsters. Enormous "shinons"—so the article is often pronounced in burlesques—crinolines, short petticoats, and a simulated bosom are indispensable for the production of this order of fun, which, without offence be it spoken, is an infringement on the patent rights of the clown. For that humorous artist dresses himself in female attire before the public, stumbles in the palings of his crinoline, falls, affects modesty at the exhibition of his legs, drops his "shignon" as they call it—in short, goes through the round of tricks with which we have been familiar in many a pantomime for many a year. Thus it is we gradually trace the present shape of burlesque from the regular stage to the music hall, and from the music hall to the clown—and it does not make a very glorious family tree. Mr. Thorne, too, has that peculiar voice of a horny character, which is unpleasant. But really it is ungracious to be finding fault where so much labour and hodman's exertion is given to amuse, when the liberal profits are more than earned by exertion that exceeds that of stone breaking or paving. No one can visit the temples devoted to this sort of thing without coming away at least satisfied that every one has spared neither limb nor voice to amuse him.

Yet it must be infatuation that drives actors with good gifts into parts that positively put them lower than the pantomime clowns. Let any one go and see Mr. Thorne at an early part of the evening, when he is playing Meddle in "London Assurance," and an hour or two later when he is in his strong mountebanking in a night-mare dress in "Camaralzaman." The first is really a funny performance—vivacious, and full of spirit—at the latter it was impossible even to smile. In Mr. James's case there was nearly the same contrast; and his Dolly in the first piece was infinitely more diverting than all his antics in the last. But still this only bears out what has been stated; for the inflections of his voice and the "faces" that he makes are all borrowed from his burlesque character; and it is probable he would make nothing of a character which did not depend upon what was grotesque.

ORIGIN OF "THE TURF" IN ENGLAND.

BY CADWALLADER WADDY.

IN tracing the rise of horse-racing in England to its fountain head, our researches carry us back to the Saxon era. William of Malmesbury is the earliest authority on *Equos Cursores* amongst English writers, and we are indebted to him for the knowledge that: "When Hugh, the head of the house of the Capets, afterwards monarchs of France, solicited the hand of Edelswitha, the sister of Athelstan, he sent to that prince, among other valuable presents, several *equos cursores* (running horses), with their saddles and their bridles, the latter being embellished with bits of yellow gold." Hence we may infer that horse-racing was practised by the Anglo-Saxons, but most probably it was confined to persons of rank and opulence.

We learn from "The Knight of the Swan," one of "Garrick's Collection of Old Plays," that every gentleman ought to know "how to run horses, and to approve them." Fitz-Stephen, who lived in the reign of Henry II., gives the first description of which we have any record of this pastime being practised by Londoners. He tells us that horses were usually exposed for sale in West Smithfield, and, in order to prove the excellence of the most valuable "hacks" and "charging steeds," they were matched against each other. *Sic loquitur:* "When a race is to be run by this sort of horses, and perhaps by others, which also in their kind are strong and fleet, a shout is immediately raised, and the common horses are ordered to withdraw out of the way. Three jockeys, or sometimes only two, as the match is made, prepare themselves for the contest; such as, being used to ride, know how to manage their horses with judgment. The grand point is *to prevent a competitor from getting before them.* The horses, on their part, are not without emulation; they tremble and are impatient, and are continually in motion. At last, the signal once given, they strike, devour the course, hurrying along with unremitting velocity. The jockeys, inspired with the thoughts of applause and the hopes of victory, clap spurs to their willing horses, brandish their whips, and cheer them with their cries." In the old metrical romance, "Sir

Bevis of. Southampton," we are told that the nobility of the middle ages raced their horses in the Easter and Whitsuntide holidays. One of the passages we refer to says :—

> In somer at Whitsontyde,
> Whan knightes most on horsebacke ride;
> A cours, let them make on a daye,
> Steedes, and Palfraye, for to assaye;
> Whiche horse, that best may ren,
> *Three myles the cours was then,*
> Who that might ryde him shoulde,
> Have forty pounds of redy golde.

Commenius, in his vocabulary, entitled "Orbis Sensualium Pictus," published towards the conclusion of the sixteenth century, tells us that "at this day tilting or the quintain is used, where a ring is struck with a truncheon, instead of horse-races, which," adds he, "are grown out of use."

Bourne mentions in his "Antiquities," published in the seventeenth century, that horse racing, which was formerly practised at Eastertide, "was then put down, as being contrary to the holiness of the season;" for this prohibition we can discover no other authority. It is very certain, however, that horse races were held upon various holidays, and in different parts of the kingdom, in preference to other pastimes; and that, too, in the seventeenth century. Chester races are an instance in point, Randel Holme, of Chester, one of the city heralds, having left some valuable records behind him on the subject, from which we quote the following :—"It had been customary," says our author, "time out of mind upon Shrove Tuesday, for the Company of Saddlers belonging to the City of Chester to present to the Drapers a wooden ball embellished with flowers, and placed upon the point of a lance; this ceremony was performed in the presence of the Mayor, at the cross in the 'Rodhee,' or 'Roody,' an open place near the city, but this year"—the thirty-first of Henry VIII.—continues he, "the ball was changed into a bell of silver, *valued at* 3*s.* 6*d.*, *or more,* to be given to him who shall run the best and the hardest on horseback, before them upon the same day." These bells were afterwards denominated St. George's Bells, and we are told that in the last year of James I., John Brereton, innkeeper, Mayor of Chester, first caused the horses entered for this race, then called St. George's race, to start from the point beyond the new tower; and appointed them to run five times round the "Roody;" "and he," says Randel Holme the Younger, "who won the last course, or trayne, received the bell, of a good value of eight or ten pounds, or thereabout, and to have it for ever; which moneyes were collected of the citizens to a sum for that purpose." We may understand from the author having added that the winner of this race was to have the bell, and "have it for ever," that formerly it was only a temporary badge of honour, like "Volunteers' Cups" are in the present day. This alteration was made on the 23rd of April, 1624. Here we see the commencement of a regular horse-race, but whether the courses were in immediate succession, or at different intervals, is not perfectly clear. The modern innovations in the sport, of "distance posts," weighing the riders, "weight for age," and other *niceties* of the Turf in our day, are totally wanting in the details of the honest and unsophisticated racing men of that age. The Chester races were originally instituted for amusement, but now such prodigious sums are usually dependent upon the result of a race that the apparently trivial matter to the originators of the sport—of "weighing the jockeys"—has become indispensable. In 1665, the fifth year of the reign of Charles II., and forty-six years after the period when a "bell" was considered a sufficient prize, the same author tells us that the Sheriffs of Chester "would have no Calves'-Head Feast, but put the charge of it into a piece, to be run for on that day—Shrove Tuesday—and the High Sheriff borrowed a Barbary horse of Sir Thomas Middleton, which won him the plate; and being 'master of the race' he would not suffer the horses of Master Massey, of Puddington, and of Sir Philip Egerton, of Oulton, to run, because they came the day after the time prefixed for the horses to be brought, and kept in the city; which thing caused all the gentry to relinquish our races ever since."

Butcher, in his survey of the town of Stamford, printed in A.D. 1646, gives a similar description to the preceding one of how races were conducted at that era. "A concourse," says he, "of noblemen and gentlemen meet together in mirth, peace, and amity, for the exercise of their swift-running horses, every Thursday in March. The prize they run for is a silver and gilt cup, with a cover, to the value o seven or eight pounds, provided by the care of the alderman for th time being, but the money is raised out of the interest of a stock formerly made up by the nobility and gentry, which are neighbour and well-wishers to the town." "Running horses" are frequentl mentioned in the *computus*, or "account book," of the variou monarchs who have occupied the English throne. John was notorious for his love of swift horses and well-bred hounds, so much s that he took "fines" in those animals, very often in preference t "marks." He does not seem, however, to have used the horses f other purposes than hunting. Bernard de Wicto, who wrote in the time of Edward III., says that running horses purchased for the King's service generally cost twenty marks, or 13*l.* 6s. 8d. of our money; some few, however, were prized as high as twenty-five marks. Michael de la Were states that in the ninth year of this King's reign the King of Navarre sent him as a present two running horses, which must have been very valuable, as the King gave the groom who brought them "one hundred shillings for his guerdon." Upon reference to the poets we find that swift-running horses were much esteemed by their heroes. For instance, an old poem, written in the fourteenth century, descriptive of Richard Cœur de Leon, or "Emperor of the Camp of Cyprus," as he is called, says:—

> Too stedes fownde King Richarde,
> That oon Favell, thatt other Lyard:
> Yn this worlde they hadde no pere;
> Dromedary, neither destrere,
> Stede, rabyte, ne cammele
> Goeth none so swyfte without fayle
> For a thousand pownde of golde,
> Ne shoulde the one be sold.

As "destrere" is the old French name for a "large and powerful horse," we must allow for some poetic licence. The two horses alluded to *must* have been Arabs, and therefore could not have been either "large or powerful." In Elizabeth's reign race-horses were prized on account of their breed, as appears from one of Bishop Hall's satires:—

> Dost thou prize
> Thy brute beasts' worth by their dam's qualities?
> Say'st thou this colt shall prove a swift-pac'd steed,
> Only because a jennet did him breed?
> Or say'st thou this same horse shall win the prize,
> Because his dam was swiftest Trunchefice,
> Or Runcevall his syre; himself a gallaway?
> While like a tireling jade he lags half away.

Two centuries back horse racing was looked upon as a pastime practised more for pleasure than for profit; now it is reduced to a system of gambling. Formerly it ranked with hunting and hawking and Warton, in his "History of English Poetry," gives us a quotation from the "Poem of Covetice," by a Scotch author, in which he opposes horse racing to dicing and card playing, as a healthy and manly recreation. John Northbrooke, a Puritanical writer in the days of Elizabeth, though he is severe in his denunciation of "cards, dice, vaine plays, interludes, and other idle pastimes," allows of horse racing as yielding good exercise; and he certainly never would have countenanced it had it any of the numerous "questionable belongings" which are its concomitants in the present epoch. At the decline of the seventeenth century, however, if we may judge from Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," this sport had become productive of harm; for, says he, "Horse races are desports of great men, and good in themselves, though many gentlemen by such means gallop quite out of their fortunes." Fifty years afterwards, we learn from "Newmarket," one of D'Urfey's collection of songs, everything that could be called "sharp-practice" had attached itself to racing:—

> Let cullies that lose at a race,
> Go venture at hazard to win;
> Or he that is bubbl'd at dice,
> Recover at cocking again.
> Let jades that are foundered be bought,
> Let jockies play crimp to make sport.
>
> * * * *
>
> Another makes racing a trade,
> And dreams of his projects to come:
> And many a crimp match has made,
> By bubbing another man's groom.

Thus we see that a pastime originally practised in England for emulation, and in which the owners were riders, eventually came to a dead level of gambling. Contests between famous horses and great owners were the origin of race-meetings, as a vast concourse of people, for those days, used to assemble to see the sport; which speedily led the inhabitants of towns to fix specified periods for racing, and also to institute prizes, in order to draw by such means custom to their own doors. In James I.'s reign public races were established in many parts of the kingdom. Horses were trained for the purpose as they are now, but the courses were still called "bell-courses," in commemoration of if not for the actual silver bell, which as we have shown was amongst the earliest of racing prizes. At the latter end of Charles I.'s reign races were held in Hyde Park and at Newmarket, and the King lent his countenance and support to this sport. After the Restoration, Charles II. took the lead in patronising this amusement, and made a course at Datchet Meadow, near Windsor. At Newmarket, where he entered horses and ran them in his own name, he established a house for his better accommodation; it also seems, from Mathew Thomas Baskerville's "Itinerary," that the King visited other racing resorts, as he makes these remarks concerning Charles II. and his favourites at Burford Downs:—

> Next for the glory of the place,
> Here has been rode many a race;

King Charles the Second I saw here,
But I've forgotten in what year.
The Duke of Monmouth here also,
Made his horse to swete and blow;
Lovelace, Pembrook, and other gallants
Have been ventring here their talents:
And Nicholas Bainton on Black Sloven,
Got silver plate by labour and drudging.

Apparently, from the characters introduced, this incident must have occurred at or about 1690.

In No. 173 of the *Spectator* we find an advertisement copied from the *Post Boy* of September 11, 1711, to the following effect:—"On 9th of Oct. next will be run for on Coleshill Heath, in Warwickshire, a plate of 6 guineas value, three heats, by any horse, mare, or gelding that hath not won above the value of five pounds. The winning horse to be sold for ten pounds, to carry ten stone weight if fourteen hands high; if above or under, to carry or be allowed weight for inches, and to be entered on Friday 5th, at the Swan in Coleshill by 6 in the evening. Also a plate of less value, to be run for by asses." The latter, though by no means a noble sport, must have been amusing as a wind-up to the proceedings. Two-year-old racing, it is pretty generally admitted, has arrested the development of growth of our horses, and done the country a serious injury; indeed it is a grave matter of doubt if we *could* get a thoroughbred now to carry weight for inches in like proportion as the Coleshill coursers did; we certainly could not get a racer nowadays for the equivalent in value for £10 in those days, not even if we took him from a "cab-rank." Racing truly *has* grown since the days of Athelstan; so much so that we can hardly recognise in the vast industry which it now represents in this country any trace of what was formerly the pastime of an Anglo-Saxon king. Kinglake has left upon record that "we are a nation of gamblers," and we suppose we *must* be, as racing has grown into a grand national gambling institution. The breed of the horses, or who or what wins the "Derby," is of little consequence to the million of backers who are not "on." They have *lost;* and whereas in Athelstan's time such a catastrophe entailed temporary disappointment on *one*, in these days it means sorrow and ruin to many thousands. We have no further space to go into the *pro* and *con* of the matter, but prefer to leave racing for the present in 1711, when Coleshill races were wound up by a good ass race, and venture to throw out a hint that a few plates given for improving the breed of the patient "moke" of the costermonger would not be amiss.

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLANTS OF BARTON," "THE VALLEY OF POPPIES," &c.

CHAPTER XXX.

DOROTHY AND MISS THORNTON COMPARE NOTES.

A FEW days after Will Tunster's visit to Mortimer House Dorothy found herself alone with her mistress.

"Well, Dorothy," said Lucy, "and what conclusion have you arrived at with regard to your faithful lover, Mr. William Tunster?"

"If I say I wish to leave you?" answered Dorothy, with rather surprising promptness.

"I shall be sorry," said Lucy.

"You don't seem astonished."

"I am beginning not to be surprised at anything," said Lucy.

"My mother—you know how she grieves after the old place," said Dorothy. "But I give you pain!"

"No, no," said Lucy, with a sigh; "go on."

"Will has taken the old house—they have let it to him as an especial favour, though it will not be wanted any more for a keeper, because they are going to cut a railway a quarter of a mile above it," said Dorothy, making an effort to say what she had to say "quick, and get it over," as she afterwards told Will.

Lucy saw her embarrassment, and with womanly instinct and sympathy interpreted what Dorothy further desired to say. "And you think you will say 'Yes' to Will's proposition, and leave this fine city, and settle down into a quiet country wife? You are right, Dorothy; Will deserves to have that answer; he has waited long and patiently, and you will be happy."

"God bless you," said Dorothy, while Lucy flung her arms round the woman's neck and kissed her.

Dorothy's was a sad and romantic story in its way. In early life she had loved deeply and passionately. She was a fine handsome girl at eighteen, and her lover was a manly young fellow.

She had mourned his loss for years and vowed her heart was broken. This had been her reply to Will Tunster any time this fifteen years. At last she told Will he was welcome to half her heart. She could give nobody more than what was left, she said, and she would not give anybody else that except Will, and he said dang his buttons he would only be too glad to have it; for half a loaf was better than none.

"It will perhaps be happier for mother," said Dorothy, "for since she has had nothing to complain about, she has only grumbled the more."

"But that has not influenced you," said Lucy.

"No, I've come to like Will; he is very kind; and we shall all live together in the old house."

"Ah, my dear friend, you are right."

A gentle tap at the door.

"Come in," said Lucy.

"The Hon. Max Walton and Mr. Thornton are in the hall," said the servant. "Mr. Thornton wishes to know if you will join them in the park."

"I will presently," said Lucy; "in half an hour."

"Yes, my lady."

"Tell John I will be ready in half an hour."

"I shall leave London," said Lucy.

"You!"

"Yes, for a couple of years at least."

"My dear Lucy," said Dorothy, with tears in her eyes, "you are not happy."

"Oh yes, I am," said Lucy, smiling sadly, "but I ought not to have come out this season; I want more education; I must study quietly; I know nothing."

"You know as much as other ladies."

"No, I do not; my music requires practice; I cannot speak French; my water colours are daubs; I am very ignorant."

"You can ride better than any lady in the Row, and dance—Oh, how you did dance the other night! I was watching you from the gallery."

"Yes," said Lucy, "and uncle is anxious that I should marry."

Dorothy sighed.

"I know what you are thinking," said Lucy.

"I suppose it is not to be."

"What is not to be?"

"I was thinking of Jacob Martyn," said Dorothy.

"He is not worth thinking about," said Lucy, her face suddenly flushing.

"Don't say that, dear."

"Well, we will not discuss the subject," Lucy replied.

"Of course you are going to marry Mr. Max Walton."

"Not of course; there are a dozen men quite as eligible as my lord's brother," said Lucy; "but I must have a nice quiet house in the country, where I can study and make myself worthy to be a wife."

Dorothy, in thinking of Jacob, had forgotten for the moment how even she had given up her old lover at last. She did not know that neglect is harder to bear than absence. Dorothy had waited from year to year, expecting her lover to return to her across the treacherous sea, and at last was fain to give him up as dead, and transfer her affections to another. Lucy had waited for tidings of Jacob, and she too was tired of waiting.

If you had seen her galloping with her uncle and Mr. Max Walton an hour after her conversation with Dorothy you would have thought her happy and contented. She was the admiration of riders and pedestrians. The latter leaned upon the railings, watching her lithe figure as it disappeared among the trees; the former admired and envied her according to their sex. Sometimes she tried to chat with her uncle about a pleasant country house and two years of retirement from London; but the moment they pulled their horses into a walk under the trees they were surrounded by friends. The Hon. Max Walton was perpetually by Lucy's side, and it was generally believed that he was the most fortunate man of the season. Now and then, however, Lucy gave gossips a little reason to doubt this, by marked flirtations with other admirers. Indeed Lucy played the part of the belle of the season to perfection, and especially as the season advanced, practice in flirtation giving additional grace and piquancy to her natural charms.

"They say you are becoming a finished flirt, Lucy," said Mr. Thornton, as they were riding home; "quite cruel and fickle, upon my honour."

"Who says so?"

"Max thinks so, I am sure," said Mr. Thornton.

Lucy burst into a merry little laugh.

"Lord Folden has made a bet against Max Walton's success."

"Success?" said Lucy, inquiringly.

"As the favourite for your hand."

"Oh, they bet upon matrimonial events, do they?"

"Lord Folden bets on anything."

"How droll!" said Lucy; "I will support his judgment."

"What is the joke?" asked Max Walton, riding up.

"A bet of your brother's," said Lucy, looking across her horse's neck at the speaker, who found himself at a loss what to say in reply.

"Do you make bets?" asked Lucy, enjoying his confusion.

"Sometimes—I backed the Derby winner this year," said Mr. Walton.

"Oh, indeed; then you are lucky in your wagers."

"Generally, yes."

They had arrived at Mortimer House. Lucy alighted; Mr. Thornton and the Hon. Max Walton raised their hats. Lucy smiled, waved her whip, and disappeared, to meet her escort, however, again at dinner.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DESCRIBES A FAMOUS FAIR, ITS PLEASURES, PECULIARITIES, AND PASTIMES; BUT IS MORE PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY ON ACCOUNT OF THE UNEXPECTED MEETING OF TWO TRAVELLERS.

"WELL, dang my buttons!" said Will Tunster, who was mounted upon a sturdy cob, doing seven miles an hour on the Dinsley road, about twenty miles from Cartown. "Gee up, Sauce Box, gee up!"

Sauce Box shook her head, and declined to gee up.

"Vary weel, owd testy, then ston still, and I'll get off."

Sauce Box scrambled into a trot immediately.

"Thou'rt like th' paddy's pig as had to be shoved t' rong way before it ud go th' reight un."

Sauce Box shook her head and walked again.

"Weel, niver moind; we're up to him noo; and if it isna Jacob Martyn, whoy, my name's not Will Tunster, that's ole."

Will said this in such a loud voice that the object of the remark turned round, and there was a mutual recognition. Jacob, however, looked far less pleased at the meeting than Will, who slipped off Sauce Box and shook Jacob by the hand, and hoped he was well, and hearty, and stunning.

"I am very well and glad to see you, Will," said Jacob, after a pause.

"Weel now, I shouldna a thout it; thou doesna look ower pleased, master. But niver moind, I know thou's had thy troubles; and dang me, whether thou'rt glad or not, I'm glad. Roide, sir, roide—I've had a long spell; and thou'rt more fit for a horse than I am."

Jacob smiled bitterly, and said, "You forget the adage, Will, about putting a beggar on horseback."

"A beggar! Well, if thou'rt a beggar, I can only say thou deserves to be one, lad," said Will, slapping his thigh with a short ash stick.

Jacob looked angry.

"I donna care! When Dorothy said to me, only t'other day, as she feared thou might not be doin' well, I laughed at her, and towd her it was rubbish. Mester Martyn i' low watter! I said, why he'd brains enough for a Prime Minister!"

"Dorothy!" said Jacob; "where did you see Dorothy?"

"Where!—why, in London, to be sure, where th' owd women go abaht i' glass cases, and th' butcher lads carry legs of mutton in coffins," said Will. "But come now, get on Sauce Box, and I'll tell thee ole abaht it."

"No, thank you," said Jacob, anxious to hear what Will might have to disclose.

"Then dang my buttons if I'll tell thee; and it's worth summat what I can tell; so now then—here, gie me thy leg."

Jacob mounted; Will took his bundle, and walked like a dutiful squire by the cavalier's stirrup.

And then Will, in a quaint roundabout way, told Jacob as much as he knew concerning Lucy's removal to London, until Jacob's thoughts ran at such a rate that Sauce Box suddenly seemed desirous to overtake them, and away she went as fast as her little stumpy legs would carry her. But she was winded sooner than Will, who laughed heartily at her antics. When she stopped Jacob dismounted.

"I can stand this no longer!" said Jacob.

"Oh, gammon!" said Will, "you made her start off, you know."

"But that is not what I mean, Will. Did you say that Mr. Thornton was her grandfather's brother?"

"Of course."

"And that Miss Thornton still thinks of me?"

"Aye, lad! And ud give a trifle to know where thou art."

"Will, your hand! God bless you, Will!" and Jacob returned, with interest, the squeeze he had received a few minutes before.

The people who passed looked and laughed at this strange pair making these demonstrations of regard for each other. Some of them nodded and winked and thought the two had begun the day's drinking bout early; for the majority of the travellers on the road that morning were on their way to Dinsley Statute Fair. Jacob had noticed many strange people by the way; he had started early from a little roadside inn, and was one of a motley crew that reminded him of an old nursery ditty which Susan Harley had sung to him when he was a child:—

> Hark! hark! the dogs do bark,
> The beggars are coming to town,
> Some in rags, some in tags,
> Some in silken gown.

When Will came up, Jacob was thinking of the old song, and of some of the trials he had undergone since the last time poor Susan had called him up in the early morning to ramble in the fields with Tom Titsy and his dog.

When they reached Dinsley Jacob and Will went to a little inn, where, Sauce Box being stabled, Will repeated his story over again, and detailed his conversation with Dorothy.

"And I'm justified, thus far, in believing that Miss Thornton is concerned about my welfare?"

"Aye, lad—but I'll go further nor that."

"You think she has made some efforts to find me out?"

"I know she has."

"And gone so far as to write to me?" said Jacob, his eyes flashing with hope.

"Yes, Dorothy said so, and she wouldna tell a lie for ole Lundun."

"And her address is Mortimer House, Piccadilly?"

"It is, lad."

"I will leave you for a while now, Will, if you please."

"I am goin' on a bit further this afternoon," said Will; "I'll meet you here at eight o'clock to-night, sir."

"Very good, that is an engagement," said Jacob, as he strode forth, only, however, to return almost immediately to order a bed for the night, requesting to see the room at once, that he might wash.

It was long since Jacob had been so careful over his toilet as he was upon this occasion; and although he had but a few shillings in his pocket, and his clothes were rough and shabby, his face was animated, and he looked happy and gentlemanly.

He went into the nearest bookseller's shop, purchased a sheet of note-paper, wrote the following lines upon it, and addressed the letter to Dorothy:—

"Tell Miss Thornton that Jacob Martyn still lives in the hope of some day being worthy of her; tell her that he goes about the world with the music of the old hymn in his heart—

> There is a happy land,
> Far, far away;

Tell her he has heard of the change in her fortunes, but not rightly until now; that under the circumstances he still releases her from a girlish engagement; but that he has not given up loving nor hoping; and that he prays always for the happiness of the companion of his boyhood, and thanks heaven for news of her welfare and happiness, for the continuance of which he ever prays."

Having dropped this missive into the post-office, Jacob took a turn down a by-lane and wandered, with his thoughts, into some green meadows. After a while he came back to the inn, where he partook of a simple meal, and then sallied forth, to search for Dr. Johnson, who was in the habit of attending great fairs in all the Midland counties.

"Dinsley Stattis," as the people called it, was a holiday long looked forward to by the rural population as well as by the inhabitants of Dinsley with pleasurable and profitable anticipations; and it shall have more than a passing notice at my hands. The hiring saturnalia was still kept up, with little change in the way of business and pleasure from the days of our fathers. The adjacent villages sent to the fair servants, male and female, dressed in their finest clothes; and masters and mistresses on all kinds of beasts of burthen, and in all manner of carts, gigs, and waggons. The servants whose periods of hiring terminated that day mostly desired new masters, and the masters new servants, and so they all congregated at certain places in the market-place and stared at each other. When a farmer liked the look of a man he opened a negotiation for his services, and the same process was adopted by the farmer's wife with regard to her assistants—only that in the latter case a great deal more examination on both sides was deemed necessary. If the terms suited, and both parties were agreeable, a bargain was struck, and considered thoroughly binding by the acceptance on the part of the servant of what was called "the fastening penny," which was presented on the principle of the recruiting shilling. The "fastening penny," however, was represented by any amount the hirer might think proper to give; a "waggon-wheel," as the five-shilling piece was denominated in some parts of the country, being generally considered a tolerably liberal "fastening penny." As soon as the money was accepted the engagement between the contracting parties was as binding for a year as if half a dozen lawyers had been employed to set forth the contract on as many skins of parchment. And all this matter-of-fact business went on amidst the noise and bustle of the fair; yet it was seldom that mistakes of terms or breaches of contract arose out of the statute engagements, clumsy as the system certainly appears in these days of educational progress.

The old institution is at an end. It was a relic of barbarism, no doubt. There are a few links still left between feudalism and serfdom. The School Boards will break the remaining bonds. But let us turn back to the old fair. I see it as it were with the eyes of childhood, as Jacob Martyn saw it years ago. It is at night, when the sight-seeing, the excitement of gingerbread dealing, the fun of putting pennies into lotteries and getting nothing for them are at their height. It is when the naphtha begins to blaze and splutter, filling the atmosphere with a sort of illuminated mist, that the fair is "in full go." The "pale moonlight," which still heightens the beauty of Melrose Abbey, though Sir Walter never saw the sweet effect, would be fatal to the fair. The darker the better for the glory of naphtha lamps and tinselled queens and magicians. It is quite invigorating to watch the fierceness of the competition between the rival showmen.

First, there is the dwarf, perpetually ringing his bell out of the first story front, and his proprietor yelling the proportions of "the wonderfullest fe-nomenah as ever appeared afore the British public, at the low charge of *one* penny."

Then there is the red-faced gentleman belonging to the waxwork, who seems to be shouting himself into fits of apoplexy, in an overweening desire to make known to those who are wavering betwixt "Daniel in the lions' den, as natural as life," and "the wonderfullest dwarf halive," "that this hexibition of mechanical figures challenges the world for variety and perfection, avin ad the honour of happearin afore nearly all the crowned eads of Europe."

Above all, there is Bumwell's Royal Collection of Animated Nature, towering up into the darkness, with florid delineations of lions, tigers, birds, and reptiles, occupied in the amusements of their native woods, or being mildly inspected, in a semi-circle of cages, by the reigning monarch and several persons in military uniform. Bumwell's have a band of music, which the proprietor of "The Temple of Magic" is endeavouring to drown with a drum and barrel organ, assisted by the band belonging to the giant and the boa constrictor—two trombones, cornet, and a drum—which appears to be fully determined to drown everybody else or perish in the attempt; while the crowd below, tantalised by the half drawing of a curtain exhibiting a sort of monster Catherine wheel, spinning before a piece of looking-glass, dash up the steps, and disappear behind two very green doors, ornamented with a very bright knocker.

In the midst of these exhibitions, surrounded by a host of other equally noisy establishments, including peep-show delineations of Waterloo and the latest murder, is situated the booth of the "Nottingham Pet," a gentleman of somewhat short stature and battered aspect, who, elevating himself on a temporary platform, proclaims, in a husky voice, "You've the real thing here, gents—no infernal drums an trumpets to dror yer in, and ease yer of yer money——it's the nut—the *nut*, gents, wot you has here in all its perfectshun—the *nut*, gents, *the* nut." This choice oration is accompanied with a beating of the head every time that piece of human anatomy is alluded to as "the nut," and by the time the "Pet" has exhausted his speech, and made himself much hoarser than when he commenced it, another of the same calibre of "nuts," and rejoicing in a similar "gin and fog" organ, invites "them as loves the noble skience of self-defence" to lose no time in witnessing "a set-to atween the renowned Nottenham Pet, which is backed for a undred pund a side to fight the 'Tipton' and 'Jimmy, the Black,' which has had the honour of oldin the champion belt of the light weights, and which is also backed to fight a battle in the ensooin munth."

Leaving "the real thing," with its gloves and its flat noses, we come to something of a more imaginary character—"The Theatre Royal." The performers, in a remarkable variety of costumes, are pacing the platform, and just as we arrive at the steps it is announced that the company will have "one dance at the exterior of the house prior to the commencement of Shakespeare's *im-mortal* tradegee of 'King Richard the Third'—by the whole strength of the company, after which a Grand Tragical, Magical, Comical, Laughable Pantomime,—only twopence to the gallery;" all this being accompanied with the most positive assurance that there will only be three or four more performances this evening, and that the house is elegantly illuminated, and heated with a patent stove. Thereupon the whole strength of the company—a hump-backed individual in a black velvet coat and feathers; two or three royal looking swells of a past age, in various stages of seediness; two children (shortly to be murdered in the Tower), shivering in scanty garments and buckled shoes; and divers ladies, in long robes of all colours, together with short robes for the pantomime of the most gauzy and gaudy character, begin to dance; and after a few fantastical turns, the men severally fold their arms, the women raise their dresses, and at the pantomimic beckoning of a clown, who tumbles head over heels across the stage, and then runs back again, they all disappear to commence their interpretation of Shakespeare's "Life and Death of King Richard the Third."

Moving a little way from the noise of the shows, we find ourselves in a maze of stalls, shooting galleries, roundabouts, swinging boats, bazaars, and "good stuff" booths, and wherever we go, gingerbread and nuts seem to be the staple luxuries; indeed, the fair is redolent of gingerbread, and in whatever other occupation they may be engaged, girls and boys, and men and women, are all cracking nuts, which are offered and sold to them as "real Barsalonies." Here a group throngs round a ballad singer, who sells his ditties by the yard. Close by, a bustling individual, with a sort of dumb clock, painted in stripes of red, and blue, and black, and green, with a perpetually moving long hand, cries, "Now, gents, try your luck again—faint heart never won fair lady—nothing ventur, nothing win—one down, who makes two?—I'll bet even on the red;" and smock-frocked fellows gape at his volubility, while his volubility wins their pence by handsful. In close proximity, all who are suffering from pains in the head or back, nervous debility, spasms, wind, gout, or any other complaint, are requested to try the infallible pill, the recipe of which was procured from an officer in "the Royal Artilleree" who had been in the habit of curing whole regiments with the recipe, and who had only been induced to part with the same on account of the humble individual who now possessed it having saved that officer's life when set upon by four blacks in the great Sikh war—two night and morning would be found efficacious in all disorders, and the charge for one box was about one-third of the price which would have to be paid for a single pill in any respectable druggist's in town—and why? because the seller was not compelled to pay rent and taxes, and because he gave the public the benefit of his not keeping a large shop with numerous assistants. These arguments are found to be irresistible, especially with the women; as are also, with numerous men, the jokes of "Cheap Jack," who is continually trying to break a joiner's saw, and expressing an emphatic opinion that nobody ever saw such a saw as that saw, which said saw was as elastic as india rubber, and as sharp as a razor, and if the axe he now held in his hand—and which he would neither ask five, four, three, two, nor one shilling for, but would sell at the low and ruinous figure of tenpence—was placed at the root of a tree that night, the timber would be found felled and ready for carting the next morning. Above all this you hear a mingled hubbub of cries, made up of "Three a penny, three a penny," "Taste 'em and try 'em 'afore you buy 'em," "Try your weight, gents, try your weight," "Strong leather laces," "Only a penny in the lucky bag," "The real Turkey rhoobarb, only four pensh de ounsh, two pensh de half ounsh, and as low as a penny de quarter of an ounsh," "Now, my little dears, who rides, who rides?" "Real Grantham gingerbread, only sixpence a pound," "Here you are, the real brandy snap, the real brandy snap;"

"We are poor folk from Manchester,
An we've gott'n no work to do;"

and a hundred other inducements to buy or give, interspersed now and then with a deep bass entreaty to "Pity the poor blind!"

It is a source of pleasure and amusement to watch the children, among all the noise and glitter, and to see them struggling home under loads of toys, blowing their trumpets and beating their drums, and talking about their "fairings," and bedaubing their cheeks with gingerbread; and to see the rough country lovers taking their sweethearts to the shows, and buying them nuts; and to see the tradesmen busy in their shops round the market place; and to hear, as you may sometimes, the parish bells ringing joyous peals, that fill up the smallest lull in the noise of the fair, and make the holiday clamour complete.

Jacob wandered about amidst these familiar scenes, now lingering here, now lingering there, searching for Dr. Johnson, and listening for his voice among the Babel of cries of the fair. But nowhere could be found Mrs. Titsy's famous lodger. Jacob was, however, interested in one discovery. He recognised the two waggons which had formed part of the gipsy settlement. One of them attracted his particular attention. It was the "Cheap Jack's" establishment, at the back of which, handing out the goods, was the "Baron" of the encampment. Julius, he thought, was playing a dangerous game if he had really committed any serious crime; but his disguise was certainly a most complete one—so complete that Jacob doubted, after all, whether this was the Baron or not, and he would never for a moment have dreamed of that strange figure being Jennings had he not met with the Baron as I have previously described.

He was wondering what his late father's factotum could have done, when a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and he found himself face to face with Dr. Horatio Johnson. A hearty greeting on both sides followed the recognition.

"I have been looking for you everywhere, listening for you in every corner of the fair," said Jacob.

"My assistant is here to-day," said Mr. Johnson. "A vulgar antagonist has sprung up who talks about having saved an officer in the Sikh war; he has planted himself opposite my place in several towns, and wherever he has done so I encounter him with my assistant. Did you not notice my stall?"

"No! Looking for you I naturally took little notice of any establishment where I did not see you, though I did observe the Sikh war man, because he wore regimentals and shouted louder than anybody else."

"That's the fellow—well, never mind him—come along."

"I have an engagement at eight," said Jacob, "and it must be nearly that time now."

"So have I," said the Doctor, "but mine is one in which you may participate; I am going to sup with a gentleman whom you know very well."

"I have met a fellow whom I knew years ago to-day," said Jacob, "and I have promised to meet him at eight."

"Not at the Grove?" said the Doctor.

"No," said Jacob.

"Well, I'll let you off for half an hour, on one condition," said the Doctor, "that you bring your friend, and come to No. 6, The Grove (it is close at hand) to supper."

"You have my word," said Jacob.

"Your hand upon it," said the Doctor, "and I am delighted, sir—delighted to have met you again. I rely on your coming to the Grove."

And the Doctor disappeared among the crowd.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE GROVE.

MR. WINDGATE WILLIAMS, the accredited editor of the *Dinsley Courant*, lodged in a pleasant part of the county town called the Grove, whither Dr. Horatio Johnson hurried, after leaving Jacob in the fair. Opening a diminutive ornamental gate he passed along a small square garden, and knocked at a respectable-looking door.

"Yethir, he ith in," said a young woman with black hair, blinking eyes, and prominent teeth.

"Walk in, sir," thereupon said a bland, patronising, oily voice from a side door, accompanied by strong whiffs of fried onions.

The voice belonged to the landlady, who was the mother of the interesting individual with the teeth. "Joanna, show the gentleman upstairs."

Joanna, who dashed about the house, Windgate Williams had said, like a lost thunderbolt, took two stairs at a time, and beckoning the

Doctor to follow, was in another moment thundering at the door of Mr. Williams.

"Aha, my boy—half an hour before your time; 'but no matter, ah,' as the heavy drama men say; glad to see you—sit down, sit down."

"I've taken a liberty with your hospitality," said Mr. Johnson.

"Not at all, Doctor—don't see it—hang it—I invited you to meet my friend Crooks"——

"But I have invited two other friends to accompany me—at least, a friend and his friend," said the Doctor, interrupting Mr. Williams.

"The deuce you have," said Williams, knitting his brows, and ringing a bell.

Before the Doctor had time to reply, the thunderbolt rolled into the room, and stared at Mr. Williams.

"Send your mother here."

The thunderbolt rolled down stairs.

"Queer girl that," said Williams; "I call her Jumbo—her name's Joanna—Jumbo the lost thunderbolt, sir—I contemplate writing a humorous song about her."

"Mrs. Smick—my friend Dr. Johnson."

The Doctor bowed to a fat, smiling, good-natured looking woman of fifty.

"What have we for supper to-night, Mrs. Smick?"

"Oh, plenty, sir—never fear."

"Plenty for five?"

"I thought it was three which I were a saying to Joanna when"——

"We have been into the highways and byeways, mam—result is two more," said Mr. Williams, interrupting his landlady.

"Ho!" said Mrs. Smick, thoughtfully; "couple of ducks and a steak—ha!—we'll put on a little more steak, sir, which, when the pertaties is considered"——

"Very well—very well—all right," said Mr. Williams, and the lady bowed herself out of the room.

"You seem doleful, Doctor—come now, none of that—it will not be tolerated to-night—away with melancholy!—you're thinking about that sanguinary affair which is to be tried at the assizes—he's all right, sir—the lad's all right—I've told you so before—come now—for to-night we'll merry be, et cetera."

With these disjointed remarks, dropping from him during journeys round the room to put papers and books and other litter out of the way, Mr. Williams endeavoured to raise the Doctor's spirits, finally extracting from him a promise that he would, for that night at least, confine himself to the pleasures of social life, and that he would in no way mar the hilarity of the company by thrusting a murder under its nose.

Then Jumbo rushed into the room and laid the cloth, seeming to look everywhere at once and to be there at the same time; she was followed by a short, stout, closely-cropped gentleman, who wore spectacles, and "snuffed."

"My friend Mr. Ebenezer Crooks, well known for his dramatic readings and his eloquent lectures—Dr. Horatio Johnson of Middleton-on-the-Water—glad to have the pleasure of introducing you," said Mr. Williams.

"And here comes our other friends—why—no—yes—yes—it is—Mr. Jacob Martyn—delighted to see you, sir—Dr. Johnson, this is a pleasure I did not expect—Mr. Crooks, allow me to introduce you to my friend Mr. Martyn."

Will Tunster stood smiling near the door, swinging his hat in one hand while he rubbed his nose with the other.

"This is my friend Mr. William Tunster, farmer."

"Noa, not yet," said Will, bowing; "not farmer yet—hopes to be in two or three weeks."

"Welcome to the Grove!" said Mr. Williams, theatrically.

"Sur, to you," replied Will, smiling.

The supper was speedily brought up, filling the table with good things and the room with the perfume and odour thereof.

The party ate and talked, and drank each other's healths over supper. The fair, the shows, the new company at the Dinsley Theatre, the recent lectures of Mr. Crooks, the smart article in the *Courant* on the condition of the High Street, furnished varied and interesting topics of conversation.

"Talk of the state of the High Street," said Mr. Crooks, in a deep bass voice, which gradually rose to a baritone, and then to a tenor, "I can tell you—ah, ah—a good joke—the reason Williams objects to"——

"Now, come—don't expose me—that is too bad," interrupted Mr. Williams, with perfect good humour.

"That was the foundation of the article—you know it was now," said Mr. Crooks, in his tenor notes, and adding in a deep bass, "It's too good to be lost. I must tell the story. Williams *avec de l'eau-de-vie* in *l'estomac*, was coming home, leaning on my arm. 'Confound those Lighting and Paving Commissioners,' said *mon ami*, reeling along—'what a dreadful state the streets are in, to be sure—I'll pitch into 'em next week,' and he did *ad nauseam*;" and then Mr. Crooks paused to say, in a falsetto shriek, "The streets were all right, gentlemen; it was the editor who was all wrong."

Everybody laughed except Will Tunster. After quietly laying down his knife and fork, he turned round to the gentleman in the spectacles, and said, "I hope I'm not goin' to be rude, sir—Mr. Snooks; but if you have anything to say as you object to my hearing, I'll leave th' room."

Mr. Crooks's reply was an inquiring glance at the company.

"There's no need to stare; ole I've gotten to say is, that I havn't had a forrin edication, and if there's to be ony parlyvooin, if it's the same to you, sir, I shall be glad if you'll tell us the English on it after."

The truth is, Mr. Crooks being a local lecturer was continually on the watch to impress the local ignoramuses among whom he managed to scrape together a living. Unlike Mr. Johnson, he did not confine himself to a single Latin quotation; but he larded his pompous talk with scraps of all the tongues he had come across. Windgate Williams swears he heard the impostor in his closing peroration to a scientific lecture tell his gaping pit-village audience that *tempus fugit in vino veritas, usque ad nauseam* must be the end of all who did not look progress fairly in the face, but he would beg them to join him in hoping that the *mauvais sujet, ad horrendum, tout ensemble*, would be the lot of that glorious country which placing its *semper idem* on the wave of time had sailed to the highest pinnacles of a never dying future.

But this is by the way.

Mr. Crooks was angry at honest Will Tunster's protest, and would have at once given that presumptuous mail driver a moral rebuke, had not Williams verbally stepped between the two with "All right, sir—all right—I'll interpret for you, Mr. Tunster, if necessary—but I claim your attention for a moment—I must have my revenge—you forgot to tell our friends, Mr. Crooks, what *you* did on that same evening when I had taken too much brandy, as you say."

"Did! I went home to Mrs. Crooks," said the lecturer.

"Oh, no," said Mr. Williams, laughing; "he was here all night, I assure you—came home with me—we toasted each other in this very room till midnight—then my friend left—half an hour afterwards thought I heard a noise in the backyard—sober as a judge I was—went out with a light—'No more, thank you—no more, thank you,' said a voice, in a sort of bubble-and-squeak style—I looked everywhere—still the voice 'No more (bubble), thank you,' as if a man were speaking in the act of drinking—at last I thought of the duck-pond, two yards by three, about a foot deep—turned the light in that direction—Crooks lying on his back, with the water bubbling into his mouth whenever he moved—at every bubble he said, 'No more, thank you'—ah, ah—thinking, no doubt, somebody was insisting upon his drinking eau-de-vie—I beg your pardon, Mr. Tunster—brandy, sir, brandy."

Will Tunster leaned back in his chair and roared most rudely.

"Dang my buttons, but that's a good un—well done, lecturer."

"Go away, sir—don't be so familiar," said Crooks, wiping his spectacles, and glaring without them at Will.

"Familiar! That's good! I've always paid to hear thee lecture! But dang it, Mr. Williams has made me laugh for nowt more than thou ever did for twopence."

"Don't be angry, Crooks—I knew a fellow once who got awfully drunk, and then throwing himself upon the floor bemoaning his lot because he could not drink any more, hiccupped, 'I can't drink any more, throw the rest over me.' Now, gentlemen, I am not going to indulge you to that extent; but I can offer you some very fine old whisky, and I hope you will not spare it."

"Bravo!" said Will, and "Hear, hear" the Doctor.

The steaming punch which Mrs. Smick brewed, and brought up in an old-fashioned china bowl after supper, put everybody into excellent humour, except the Doctor, who was vainly struggling against gloomy forebodings. But even Horatio smiled genially when Mr. Windgate Williams handed him a long pipe and bade him smoke his cares away. Jacob was in high spirits; the news of the morning had almost turned his head; he fired off jokes at everybody, to the evident delight and admiration of Mr. Williams. Will Tunster laughed and danged his buttons at Jacob's wit, and Mr. Crooks, who had been accustomed to talk a great deal, sat uncomfortably in his seat, and jerked out some random remarks whenever an opportunity occurred. These opportunities were few indeed, for Mr. Williams was also fond of talking, and he rattled away at such a high-pressure rate that Will Tunster laughed more at the manner of his speech than at the matter thereof.

At length, a question arising as to the best method of brewing punch, Mr. Crooks made it a peg on which to hang the heads of a lecture on chemistry which he had recently delivered; and as his lectures were always dribbling from him, he threw off, with scientific garrulity, the compilation of several volumes of facts and theories about matter, its physical properties, the attraction which determines chemical combination, single elective affinity, changes produced by chemical action, chemical nomenclature, theories of combustion, &c.

Meanwhile Mr. Williams and the Doctor entered into a confidential chat; the end of which appeared to be very satisfactory to the Doctor, who smiled benignantly upon Jacob. The latter, while pretending to be listening to Mr. Crooks, was occupied with his own thoughts.

"It's a danged good lecture. I've heard some on it before at Crossley Institute. Give us thy hand, lecturer; thou art not such a bad sort when thou doesn't speak in foreign languages."

The lecturer smiled and took Will's hand, whereupon Mr. Williams in a short speech proposed Will's health; "And the future Mrs. Tunster" added the Doctor out of the midst of a cloud of smoke.

Will said he was very much obliged to all, and begged to drink their good healths in return; as for t' future Mrs. Tunster, he was sure that if she know'd he was in such edicated company and that her health had been drunk, she would like him to say "Thank you, same to you" on her behalf, and he therefore begged to do it; and he might inform them that Mrs. Tunster wasn't such a myth as the Doctor seemed to think, as he laughed so much abaht it; however, he would not sit down without giving them th' health of Mr. Doctor Johnson and *his* good leddy.

The Doctor replied—all my readers will readily believe that he did so genially and in appropriate terms—and then toasts and sentiments and songs became the order of the evening.

Mr. Crooks made sundry efforts to introduce a discussion upon astronomy, and failing to secure any attention for his second-hand views of the Atomic theory, or the phenomena of Affinity, he laid down his pipe and recited the well-known scene from "Speed the Plough," where the Farmer tries to make himself agreeable to Sir Philip Blandford, at the conclusion of which Will Tunster applauded most lustily; and Mr. Crooks, steaming with the exertion and delighted with his own performance, said to Will, "*Vous chantez?*"

"Sha'n't I?—by jingo, but I will;" and the countryman rattled his glass and cheered again, and proclaimed it as his opinion that Mr. Crooks was a real good un.

"Mr. Crooks would like to hear you sing," said Mr. Williams.

"Well than, dang me, as I havn't th' oud bugle here, he shall; it's mony a long day sin' I've sung, but there's an oud song of the same tune as 'Mary on the banks of sweet Dundee,' and a bit like it as I heered ith' fair which, as Mester Crooks has gin us a bit in th' farmin loine, and as I'm goin to be sommat i' that way, maybe you'll loike."

Will therefore stretched out his legs, unbuttoned his plush waistcoat, and bellowed, in a minor key, the following ditty:—

Young William was a ploughboy
  In famous Lincolnshire:
Young William was a ploughboy
  For more than fower long year;
Till by the pressgang he was ta'en—
  As I will tell to you—
Before that he'd arrivèd at
  The age of twenty-two.

Young Mary was a milkmaid
  In that same famous shire:
Young Mary was a milkmaid
  For more than fower long year.
She loved the gay young ploughboy,
  Whistling behind his team;
When to their joys an end was put,
  As quickly it shall seem.

Ben Swasher was a captain,
  All dressèd out in blue:
Ben Swasher was a captain
  Of a famous pressgang crew.
Says he—"We'll have young William,
  The ploughboy brave and true;"
And on they marched to capture him,
  Which quickly they did rue.

The ploughboy they did lure away,
  By a message from his love:
The ploughboy they did lure away,
  Into a lonely grove;
And there out dashed upon him,
  The pressgang brutally,
And Will did wage a deadly fight,
  All for his liberty.

Before young William was secured,
  Two men had gasped their last:
Before young William was secured,
  Two men had breathed their last.
But William he was put on board
  A ship that very night,
And sail'd away unto the wars
  Before the morning light.

Now the Captain came to Mary,
  For to make love to her;
He came unto young Mary,
  With precious gold, a store;

But when she knew her ploughboy
  A pressēd man was he,
She seizēd his betrayer,
  And stabbēd him mortally.

Young William he returnēd,
  In about ten year, or more:
Young William he returned,
  All from a foreign shore.
They pointed to the churchyard,
  And there he found his bride;
And over her a stone, which said—
  "Of a broken heart she died."

Young William heav'd a deep sigh,
  This painful sight to see;
Young William heav'd a deep sigh,
  A deep sigh heaved he ;—
"Oh Mary! dearest Mary!
  With you I'll quickly lie,"
And then upon the cold, cold ground,
  He laid him down to die.

It was now past midnight. The Thunderbolt had twice rolled in to see if Mr. Windgate Williams would require anything more, as her mawther was going to bed. Mr. Crooks fell asleep over Will Tunster's song, and Jacob at its conclusion thought it was time to bring their pleasant evening to an end. Mr. Williams insisted upon their all having one nip at parting, and further, taking the hands of Jacob and the Doctor, commenced to sing, very piano, the opening of "Auld Lang Syne," which the party struggled through much to Will Tunster's satisfaction, who vowed they were all good uns, and his only regret was that he had not brought th' oud bugle.

When Jacob reached the inn where he had ordered a bed for the night, he found a note waiting for him. It was evidently written in a disguised hand; nobody knew who had left it; but it was to be given "to the good-looking young man who had ordered a bed there, and who was in the house with a countryman in the morning." Jacob opened the note, and read as follows:—"I saw you in the fair to-day; keep my secret as you have sworn. Tom Titsy is innocent, and if the worst comes to the worst *I* will save him."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

JACOB'S ASPIRATIONS AND WILLIAMS'S ADVENTURES.

On the day following the supper party at the Grove, Jacob learnt what the readers of this history already know of the events which had occurred at Middleton since the day when he turned his back upon it, as he thought, for ever. His wanderings upon the earth had been strange and purposeless, or he would have been informed of what had transpired. Some of Jacob's notes of these early days remind me a little of the wanderings of De Quincey before his arrival in London. He had been altogether out of beaten paths, and in the summer months had more than once slept in the open fields, sheltered by some luxuriant hedge-row or fragrant stack of newly-mown hay.

Mr. Johnson informed Jacob that Tom Titsy had been apprehended as an accomplice of Magar's. The police, he said, had taken this extraordinary step on account of some words which Magar had let fall in his cell, and because an old watchman remembered seeing Tom and Magar together on the morning of the murder. This watchman had seen Tom out late at night, and had also a strange story to tell of the same voice which said "All right" to him in Magar's mill when the murder was, no doubt, being committed, saying "All right" when he tried Mrs. Titsy's door, two nights afterwards. That might have been Jennings's voice, the Doctor said; but the police were determined to have some one else in the dock if they could not catch the other villain, and so they had pounced upon poor Tom, who seemed born to be unfortunate. The Doctor was satisfied that Tom would be acquitted, but he was very much troubled on account of the misery which the event had brought upon Mrs. Titsy and poor Susan Harley.

"However," continued the Doctor, "I have a scheme in my head concerning them, which shall be explained in due course. The first thing I want is to make a proposition to you. By the by, has Mr. Tunster left Dinsley?"

"He went away early," said Jacob; "he is furnishing, and otherwise preparing for matrimony. He made many mysterious purchases here yesterday. His father has left him a little fortune, and he is going to make good use of it."

"Well, it seems to me," continued the Doctor, "that the time has come for a change in all our fortunes, sir. Fate will work in its own way, and if we do not take up our proper positions until we are fairly thrust into them by sheer good luck, we may wait until the crack of doom."

"A true philosopher," said Mr. Windgate Williams, at whose lodgings the reader will already have concluded this conversation took place—"looks on the bright side of things—has faith in truth—he will win, sir, he will win."

"Now, Mister Jacob, I know you are proud, but you are not too proud to take the first step on the ladder up which you may mount to fortune; Mr. Williams offers to put your foot upon it. *Moniti meliora sequamur!* I beg your pardon, gentlemen—habit! Forgive the lapsus, and let us get on."

Jacob looked anxiously from one to the other. He had been racking his brain, half through the night, wondering how he might fairly start in life, and secure the prize which hope whispered might still be his.

"This is it," said Mr. Williams; "I admired you, sir, at Middleton. I had the greatest esteem for your father—fine man, sir; noble-hearted creature. Mr. Johnson has told me of your great merits; has spoken of the intention of your father to make a journalist of you; and in the most handsome manner has placed a sum of money in my hands (he said you would be too proud to take it) for the purchase of books or other purposes; and, in fine, sir, the reportership and sub-editorship of the *Courant* is vacant, and the appointment is yours if you will take it."

If he would take it! Jacob's heart swelled with gratitude; he felt that the ice was thawing rapidly now, and that the sunshine was brightening the future. He would only accept the Doctor's pecuniary assistance as a loan, to which his kind-hearted friend consented. It was arranged that Jacob should lodge with Mr. Williams, who delicately hinted that Mr. Snippers in the High Street was the best tailor in Dinsley. Jacob called upon that eminent clothier in the afternoon, and in the evening took up his quarters at Mrs. Smick's in the Grove.

The Doctor visited him there, and announced his intention of astonishing his friends. He thereupon surprised Jacob with a declaration.

"Jacob, Mr. Martyn, I am a capitalist; I could drive my own carriage, sir, if I chose."

"Indeed," replied Jacob. "I am delighted to hear it; you always did drive your gig, which constitutes a gentleman nowadays, and entitles a man to be writ down esquire."

"I could drive my brougham, sir, and keep my coachman; I am a capitalist. *Moniti*—— I beg your pardon, Mr. Martyn."

"Since we *are* talking of money, Mr. Johnson," said Jacob, "let it be distinctly understood upon what terms I accept your pecuniary aid."

"Yes, yes, as a loan, to be returned with interest—all right—pray do not mention it."

"Mr. Johnson, you are too good; I accept your aid, and thank you heartily."

Jacob was going to add "And I will repay you promptly;" but he kept that to himself. Every man who borrows money has that promise ready upon his tongue. A week previously he would not have accepted the Doctor's money; his pride was then above all assistance; nor would he have consented to settle down to work; Mr. Spawling's exordium on a certain memorable morning had long since been forgotten; but just now his better memories came back to him. He still loved Lucy. He had not wiped out her image from his heart as he had vowed he would on that bitter winter day at Cartown. It is easy to say we will do this and that; but neither love nor hate is easily wiped out. As for obliterating the image of Lucy from his memory, Jacob might as well have tried to forget his own history. This he did not desire, for he was very egotistical in his troubles. If he had suffered martyrdom, he did not forget, poor fellow, to credit himself with the pain. He had set himself the part of the misanthrope. In a common-place book which he carried in his pocket he had satirised some of Mr. Spawling's philosophy. He had done his disappointment into epigrams and snatches of verse. The verses to which he had sneeringly alluded in his strange interview with Jennings contained a piece of cynicism bitter enough for old Nickleby, or Old Nick himself, for that matter.

Jacob was master of many of Rochefoucauld's maxims; he knew nearly all the proverbs that have been launched against women and love. Hazlitt's maxims, which he had found in a country library, were quite a glorious discovery for him; he revelled in them. He was especially struck with the author's knowledge of women. Years afterwards, when he read the "Liber Amoris," he understood why the lodger under the spells of "L. S." seemed entitled to say a few hard words of the sex. And yet there were times when the would-be cynic stretched forth his arms in imagination to Lucy; he often walked in memory through the fields at Cartown; he heard the factory hymn in his dreams; he prayed Heaven to give Lucy back to him, and, with her, peace and hope and a noble ambition. If Jacob could only have seen his angel in the Row, smiling at the gay nothings of a lively young guardsman!

Had not all the world been against him? Poverty and pride are very unreasonable. Jacob ought to have remembered the conduct of Squire Northcotes. There was a shoulder to lean upon. That eccentric gentleman would have lent any amount of practical aid to Jacob in his need. If the absurd young fellow had only looked up the squire, he might have been his heir—who knows? No; Jacob only thought of Fate's unkindest blows; his mind dwelt upon the death of his father, the cruel scattering of their household gods, his humiliation, the letters which he never received from his friends, whom he suspected of deserting him in his troubles, whereas he himself was the only deserter; above all, that deserted cottage at Cartown. Miriam's story of Lucy's departure had haunted him day and night. But the ice and snow began to melt before Will Tunister's words on the road to Dinsley fair; and then he remembered Spen's injunction to address to him at the General Post Office, London. He hardly cared to own to himself how wrong he had been in suspecting Lucy, how unworthy he was of her love, how ready he had been to think ill of her, how easily he had forgotten her last tender words; he was heartily ashamed of himself, and he resolved, without making any words about the matter, to retrieve his position. At that moment there was no height that seemed to him inaccessible.

Many a night, when Mr. Williams was asleep, and the Thunderbolt was warm in bed; when Mrs. Smick was dreaming of her dear departed ("which he were a captain in the merchint service"), and the other lodgers in the Grove were oblivious of both time and money, there was a light in Jacob's bedroom, where the editor's lieutenant had set up a private desk at which he burnt the midnight oil. In the watches of the night Jacob believed he was preparing for a coming day. Poor Jacob! We have all built our castles in the air. How few have represented hopes destined to be realised! Jacob's castles, we may be sure, were gorgeous palaces; for it was his nature to run into extremes. But he did not wait for the palaces to grow, he worked like a nigger at the foundations.

"Well, my boy," said Mr. Williams, a few weeks after Jacob's appointment on the *Courant* and his residence at the Grove, "You're getting on—made a good start, sir—you'll do, Jacob, you'll do, my boy—my friend Beswick, who now shakes London to its centre two or three times a week in the *Leviathan*, began as you have, at the bottom of the ladder—there are prizes to be won, sir; you'll win one; but sitting up half the night will not do—be careful—nurse your powers, don't overtax them. Burning the midnight oil is all very well, but it exhausts the human lamp, sir."

"You do not know why I am so anxious to improve my position; some day I will tell you," replied Jacob, stirring the fire and looking down a long street of burning houses, which the poker left behind it.

"Oh, it's a case of love, I dare say: young fellows like you, hot and sanguine, always get violently in love and set about making their fortunes at twenty, that they may be married at twenty-one—saw you looking at that pretty girl over the way—eh? is that the flame?"

Mr. Williams was gracefully reclining on a sofa, with one leg on the back, and contemplating Jacob through the smoke of a cheap and a strong cigar.

"No," said Jacob, "but I have occasionally noticed rather a pretty girl at the window."

"Yes, I dare say—too short, but rather nice though—soft blue eyes. Was nearly in love once myself, Jacob—was editing the *London Smasher* at the time—going to the office one afternoon, just passing through Temple Bar, became conscious that a magnificent creature, in a swinging turn-out, was gazing at me—two flunkeys behind—I returned her smile—raised my hat—she beckoned, check string was pulled, and Love and Beauty were wheeled away to Mayfair—magnificent mansion—she had noticed me at the opera—love at first sight—she had adored me long!—would I be hers? Yes, by Jove, I would—ring the bell—for the priest I expected. Show this gentleman to the door, and kick him down the steps if necessary. Ah! ah! turned out to be an eccentric lady of great wealth, who had once been jilted—revenged herself by befooling all the handsomest men in town, ahem!"

"A very good story," said Jacob, "especially for the Marines, as you sometimes say."

"Is it, sir? Thank you for nothing; but let me advise your not going in for scepticism. Extraordinary place, London—as you'll know some day. Marvellous incidents occurring there every day—used me up in seven years—just that time since my cousin Webster, who wrote that work which created such a stir two years ago, said, 'Windgate, my boy, you're dishing yourself up—go into the country and recruit'—did so, and by Jupiter have been in the country ever since. Should hardly know London now, I suppose, or be known at my club. How time flies!" and Mr. Williams put his other leg upon the sofa back.

"Do you know any of the London publishers well?" Jacob inquired.

"Do I know them? Rather! Was bored out of my life to write a novel for Sharmans—worried to death to edit Ginghem's Magazine—didn't care for that sort of thing—contributed occasionally to the mag., and wrote my three leaders a week—quite enough for a lazy beggar like me. All the publishers in the Row, and out of it, know Windgate Williams—did you never see my 'Topsy Turvey; or Out of Sight,' published by—let me see—was it by Ginghems or Sharmans?—Ginghem, of course—haven't a copy now—shall come across one some day."

"I should like to see it," said Jacob, wondering at his friend's garrulity.

"Oh, yes, I can see—you don't believe half I say; just like you young fellows. I forgive you—a man who doesn't know London knows nothing. London is the epitome of the world, the encyclopædia of life, the centre of fashion, the hot-bed of genius, the arena where wit tilts with wit, the scene of all the greatest tragedies and comedies and farces in real life. By Jove, sir, I don't wonder you don't believe all I say. You've read a good deal, Jacob—know something of classic stories, fairy tales, and all that sort of thing—none of them comes up to London. Bagdad, and Athens, and the Flying Island, Rome, Pompeii, Constantinople, Aladdin's Palace, Pandemonium, and Paris, all rolled into one, would not make a London."

"I did not say I doubted your word, Mr. Williams."

"No, but you looked it. I forgive you; no offence, my boy—truth being stranger than fiction, no wonder that one is mistaken for the other. Some day I shall be telling another young fellow, perhaps, about my engagement at Middleton, and how it ended. He'll not believe it. By Janus and his gates, sir, it's a wonder I'm not a prisoner now for manslaughter! You remember the grand charge up the steps. I never hit a fellow with such malice *prepense* as I hit that minion of the fiend Gripps—it reminded me of an affair in which I was concerned some years ago. It was a grand night at Vauxhall; I was dancing with a very fine girl—swell of the first water annoyed me continually—put his eye-glass perpetually upon both of us—seemed to know the lady before. This went on for some time, when he was joined by another fellow. I ordered lobster salad for myself and friend—they passed the little harbour and sneered—lost my patience at last—dashed out upon them—thrashed them both, within an inch of their lives—nearly killed three waiters who interfered, and broke my arm against a policeman's head—was laid up six weeks—fined a pile of money, and was afterwards presented with a purse and a pair of embroidered boxing gloves, at an oyster supper, by a select party who admired my courage and hated the swells I'd beaten, for the brutal snobs turned out to have been a perpetual nuisance at Vauxhall."

"You have had many strange adventures," said Jacob.

"Many—you are right! The country is very tame after London. You live in the presence of the world down here, like fish in a glass globe—gold fish from China—mentioned first by Pepys—one of his curious notes—great book, Pepys'. But one has quiet in the country, that is a great thing; and after a fellow's done everything and seen everything there is balm for the shattered mind in a country town. Of course a fellow is thrown away here; but what of that?—a sucked orange is good for nothing else. When I was your age I lived as much in a day as we live here in ten years. But no matter; sich is life—which it is uncertain and has its troubles, as Mrs. Smick says."

Mr. Williams tossed up his slippered toes, and laid his red fez cap with his head upon it on the sofa cushion with an air of comfortable resignation, and smoked away with a calm philosophic expression of face which defied all Jacob's critical interrogations.

Windgate Williams is not a very singular character on the press; he was not, at all events, when Jacob Martyn was young. Windgate told fibs by the score—but they were amusing fictions. There was no malice in them; they hurt no one; they did not sting; and he was not offended if any one seemed to challenge his "facts." He loved to talk, and to talk about himself. He was content if you listened; delighted if you took his points; in ecstacies if you laughed at his jokes; and with all this, at bottom, he was a kind-hearted, sympathetic fellow. For a time he had an excellent listener, while he had always a staunch friend, in Jacob Martyn.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE."

JACOB MARTYN'S first important business on the Dinsley paper was in connection with the trial of Ephraim Magar and Thomas Titsy for the wilful murder of Silas Collinson. And Thomas Titsy! Here was a discovery. It was sufficiently strange, "stranger than fiction," that Jacob should join the press as if for the very purpose of being associated with this trial, in which he was so deeply interested; but Tom Titsy at the bar was an incident far more astonishing than all that had gone before in Jacob's experience. But fact is indeed more strange and startling than fiction. As this story has progressed month by month in the chrysalis form of serial publication, prior to assuming the butterfly with three wings at the libraries, one of its numerous critics has treated it very much after the fashion of the celebrated doubter who could not take in all the adventures of Gulliver. My unsophisticated friend is a countryman, on which account I am the more inclined to shake him by the hand; for there is a fresh well-spring of criticism in some of our dear old country newspapers. Was not the *Middleton Star* accustomed to deal with books from its own standard with an independence of feeling and an impartiality of opinion that often startled authors and publishers to their very souls? My critic says this story is indeed stranger than fiction—stranger than fact truly; for whoever heard of a newspaper office being stormed by bailiffs, or a mayor committing murder? He evidently regards these two incidents as a slight upon the press and an insult to the civic magistracy throughout the provinces. Let me assure my friend that ingratitude is not one of my special sins, and as I have edited a country newspaper myself and had a narrow escape of being a mayor, I should not be likely to fix the stigma of impecuniosity and murder upon the two leading representative offices in the country.

When once a man begins to talk about himself, be he never so modest, it is hard to stop him, difficult for that man to pull up. I have been sorely tempted, in defence of my facts that are stranger than fiction, to give a list of newspapers which have fallen into the hands of the bailiffs or been undone by party intrigues, and the names of mayors who have committed murders—aye, and been hanged too, Master Brooke. But I fear this would bring me down to the level of the mere realistic school of authors—the domestic reporters of fiction. I therefore content myself with reminding my friend that the Burgomaster in "The Polish Jew" murdered a man for his money and burnt him in a lime-kiln; while Tobias Aconite, the Mayor of Hole-cum-Corner, made the acquaintance of a Spanish devil for unjustly ordering Gaffer Nimmington to be whipped. Here, however, my mind misgives me. My friend may change his front, and charge me with getting my inspiration from "The Bells." I was congratulated when this story appeared in its originally crude shape—congratulated in a column of leader type—upon the fact that "Felix Holt" had not then seen daylight, though I only recognised in that story and this the similarity of a quack medicine exercising an important influence upon the conduct of the hero. For my own sake and the reader's, I wish there was a closer resemblance. My critic, however, pointed to an assize trial and an election. In these days I was his "fellow townsman" (provincial life is essentially clannish), and my fame was dear to his heart. He therefore set forth the fact that Dr. Horatio Johnson and his surroundings were created by his fellow townsman, and published in the year 1863, while "Felix Holt" and his patent medicine did not come before the world until 1866. Even my friendly critic did not go so far as to class the two novelists together in the scale of merit; for I know he had read "Adam Bede," which would be sufficient for any sensible person to put "George Eliot" in the very highest niche of fame. May I remind my other critic that the conduct of the young squire in that never-to-be-forgotten story of "Adam Bede" which opens with a scent of pine-wood and elder-bushes is not necessarily a condemnation of all the young squires of the midlands?

As to my inspiration for this romance of murder and retribution, it came to me one morning on my way to a midland counties school. They carried Silas Collinson's remains across my path. I saw the poor bones huddled together in a stable. The discovery was a horrible incident, the murder a thousand times more barbarous and revolting than I have made it here. Mere physical horrors are beyond the region of art into which I have transferred the tragedy of Middleton. The murderers thrived after the annihilation of their friend. It was long before Nemesis seized the chief criminal. The discovery was made as accidentally as I have set it forth; the evidence was just as circumstantial; there was a poor forlorn woman like Susan, with a love token, in it; a frightened burgess out late at night, with the memory of a strange cry ringing in his ear; and other details of persons and things that belong to the original murder, though I have never read a line of the famous trial since I was sixteen years old. I still remember a dark gloomy day when the sun went out, and the air was filled with lightning and thunder and sheets of driving hail, in the midst of which they were hanging one of the men who murdered Silas Collinson.

Such is the origin of "Stranger than Fiction"! The *Middleton Star* is, I grant, a more shadowy creation. But I have known all these people; some of them I know now; and my greatest difficulty in revising this history is a fear of altering even the crudities that belonged to the first idea. The very title of this chapter was suggested by me years ago (it was afterwards used by a novelist) to Mr. Gregory Spawling for a play which he had composed in admirable blank verse. Submitting it to the most successful playwright of the age, he was informed that the title was inadmissible. The Lord Chamberlain would not pass a scriptural title. "They strain at gnats and swallow camels." It would have delighted my critic and defender of civic dignity to have read Jacob Martyn's magazine article on this subject. I will warrant you it dealt roundly with the shortcomings and short petticoats, or no petticoats for that matter, of the modern stage, which, though it was then matriculating for the advent of "Traviata" and "Formosa," could not commit the sin of a scriptural allusion in connection with a fine, well written, and strictly moral play.

Forgive me, most considerate and friendly reader, for having led you this dance out of the direct road upon which we started. It is a digression not to be defended. I will not, even with Armado's apt reply to Moth on my pen, attempt to qualify it by some mighty precedent. I apologise humbly, and ere I am tempted to sin again go, at once, straight back into the beaten track. The bells invite us. They are ringing lustily, as if the judges of assize were going to be married, or had daughters on their way to the hymeneal altar, or sons just coming of age. It is the assizes at Dinsley. The town is topsy-turvy. The theatre is open for a whole week with a famous company "for six nights only!" Dobble's Waxwork competes with the theatre. "There is no waiting, remember; you see the exhibition the moment you enter; there is no waiting, and the charge is two pence! Two pence will admit you!" Punch is murdering his wife in the High Street, to a numerous and highly delighted audience. Gingerbeer corks are flying into the air; close by, a peep show near the Castle is doing a very excellent business. The policemen are in new clothes. The town crier and a greengrocer are dressed up as heralds, and they blow their flourishes of trumpets with a marked independence of time and tune. The everlasting tan-nubbles are laid down near the assize courts to deaden the noise of traffic which does not exist; and the Dinsley people are wondering whether there will be a double or single execution!

With a sad heart, Jacob entered the little box set apart for reporters in the Criminal Court of Dinsley Castle. The monitors of the press sharpened their pencils and nibbed their pens; they opened their note-books; they looked round the court, and put their sandwiches in safe places. The retainers of various solicitors brought in numerous blue bags, which the said solicitors critically examined; then the retained of the solicitors came into court and smiled at their retainers, and looked at their briefs as pleasantly as if murder was an unknown crime, and Dinsley Castle one of the temples of the Happy Valley. Javelin men, with white wands, took up positions here and there about the body of the court; policemen gathered quite a harvest of sixpences from people who were crowding into the galleries; the brazen trumpets bellowed without; the crier of the court rose and said something in a loud voice; the trumpets ceased their discordant blare; the judges entered; everybody stood upon his own legs and upon everybody else's toes; and with the usual formalities of reading the proclamation against vice and immorality, and swearing in the jury, the court was opened.

While these various ceremonies were being performed two persons near Jacob were calmly discussing the case which had crowded the court with spectators.

"There seems to me to be very little evidence against the younger fellow of the two."

"Felon, you mean," said the other person, who chuckled at his own joke.

"I don't know about felon yet; no man's guilty till he's tried and condemned," said the other.

"Well, go on," said the wag; "give us the point."

"The evidence I believe," continued the first speaker, "will be that Collinson was at Titsy's house on the evening of the murder; and that Titsy was seen with Magar the next morning after Magar had removed the body."

"Well?"

"And the police have some theory about the forged letters, which the Titsys always professed to regard as genuine; they make a point of young Titsy having an interest in Collinson's death, the poor fellow having cut Tom out as Susan's lover; and, above all, some property bearing Silas Collinson's initials has been found upon Tom, or at any rate in the house."

"That will hang him whether he's guilty or not," said the other speaker.

"Which property, I am told," went on the other, not noticing his friend's interruption, "Susan Harley will swear belonged to her, being in fact a present from the murdered man. What was it—a snuff-box, or a watch?"

"A watch, I think! Well, we shall see. I'll take odds it's a double execution."

Jacob had been out of the world of news, local and general, so long, that he had not learnt, until after the supper at the lodgings of Mr. Williams, that his friends at Middleton were in trouble and tribulation. He had casually heard of a murder having been committed in the hated old borough, and although he noticed that the name of the Mayor was connected with the offence, it only seemed to him at the time that his worship had committed the offenders to gaol, not committed the crime himself. The subject had been talked about at a roadside inn where he had lodged for a night during his wanderings. The name of Middleton was particularly odious to him, and he had not cared to listen to any conversation about it, or to make any inquiries concerning the scene of his greatest misfortunes. It seemed as if fate had compelled him to accept the link that bound him to Susan and the Titsys; and as if he were to be punished anew through the horrors of this barbarous murder and the miseries of old friends.

Shortly after the court was opened two prisoners were tried for minor offences, and sentenced; and during their removal the grand jury sent in the result of their investigations in the case of murder, which was read as follows by the clerk of arraigns :—

"True bill against Ephraim Magar for the murder of Silas Collinson at Middleton, in the county of Dinsley, on the 15th of November, 18—."

"No true bill against Tom Titsy."

A sudden shuffling of feet, a slight attempt at applause, and a sort of general gasp of relief followed this announcement. The two men who had discussed Tom's chances in Jacob's hearing looked at each other significantly. As for Jacob, his most severe self-control was necessary to keep him quiet in his seat. The other pressmen noticed his excitement, which they put down to his want of experience in connection with a branch of the Fourth Estate which regards murders, accidents, and fires with a professional eye, and seldom allows itself to be moved about such things, save in the way of obtaining exclusive details thereof, and despatching the same to head-quarters with all possible expedition.

"Remove that woman!" cried a hard stentorian voice, immediately the effect of the finding of the grand jury was generally understood. Looking across the court Jacob was almost beside himself with excitement. The reporters were quite tickled at his strange conduct. Mrs. Titsy was the woman alluded to. A subdued trembling voice had whispered in her ear, "He is free, mother! he is free!" and Mrs. Titsy was sobbing so loudly for joy that the crier of the court, scandalised at her weakness, ordered her removal accordingly. She leaned upon the arm of her companion, in whom Jacob recognised Susan. When he resumed his seat, he upset his note-book, and he was so long in picking it up that the reporters, who had smiled at him before, now fairly laughed; for there were actually tears in his eyes.

Jacob could stay there no longer. He said he was ill, and a few words whispered to one of his colleagues, in which he intimated that Tom had been an old servant of his father, were sufficient to obtain for him the full performance of his business while he left the court for an hour.

To slip out of the box, and elbow his way through a group of attorneys' clerks and others who blocked up the passage allotted to "Solicitors and the Press," was the work of a few moments. As Jacob went forth at one door, he saw Susan and Mrs. Titsy leaving the court by another. They did not notice him. He felt afraid to intrude upon them at that moment. While he watched them an officer from the gaol, despatched by the kind-hearted governor, requested them to accompany him. Jacob followed. Turning from the noise and tumult, in front of the Assize Hall, the officer led the way across a green lawn (where a few daisies, sown by the "March winds," had sprung up without waiting for the "April showers"), to the governor's house, which was at the entrance of the gaol. The officer knocked at the door, and they were shown into a little room, neatly furnished, and unadorned with the chains, manacles, pistols, clubs, daggers, and knives that garnished the walls of the governor's office. Jacob still followed. The officer was going to push him back. Jacob, however, slipped half-a-crown into his hand, and said, "I'm a friend." He still kept behind the two women, and carefully out of their observation. They were received by a benevolent-looking lady, who told them to sit down. The officer went his way. The door was closed; and then Jacob stood in the presence of his old friends. For a moment neither of them knew him. But when he went up to Susan and kissed her, and then gave Mrs. Titsy a great smack on the cheek, and shook both her hands, she smiled sadly, and began to cry afresh. None of them spoke. Jacob was shocked at the change which time and trouble had worked in Susan's once comely features.

A servant brought in a tray, and the benevolent lady made Mrs. Titsy and Susan drink. The glass trembled in the elder woman's hand. Joy was afflicting her now almost as much as sorrow had done before. Presently there was a heavy advancing footstep on the stairs. Then the door was suddenly opened, and Tom Titsy was in his mother's arms. Susan looked on with a calm smile of gladness. Jacob, in a whisper, declined the wine offered to him by the kind-hearted wife of the governor, who thereupon nodded pleasantly to him and disappeared.

Half an hour afterwards Jacob left his poor friends sitting there hand in hand, too much impressed with the escape of the innocent to talk of it, too happy to put their thankfulness and joy into words.

"Have you met them? Have you met them?" said Dr. Johnson, who was running over the Castle green towards Jacob. "I was told they had gone this way; I have been looking for them everywhere."

"In the governor's house," said Jacob.

"Good! What a fool I must have been to lose them;" and away went the Doctor, as nimbly as a boy, in the direction pointed out to him.

"Dear old fellow!" said Jacob, looking after him. "The heart of a woman and the courage of a lion, if he is but a quack doctor. Would there were no *greater* quacks in the world than this Middleton herbalist!"

CHAPTER XXXV.

"FOUND WANTING."

WHEN Jacob re-entered the court, Ephraim Magar was at the bar, and Mr. Wentworth Quarrington, Q.C., had commenced his address for the prosecution. Jacob took his turn in reporting the famous oration; but frequently lost himself in amazement at the terrible story of guilt which the learned counsel linked together in a chain of circumstantial evidence that seemed to cling about the prisoner, and all but strangle him where he stood. Magar glanced round the court with a searching, sunken eye. Presently his attention became concentrated upon the counsel's speech, and an occasional clutching of the bar, a sudden flush, a startled look showed how nearly some of the advocate's story touched the prisoner. But Magar was not aware that his movements could be read; he was trying to appear calm and indifferent.

It was almost pitiable to see the great man of Middleton, the leader of public opinion, the benevolent Mayor, the straightforward, out-spoken, manly founder of his own fortunes, standing in the felon's dock to be tried for one of the most horrible crimes recorded in the annals of the county—a crime which had set all the Midlands in a tremor of horror—a crime which the author of this history again assures his readers he has not exaggerated.

Perhaps the learned Q.C. travelled beyond the limits of what may have been fairly considered to be his duty when he endeavoured to show that the wretched prisoner at the bar had been benevolent only to hide his sin; that he had busied himself in public matters to raise himself above suspicion; that he had striven to lull the reproaches of conscience by acts of charity; and had made sacrifices to the murdered manes of poor Silas Collinson, in the vain hope that he would thus appease the anger of Him who in His own good time discovereth the murdered and the murderer.

Never, however, did there appear to be a clearer case of guilt than the evidence of the witnesses who were called bore out. Susan Harley told the terrible story with which our readers are acquainted. She identified the ring as the property of Silas Collinson, and she also identified as his a pin and a snuff-box found in Magar's iron chest. She proved the receipt of the £100, which the prisoner paid her as part of the proceeds of the sale of Collinson's effects; she told the story of his overtures to her on that occasion, and gave evidence as to the letters which Magar professed to have received from

Collinson. In cross-examination Mr. Arthur Macintyre, Q.C. (who with Sir Howard Pisquelly, Bart., Q.C., had been specially retained for the defence) tried to shake Susan's evidence, but only succeeded in his object so far as to get upon the judge's notes that she could not say whether Collinson might not have given to his friend Magar the snuff-box and pin; and that one Julius Jennings had also professed to have heard from Collinson.

Then there were witnesses who proved that Collinson and Jennings and Magar were drinking together on the Sunday night upon which Collinson was supposed to have started for America; there was the constable who had flashed his lantern upon the mill on that same night, that dreadful "November 15" of our story; there was the timid husband who had been out late, and was frightened when crossing the Middleton bridge at the cry which came out of the "darkness visible" of the mill, where a light moved from one room to the other; there was another witness to swear that she marked the letter "C" on some linen proved to have been Collinson's, which had been found after the inquest at the mill; there was Collinson's old housekeeper to swear to his handkerchief and its initials of "S. C.," found in Magar's house; there were the policemen who had taken the prisoner to gaol; and the superintendent who had searched in vain for any receipts of moneys or letters from Collinson to Magar since Collinson's disappearance, but who produced a receipt signed by Collinson, and dated November 15, for £200, and a bill for the same amount, and the copy of a bill of exchange for £200, at six months, drawn by Collinson and accepted by Magar, but which had not passed through a bank. A banker's clerk proved that Magar opened a banking account on the Monday following with £200; an auctioneer proved paying Magar £4,500, in three sums, the result of the sale of Collinson's property; the aforesaid banker's clerk proved the payment into the bank of these moneys, showing that no payments had been made to Silas Collinson, and that £500 had been paid to Julius Jennings. A surgeon, who had known Collinson intimately, was of opinion that the murdered man had been killed by blows on the head with a blunt instrument, and there were other witnesses called to speak to minor details, such as Magar's trafficking with Collinson's property, and Collinson's complaints that he could not get his money from Magar, and that he was going to have a final meeting to arrange matters on the Sunday night in question, when Magar had promised "to settle up." The cross-examination upon all these and other facts aimed at several things—one was to make the jury believe that Collinson still lived, and that the bones in question were not in any way identified (but no witnesses were called for the defence); another was to insinuate into their minds that if the remains in question were Collinson's, not Magar, but the man so often spoken of as Julius Jennings, whom the police had been unable to capture, was the murderer; another was to make capital out of poor Tom Titsy's acquittal by the grand jury, which Sir Howard Pisquelly, in his eloquent defence of the prisoner, characterised as a piece of justice to an innocent fellow-creature, which he hoped the intelligent jury before him would emulate; and the closing effort of the defence was an appeal to the jury in favour of a man who had in every relation of life shown himself to be actuated by feelings altogether at variance with those which had been imputed to him; a man whose benevolent acts the learned counsel for the prosecution had chosen most unwarrantably to array against him on a theory which, if it had any weight, would go to show that our great philanthropists only gave money to the poor and endowed churches and hospitals because they were murderers striving to shield their sins; a man who had ever been characterised by an outspoken honesty altogether incompatible with guilt, who had given of his self-earned riches to the poor and needy, which was at variance with murdering for gold; a man of social standing, an honourable burgess, a wise magistrate, and a man who by the verdict of the jury would either be sent home to his sorrowing friends and to the poor by whom he was revered and beloved, or who would be sent forth to die the ignominious and awful death of a murderer on the gallows.

This and much more did the learned and eloquent counsel urge in behalf of the prisoner, as any of my readers will find by consulting the files of the Dinsley and Middleton journals, which issued special supplements containing full reports of the trial.

Magar heaved a deep sigh at the conclusion of his counsel's address, and looked eagerly at the jurymen, who began to talk to each other in noisy whispers.

Then there was a sudden and death-like stillness, made more awful by the darkening shades of evening which fell upon the oriel windows. The densely crowded court seemed to hold its breath, and to wait.

"Gentlemen of the jury, what say ye? Is the prisoner at the bar 'Guilty,' or 'Not Guilty'?"

The words fell one after the other upon the court with ominous distinctness. Even the bar looked earnestly towards the jury box. When the foreman in a clear but trembling voice said "Guilty," the people in court gave a great gasp for the breath which they had previously stifled in their anxiety; and before the echo of the dread word was still there was a clank of irons in the dock, where the prisoner had fallen, a senseless heap of crushed humanity.

Water was at hand, but it only served to awaken the wretched man to a sense of his position; his cries for "mercy," his protestations of innocence rang through the building; but Justice was inexorable. "Silence!" "Silence!" was demanded from one part of the court, to be repeated by another; and then the prisoner was asked if he had anything to say why the sentence of the law should not be passed upon him.

Exhausted by his cries, and awed by a sudden realisation of his danger, the prisoner, clutching the bar, and trembling from head to foot, stared vacantly at the judge, who, putting on a black cap, as the twilight was deepening into night, sentenced the prisoner to the last awful penalty of the law.

Then the Court broke up; the trumpets were sounded; the Bar went to dinner; the reporters went home to finish their work; the crowd gradually dispersed, pouring itself into inns and private houses, and up and down narrow streets and noisy thoroughfares. A few of the more distinguished citizens and visitors went home to dress for the theatre; while all over the town dashed slipshod men crying catchpenny chronicles of "the trial and condemnation of Ephraim Magar for the murder of Silas Collinson, together with a copy of verses written on the melancholy occasion—only one penny each."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IN WHICH A NEW ERA DAWNS UPON THE HOUSE OF TITSY.

THEY were all sitting round the fire in the old thatched cottage—Tom Titsy, Susan Harley, Mr. Horatio Johnson, and Mrs. Titsy. The Doctor was blowing a cloud of smoke up among the chimney ornaments. The best family tea-tray occupied its usual conspicuous position. The oak corner cupboard shone with unwonted radiance. Cæsar lay asleep on the hearth; Mrs. Titsy was knitting; Tom was looking into the fire; and Susan Harley was looking at Tom.

"Well, we are a nice little family party after all," said the Doctor, making an elegant smoke ring, and watching it mount upwards until it came to grief against the artificial apple. "All things are arranged for a special purpose; I trace the finger of Fate and a kind Providence throughout all our trials: troubles are stepping-stones to happiness—blessed are the sweets of philosophy."

"What we should ha' done without you, Doctor, I will not pretend to say—the Lord only knows," said Mrs. Titsy, slowly plying her needles.

Susan, whose appearance had much improved since we saw her at the assizes, looked up into the Doctor's face admiringly.

"You see how Fate pursued that wretched creature who was sentenced to death a week ago; and 'may the Lord have mercy on his soul!' say I, with the judge. Fate, Susan, marked you down for one of its instruments, and Retribution required that you should be slow in the work of detection, that the rascal might prosper for a while, and get up to a height from which his fall would be all the more terrible: in due time Fate suggested to you the idea of papering that little box, and Fate provided the paper."

"Rather, Doctor, was I not punished all that time for my wickedness in not writing to you, and my dear friend here who has given to me the love of a mother; those long weary nights and months and years when I thought I should go mad often, and did do so sometimes I think; was not all this a deserved punishment for my pride, which would not let me own that I had been deceived; and for my injustice to an honest man who would not have deceived me? I ought to have known that he would not have sent for me to America—he would have fetched me."

Susan spoke with unwonted animation, and Tom turned his eyes from the fire to look at her; while Mrs. Titsy let her knitting fall into her lap to note the Doctor's reply.

"There is much in what thou sayest, girl," said the Doctor, evidently bent upon a speech of more than ordinary importance, indicated as much by the extension of his right hand, in which he held his pipe, as by his grandiloquent rendering of "thou sayest."

"Pride is a bad adviser, and an ungrateful heart is a miserable companion. But my friend Susan Harley hath neither the one nor the other as we understand those weaknesses of weak humanity. The pride which attacked her was that which springs from a laudable self-esteem—a virtuous, honest, and high-minded girl, she could not endure that one idle gossip should whisper a word to sully her fair fame, and she could not live to be taunted by the Mrs. Gompsons of this world with having done an imprudent action—she wanted courage, that noble attribute of our nature which prompts us never to give in against the longest odds, but induces us to bear and hope and strive, and, what is more, makes us win at last. Win, I say, as we shall do, for Truth and Honesty must have their day when Villainy is dethroned. Moreover, touching the self-made charge of ingratitude, the fact that our Susan suffered, that she grieved after us, that she dreamed about us, and longed to come and sit here under this humble but honest roof, proves that she had a grateful heart; and even if she had not—I only use *if* for the sake of argument—if, I say again, this dear girl, destined to suffer so much, that the guilty might be brought to punishment—if she had not been grateful the open confession of a fault straightway amendeth it. And with regard to Mr. Thomas Titsy, Fate, hard as it may seem, required that he should be placed in danger, that he should be seized by the law and locked up in a cell, in order that such an amount of sympathy and compassion might be excited in the loving breast of Susan Harley (Susan held down her head and Tom fidgeted with his hands), to induce her to turn to the man who has loved her from the first, and who loves her now, and say to him, 'Tom, thou shalt be more to me than my brother—take me for thy wife.'"

Here something seemed suddenly to rise in the Doctor's throat, and after stammering a little and coughing, he found he could say no more; he, therefore, quietly whispered *Moniti meliora sequamur*, and sat down, by which time Mrs. Titsy was weeping all over her knitting.

Susan, whose kindness towards Tom had been very great during the last few days, and whose heart had yearned to comfort and console him, though she felt that the Doctor had almost interpreted her own wishes, could only follow the example of Mrs. Titsy and fall to a-crying; but when Tom came towards her and held out his hand, she laid hers in it, and Cæsar woke up at the moment, and seemed to ratify the engagement by licking both hands and then inserting his nose between them.

When Mrs. Titsy looked up through her tears, the Doctor made a signal to her, and while one went out to see that the pigeon-cote door was shut, the other went upstairs to sit against the window, where the moon was shining in upon a patchwork quilt, and making a chest of old oak drawers as bright as the looking-glass that hung upon the whitewashed wall.

"Shall it be so, Susan?" said Tom, after a long pause.

Susan returned the pressure of his hand.

"I think I *could* hold up my head again, lass, in some spot where nobody 'ud know me, if I had thee to live for."

This was a longer speech than Tom had ever made to Susan in the way of lovemaking; and there was something so forlorn and sad and appealing in his manner, that Susan felt glad he had said so much.

"Tom, dear Tom," she said in a faltering voice, "you have suffered a great deal through me; nay, don't deny it; if, after all, you think that I am worthy"——

"Susan! Susan! God bless thee, lass; say no more—all the old time comes back, and the old feeling," and Tom, pressing her hand, drew Susan towards him, and she laid her head upon his shoulder.

Of course the pigeon-cote door was shut: so the Doctor went upstairs, not to his own room, but to Mrs. Titsy's door.

"Deary me, that must be a knock," said Mrs. Titsy, who had been sitting at the window—"Yes; and there it is again."

"Mrs. Titsy! Mrs. Titsy!" a voice whispered through the keyhole.

"It is indeed the Doctor," and Mrs. Titsy went to the door.

"Don't be alarmed," said the Doctor; "but put your bonnet and shawl on; I want to have a little talk with you, and we must leave them for a while."

Mrs. Titsy frequently indulged in presentiments. "Sometimes," she said to herself, "it is a death tick, sometimes it is somebody treading on one's grave, sometimes it is a stranger on the bar, or a letter in the candle; but for three days it's been no death warning—that's certain."

The Doctor was waiting for her at the bottom of the stairs.

"Tell them we shall be back again in half an hour," he said.

Mrs. Titsy put her head into the kitchen and did as she was desired; and then she took the arm gallantly offered to her by her famous lodger, and suffered herself to be conducted out into the moonlight.

"You will think my conduct strange, perhaps, my dear madam," said the Doctor, when they had walked a short distance.

"Hem!" said Mrs. Titsy, not knowing what to say: she did not think his conduct at all peculiar; she was a woman with presentiments.

"But I will no longer delay what I have to say to you."

Mrs. Titsy leaned a little more heavily on the Doctor's arm.

"We are not young, you and I, Mrs. Titsy; I am getting on towards fifty; and though you married young, your son's manly form tells of the matronly period of life, my dear madam, at which you have also arrived, although Father Time has dealt kindly with you, and left you with personal attractions which I have long admired, while your good disposition and kind heart are as fresh as ever."

"Really! Mr. Johnson," said Mrs. Titsy.

"Old fools are the worst of fools they say; I am not going to play the goose, and try to make love; but Mrs. Titsy, if you will become Mrs. Horatio Johnson, that individual will be happy for the remainder of his days, and will endeavour to make you a good husband, and Tom and Susan a good father. *Moniti meliora sequamur!*"

She knew it! When the Doctor whispered at the door she was sure that this was coming. She was a woman, however, and of course must be astonished and confused at the Doctor's proposition, though I must do Mrs. Titsy the justice to say that she made as little fuss as could possibly be expected from the most ingenuous of widows at so trying a moment. After many faltering attempts to reply to the Doctor in suitable terms, she leaned nearly all her weight upon his willing arm, and said she was his. When the two were returning, and had left behind them the street in which I first introduced Jacob Martyn to my readers, the Doctor was unfolding to Mrs. Titsy his plans for the future. And capital plans they were.

Thus while night, dark and hideous, was setting in upon the fortunes of Ephraim Magar, the morning of hope was dawning for some others in my story who had almost despaired of the sunshine.

(To be continued.)

TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

I HAVE great respect for School Boards. The new Act makes a glorious era in our history. But I hope soon to see more perfect and defined rules of educational legislation. A School Board just now seems to resemble Nathaniel Hawthorne's blind man. It is set forth on a walk through unknown ways, trusting to the guidance of any one who will take the trouble. All sorts of persons offer their assistance: some mischievous; some well-meaning, but incapable. Even the blind step in with shambling notions of the correct path. At last the Board, set adrift by a too speculative Act, rejects all guidance, and blunders on by itself. This is the story of many a country Board. It is not unlike even the history of the representative Board of London herself. I hope during the next session to see the blind man supplied with well-instructed guides. Apart from the religious question there are several points upon which legislative action is required. The London Board sends the children of indigent parents to the Poor Law Guardians, who promptly decline the responsibility of paying school fees. The result is that many destitute children are left outside the new schools. While London is debating whether special or free schools shall be provided for these waifs and strays, Birmingham declares against free education. Some of the leading provincial School Boards pay the fees of children whose parents have no means of doing so. London stands almost alone in refusing this necessary assistance to the poor. I confess that the arguments for and against are cogent. It is not my intention to find fault with London. Any one who looks fairly at the difficulties of the position will sympathise with the Board. But to return to my original simile. Driven to desperation, the blind man is becoming rather troublesome. The Government ought to have settled his route, and given him an inspired leader.

ADULTERATION is as old as commerce. Some political economists and rigid freetraders think that one is an essential and necessary part of the other. John Bright even finds it difficult to condemn the adulterator unless he mixes with his article of commerce a deleterious compound. It was in this spirit that Government dealt with the question of coffee. "Label your stuff as a mixture of chicory and coffee," said the law, "and you shall be protected." A certain class of traders are so accustomed to having their own way that they will not even take the trouble to use this legal disguise. Now and then a local informer comes down upon one of this class, and there is a conviction and fine, but the recalcitrant grocer soon takes the amount of the penalty out of his customers. Coffee had already been adulterated in the days of William and Mary. "I sell coffee powder," says an advertiser of that period, "and I'll take care that what I sell shall be fresh and *true;* and all who will may have it in the roasted berry, or see it ground." This announcement was evidently the outcome of complaints which have been more or less rife ever since. When the Legislature dealt with the matter some years ago it left milk dealers, brewers, and other important traders pretty well free to do what they pleased. Indeed, adulterators generally have had so much liberty that the nation seems almost reluctant to enforce one of the most important measures of modern days, the Adulteration (Food) Bill. An odd prosecution here and there marks the inauguration of the new law. I hope soon to see a more general recognition of its necessity and its power. Public analysts should be appointed in every town in the kingdom. The health of a nation depends as much upon wholesome food as upon pure air. Great things have been done of late years in the way of drainage and ventilation; I hope to see daily records of supplementary action in an earnest and honest attack upon adulteration.

A FACT for my lady friends. Dr. Moore, in a little work on "The Training of Young Children," quotes a remark of Dr. Conolly to Dr. Carpenter that "Three-fourths of the women under restraint at Hanwell came there, he believed, simply through the habitual indulgence of an originally bad temper." Whether the gentler sex is born with a worse temper than that with which man is endowed, or whether the defect is one of the results of the peculiar training of our girls, are curious questions for the philosophers.

HERE is a characteristic anecdote of Mr. Lowe. The railway companies have been using all their powers of persuasiveness and all their parliamentary influence to induce the right honourable gentleman to remit the passenger duty, a duty which, as they contend, is equivalent to a second income tax; and a few days ago the directors of the London and North Western, of the Great

Northern, and Midland called upon him, primed all round with statistics and arguments against the tax. Mr. Lowe folded his arms, shut his eyes, and listened to the speeches with patience and apparently with acquiescence. At last the arguments were all over; and Mr. Lowe opened his eyes and spoke. "I quite agree with you in principle"—this was the drift of his speech—"and nothing would give me greater pleasure than to remit this passenger duty. But the remission of taxation, although very pleasant when it is possible, is very embarrassing to a Chancellor of the Exchequer doomed, as I am, to raise seventy millions a year without letting any one know too painfully what I take out of his pocket in the course of the year. I *must* have the money, and the easier I can get it the better. I have been thinking of a compromise. You pay now between you a trifle less than £10,000 a year, and this £10,000 I must have either in meal or malt. But as you dislike the passenger duty I will add a trifle to your income tax, which will give me what I want and put you to no inconvenience." The directors were delighted with the compromise, thanked the Chancellor, picked up their hats, and went off congratulating themselves upon a triumph. The chairman of the London and North Western went straight to the accountant's office and explained the plan. The accountant turned to his books, reckoned up the addition to the income tax, compared it with the amount of the passenger duty, and startled the complacent chairman by telling him that the result of Mr. Lowe's compromise would be to take about £100,000 a year out of the coffers of each of the companies where he now only gets about £10,000 by the passenger duty out of all of them put together. Of course the compromise was declined by the first post the next morning, and I suppose we shall hear no more about the passenger duty at present.

SIR THOMAS DYKE ACLAND has recently had to rebuild most of the cottages in one of the villages upon his estate at Killerton, and anticipating the Public Health Bill, he made up his mind to recast all the sanitary conditions of the village, to drain it upon scientific principles, to make provision for the disposal of the sewage, to give it a pure and plentiful supply of water, and thus find out the lowest cost at which the work can be done. His engineer's balance sheet appears in the current number of the *Bath and West of England Society's Journal.* The village stands as well as any village can stand for a thorough system of drainage and water supply, raised as it is about 30 feet above the valley of the Clyst, with a couple of trout streams flowing through it; but till most of it was burnt down a year or two ago, Broadclyst was hardly ever free from fever. The houses were all huddled together. The gardens, or what ought to have been the gardens, were all covered with pigstyes and cabins. The river was polluted with all kinds of filth; and the only water fit to drink had to be drawn from wells. Even this was not always pure; for the drainage was nothing but a makeshift, and the sewage of course percolated through the soil into the wells. Sir Thomas Acland, in rebuilding the village, determined to alter all this, to lay down at the back of the houses a main sewer, formed of glazed stoneware pipes, with a flushing tank at the highest point, and inspection holes or shafts at every bend to allow a man to go down and keep the sewer free from obstructions; to insist upon properly trapped gullies being fixed in each yard, communicating with the main sewer by a regular fall of not less than one in thirty; to interdict sinks in the houses, and thus to keep out sewer gas; to put the water-closets at least 30 feet from the house, to set his face against pigstyes, except in the garden; to insist upon covered and watertight ash-pits, not more than 18 inches below the surface, and to take care that these shall be emptied at short intervals. The water supply stands over for the present; and the work, even as it is, has run up to about £700, or close upon £1 per head of the population of Broadclyst, or a year's rent of the village, assuming £5 to represent the average annual value of the cottages. According to this experiment of Sir Thomas Acland's, therefore, the upshot of Mr. Stansfeld's Public Health Bill will be to impose a special property tax of one shilling in the pound upon all the owners of cottage property within the four seas.

OUR AMERICAN COUSINS.

TO SYLVANUS URBAN.

SIR,—There can be no doubt that the American climate has deteriorated the *physique* of European settlers, this being shown in the form of *atrophy* among the males and *sterility* with the females. These effects are not universal, but general, and may be delayed, perhaps averted, by constant intermarriage of old families with new settlers. It is less apparent among those who adopt a free, active course of life; and most marked among the families settled in large cities.

Seeing this decadence of race among whites settled in the American continent, it is found consistent with what we know of India; there pure whites from Europe are unable to transmit a posterity beyond the second or third generation. Wealthy Anglo-Bengalese send their children to Europe for nursing and education, to get over the critical period of growth; their return to India thereafter being a matter of uncertainty. Those who cannot meet this expense are pained to see their children fade before their eyes. This raises a curious question about the original Aryan settlers, who were confessedly a fair race from Western Asia.

It must be conceded that an Asiatic origin was all in their favour, whether originally from Central or Western Asia; for in historical times Mongols, Tartars, and Turkomans have followed their Aryan predecessors, and have undoubtedly transmitted a Moslem posterity to the present time. These races do not appear to have deteriorated from immigration, because their practice of polygamy admits, nay necessitates, a constant infusion of new blood from the mothers, who may be of any race. We do not know but what these Aryans may have been monogamists.

Under these circumstances it becomes a question—

1. How did this Aryan race stand affected climatically by this immigration?

2. Have they any progeny now in India?

It is considered certain that this race it was who introduced the Sanscrit language into India; it forms the basis of some leading vernacular dialects, such as Hindi and Bengali, and is largely infused into older dialects, such as Tamil and Telugu, which belong to a different family of languages. Sanscrit is identified with Brahminism, which is the native religion of Hindoos, but the latter people are nearly jet black; how, then, can we classify them as derived from the fair Aryans?

We must conclude that the Aryans of pure blood have died out; that they freely intermarried with coloured natives, with whom they thus became commingled, their descendants being coloured from the mother's side. That distinction of colour being lost, it is only by *caste* that the race can be shown; and it must be admitted that many high caste natives have a lofty physiognomy.

In strict accordance with this conclusion we see that half-caste Spaniards in Mexico may thrive, but they must change their complexions; so an Englishman who settles in India or South America may have a large progeny by native women, who will be healthy and fertile, but not white. So we may conclude that the North American Yankees must certainly die out, if ever the stream of immigration should cease, unless they infuse their blood with that of an alien race.—I am, sir, yours,

A. HALL.

September 28, 1872.

THE
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ISLES OF THE AMAZONS.

BY JOAQUIN MILLER.

PART IV.

I know upon this earth one spot
Where clinking coins, that clink as chains
Upon the souls of men, are not;
Nor man is measured for his gains
Of gold that streams with crimson stains.

The rivers run unmastered yet,
Unmeasured sweep their sable bredes:
The pampas unpossessed is set
With stormy banners of her steeds,
That rival man in martial deeds.

The snow-topped towers crush the clouds
And break the still abode of stars,
Like sudden ghosts in snowy shrouds,
New broken through their earthly bars;
And condors hold with crooked hands
The rocky limits of the lands.

O men that fret as frets a main!
You irk one with your eager gaze
Down in the earth for fat increase—
Eternal talks of gold and gain,
Your shallow wit, your shallow ways . . .
And breaks my soul across the shoal
As breakers break on shallow seas.

WELL! who shall lay hand on my harp but me,
Or shall chide my song from the sounding trees?
The passionate sun and the resolute sea,
These were my masters, and only these.

These were my masters, and only these,
  And these from the first I obeyed, and they
  Shall command me now, and I shall obey
As a dutiful child that is proud to please.

These were my masters, and only these,
  And these from the first they were all to me—
  Throw a kiss to the sun, or a stone to the sea,
Love if you like, or chide if you please.

There never were measures as true as the sun,
  The sea hath a song that is passingly sweet,
  And yet they repeat, and repeat, and repeat—
The same old runes though the new years run.

By the unnamed rivers, in the Oregon north,
  That roll dark-heaved into turbulent hills,
  I have made my home. . . The wild heart thrills
With memories, and a world storms forth.

On the eminent peaks that are darkened with pine,
  Sable with shadows and voiced in storms,
  I have made my camps: majestic grey forms
Of the thunder clouds they were companions of mine;

And face set to face, as do masters meet here,
  Have we talked, red-tongued, of the mysteries,
  Of the circling sun, of the oracled seas,
While ye who judged me had mantled in fear.

Some fragment of thought in the unpolished words,
  And a world of fierce freedom—I claim no more;
And what more would you have from the tender of herds
  And of horse on my ultimate Oregon shore?

From men unto God go you forth, as alone,
  Where the dark pines talk in their tones of the sea
  To the unseen God in a harmony
Of the under seas, and know the unknown.

'Mid the white Sierras, where they slope to the sea,
Lie the pine-crowned peaks. Go dwell in the skies,
And the thundering tongues of Yosemite
Shall persuade you to silence, and you shall be wise.

I but sing for the love of song and the few
Who loved me first and shall love me last. . .
The storm of yesterday! Lo! 'tis past,
For never were clouds but the sun came through.

Yea, men may deride, and the thing it is well;
Turn well and aside from the one wild note
To the song of the birds with the tame, sweet throat;
But the sea sings on in his cave and shell.

Let the white moons ride and the red stars fall,
O great, sweet sea! O fearful and sweet!
Your songs they repeat, and repeat, and repeat:
And these, I say, shall survive us all.

* * * * * *

He reached from the bank and he brake him a reed—
A bamboo reed—from the border below,
He pithed it and tuned it with all his speed,
And lifted it up and began to blow

As if to himself; as the sea sometimes
Does soothe and soothe in a low, sweet song,
When his rage is spent, and the beach swells strong
With his sweet repetitions of alliterate rhymes.

The echoes blew back from the indolent land;
Silent and still sat the tropical bird,
And only the sound of the reed was heard,
As the Amazons ceased from their sports on the sand.

They rose from the wave, and, inclining the head,
They listened intent, with the delicate tip
Of the finger touched to the pouting lip,
Till the brown Queen turned in the tide, and led

Through the opaline lake, and under the shade,
And along the shore, and below the ferns
Where the bent boughs reached and returned by turns,
To the bank where the chivalrous singer played.

The sweet notes swelled, and the air swept loud,
And they drew to the sound as if borne in a dream,
Or as blown in the purple and gold of a cloud,
Or borne on the breast of a crystalline stream.

But the singer was vexed; he averted his head;
He lifted his eyes to the mosses aside
For a brief, little time, but they turned to the tide
In spite of his will, or of prayers well said.

He bended his head and shaded his eyes
As well as he might with lifted fingers,
And ceased to sing; then, in mute surprise,
He saw them linger as a child that lingers

And looks bewildered about from his play,
For the last loved notes that fall at his feet,
And he heard their whisperings, "Sweet! O, sweet!"
Then lifted his hands to his face to pray.

He pressed four fingers against each lid,
Till the light was gone; yet for all he did
It seemed that the lithe forms lay and beat
Afloat in his face and full under his feet.

He seemed to see the beautiful breasts,
And the rounded limbs in their pure unrests—
To see them swim as the mermaid swims,
With the drifting, dimpled, delicate limbs,

Folded and hidden in robes of hair,
While fishes of gold shot here and there
Below their breasts and above their feet,
Like birds in a marvellous garden of sweet.

It seems to me there is more that sees
  Than the eyes in man; you may close your eyes,
  You may turn your back, and may still be wise
In the sacred and marvellous mysteries.

He saw as one sees the sun of a noon
  In the sun-kissed south, when the eyes are closed—
He saw as one sees the bars of a moon
That fall through the boughs of the tropical trees,
  When he lies at length, and is all composed
And asleep in his hammock by the sundown seas.

He heard the waters bubble and fret;
  He lifted his eyes, yet ever they lay
  Afloat in the tide; he turned him away
And resolved to fly and for aye to forget.

He rose up strong, and he crossed him twice,
  He nerved his heart and he lifted his head,
And he crushed the treacherous reed in a trice,
  With an angry foot, and he turned and fled;

And flying, oppressed like a pitiful slave,
  He questioned himself most sore as he fled,
If he most was a knight, or most was a knave—
  And flying he hurriedly turned his head

Back over his shoulder, and sudden aside,
  With an eager glance, with meddlesome eyes,
  As a woman will turn: and he saw arise
The beautiful Queen from the silvery tide;

She tossed her hair, and she turned her eyes
  With all their splendour to his as he fled,
And all their glory, and a strange surprise,
  And a sad reproach, and a world unsaid.

He beat on their shields, they arose in array,
  As aroused from a trance, and hurriedly came
From the wave, and he turned and wandered away,
  Fretting his sensitive soul with blame,

Until all arrayed; then ill and opprest,
  And bitterly cursing the treacherous reed,
Returned with his hand on his turbulent breast,
  And struck to the heart, and most ill indeed.

* * * * * *

Alone he would sit in the shadows at noon,
  Alone he would sit by the waters at night;
  Would sing sad-voiced, as a woman might,
With pale, kind face to the cold, pale moon.

He would here advance, and would there retreat,
  As a petulant child that has lost its way
  In the redolent walks of a sultry day,
And wanders around with irresolute feet.

He would press his hand as in pain to his heart,
  He would fold his hands, he would toss his hair
From his brow, then turn to the palms, and apart
  From eyes that pursued, with a petulant air.

He made him a harp of mahogany wood,
  He strung it well with the delicate strings
  Of the ostrich thews, of the ostrich wings;
And forgetting his friends, and refusing his food,

He played and he sang in a sad sweet rune,
Yet never once amorous, never once rude,
By the tide at night, in the palms at noon,
And lone as a ghost in the shadowy wood.

One sometimes sat at the wanderer's side
Where the kingly river went wandering by;
And the two once looked, and they knew not why,
Full sad in each other's eyes, and they sighed.

But still he paled and he pined in despair,
And she wept in her heart of hearts for him
With the sea-blue eyes and the brown-silk hair,
Till her soul grew heavy and her eyes grew dim

To the fair delights of her own fair Isles;
She turned her face to the stranger again,
She cheered with song and allured with smiles,
But cheered, and allured, and soothed in vain.

Then she, too, paled and pined with a grief
That grew from her pity; she forgot her arms,
And she made neglect of the battle alarms
That threatened the land; the banana's leaf

Made shelter; he lifted his harp again,
She sat and she listened intently and long,
Forgetting her cares and forgetting her pain—
Made sad for the singer, made glad by his song.

But the year wax'd old, the white moons waned,
The brown Queen marshalled them nevermore,
With sword and shield, in the palms by the shore;
But they sat them down to repose, or remained

Apart and scattered in the tr
As saddened by song, or
Or away in the Isle in c
Not at all content in their

Or they wandered away to the lakes once more,
  Or walked in the moon, or they sighed, or slept,
Or they sat in pairs by the shelly shore,
  And silent moan with the waters kept.

They forgot their temple that blazed and shone
  Built up to the sun on the westmost shore,
  With its front of gold and its golden door
That oped to the Sun, and the Sun alone.

* * * * * *

There was one who stood by the waters one eve,
  With the stars on her hair, and the bars of the moon
  Broken up at her feet by the wonderful boon
Of extending old trees, who did questioning grieve :

"The birds they go over us two and by two;
  The *mono* is mated; his bride in the boughs
  Sits nursing his babe, and his passionate vows
Of love, you may hear them the whole day through.

"The lizard, the cayman, the white-toothed boar,
  The serpents that glide in the sword-leafed grass,
  The beasts that abide or the birds that pass,
They love and are loved, but my loves are no more.

"There is nothing that is that can yield one bliss
  Like an innocent love; the leaves have tongue
  And the tides talk low in the reeds, and the young
And the quick buds open their lips but for this.

"In the steep and the starry silences,
  On the stormy levels of the limitless seas,
  Or here in the deep of the dark-browed trees,
There is nothing so much as a brave man's kiss;

"There is nothing so strong, in the stream, on the land,
In the valleys of palms, on the pinnacled snow,
In the clouds of the gods, on the grasses below,
As the silk-soft touch of a baby's brown hand.

"It were better to sit and to spin on a stone
The whole year through with a babe at the knee,
With its brown hands reaching caressingly,
Than to sit in a girdle of gold and alone.

"It were better, I think, to bear with the frowns
Of unmannerly men, as laden with spoil
From the intricate wood, and bended with toil,
We return to our beautiful babes by the towns,

"Than the life like to this, where never the brown
Sweet hand of a babe hides back in the hair
When the mother returns with her burthen of care,
And over the life of her life bends down.

"It were better perhaps to be mothers of braves,
And to murmur not much; there are clouds in the sun.
Let them wrong if they will, they alone are undone,
And the shame shall be theirs if their mothers be slaves."

* * * * * *

They wandered well forth, some here and some there,
Unsatisfied some and irresolute all.
The sun was the same, the moonlight did fall
Rich-barred and refulgent; the stars were as fair

As ever were stars; the fruitful clouds crossed
And the harvest failed not; yet the fair Isle grew
As a prison despised, and they searched on through
The magnificent shades as for things that were lost.

Then the minstrel, more pensive, went deep in the wood,
And he oft-time delayed him the whole day through,
As if charmed by the deeps, or the sad heart drew
Some solaces sweet from the solitude.

Then the singer forsook them at last, and the Queen
Came seldom then forth from the fierce deep wood,
And her warriors, dark-browed and bewildering, stood
In bands by the wave in the complicate screen

Of overbent boughs. They would lean on their spears
And would talk sometimes low-voiced and by twos,
As allured by longings they could not refuse,
And would sidewise look, as beset by their fears.

They would wander on thus as the day waxed full,
Listless and slow, and spurning the shells
With brown sandalled feet, to the whimsical swells
Of the wine-dark wave with its foam like wool.

Once, wearied and sad, by the shadowy trees
In the flush of the sun they sank to their rests,
The dark hair veiling the beautiful breasts
That arose in billows, as do mists veil seas.

Then away to the dream-world one and by one;
The great red sun in his purple was rolled,
And red-winged birds and the birds of gold
Were above in the trees like the beams of the sun.

Then the sun came down, with his ladders of gold
Built up of his beams, and the souls arose
And ascended on these, and the fair repose
Of the negligent forms was a feast to behold.

The round brown limbs they were reached or drawn,
The grass made dark with the fervour of hair;
And here were the rose-red lips, and there
A flushed breast rose like a sun at a dawn.

The copper-bound shields lay silent beside,
  Their lances they leaned to the leaning old trees,
  While away in the sun an irresolute breeze
With a rippled quick step stole over the tide.

But the black-winged birds blew over in pair,
  Listless and slow, as they called to the seas,
  And the sounds came down through the tangle of trees
As lost, and nestled and hid in their hair.

They started disturbed, and they sprang as at war
  To the lance and the shield, but the ominous sound
  Was gone from the wood, and they gazed around
And saw but the birds, black-winged and afar.

They gazed at each other, then turned them unheard,
  Slow trailing their lances in long single line
  As they moved through the forest, all dark as the sign
Of death that fell down from the ominous bird.

* * * * * *

Strange noises were heard, sad visions were seen,
  By sentries, betimes, on the opposite shore,
Where broad boughs swung their curtains of green
  Far over the wave with their tropical store.

A sentry bent low on her palms and she peered
  Suspiciously through ; and, heavens ! a man,
Low-browed and wicked, looked backward, and jeered
  And taunted right full in her face as he ran :

A low crooked man, with eyes like a bird—
  Round and as cunning—who came from the land
  Of lakes, where the clouds lie low and at hand,
And the songs of the bent black swans are heard ;

Where men are most cunning and cruel withal,
And are famous as spies, and are supple and fleet,
And are webbed like the water-fowls under the feet,
And swim like the swans, and like pelicans call.

And again, on the night when the moon she was not,
A sentry saw stealing, as still as a dream,
A sudden canoe down the mid of the stream,
Like a gleaming of light, and as swift as a thought.

And lo! as it passed, from the prow there arose
A dreadful gibbering, hairy old man,
Loud laughing, as only a maniac can,
And shaking a lance at the land of his foes;

Then sudden it vanished, as swift as it came,
Far down through the walls of the shadowy wood,
And the great moon rose, like a forest aflame—
All threat'ning, sullen, and red like blood.

(To be continued.)

LOVE OR MONEY?

A NOVELETTE IN FOUR PARTS,

BY STEPHEN J. MACKENNA, AUTHOR OF "OFF PARADE."

PART III.

CAPTAIN ISLEBART'S MANŒUVRES.

AFTER a glass of sherry and a biscuit, Captain Islebart felt himself no more fired with ideas than before, so hoped to stimulate depressed nature by exhibiting his charms on the pier-head, where the fashion-market was by this time in full activity. He lounged listlessly but grandly into the vortex of gossip, crochet, novels, muslins, silks, tatting, dress-criticism, and ill-natured banter, that whirled and seethed and deafened under the cool awning at the western extremity. He nodded and exchanged lazy "How-do's?" with the men; he stared with a critical eye at the new-comers of yesterday, making their first appearance under that exclusive canvas; he received Angelina Prout's soft, low, cooing admirations of the sea, the sky, the white-winged yachts, and the heavenly shapes of the fleecy sun-clouds, with a responsive sentimentality that encouraged that waning but still beauteous virgin to revel in wild fancies and hopes that might never be accomplished. He was gay with Mrs. Skiffer, and laughed loud "haw-haw!—bravos!" at her keen, clever, and not over-generous anecdotes and comments, and expressed unmitigated surprise when she gave him a full (indeed very much overdrawn) account of the Bells' misfortune, but carefully abstained from expressing his sympathy with their sad affairs. He seemed thoroughly to enjoy a long delicious "spoon" with Fan Evans, whose dark flashing eyes spoke out unmistakably the longing desire of her soul, as they gazed on him sitting at her feet, far down the rough timber sea-steps, while the gentle murmur of the south-west wind, and the constant soothing "lap, lap" of the tiny waves, rising to kiss the huge weed-mantled piles, seemed to lend a sort of cool dreaminess that yet was powerless to modify the romance of her passion. He entered as eagerly as his nature would permit into a discussion of the state of the odds and the probable starters and jockeys for the St. Leger, with racing men, come down to steady their heads, and (if possible) clear their brains, previous to the great autumn meetings. He played with the happy children, dancing and gambolling about the pier-head, allowing them to pull his huge moustache, and riding them "cock-horse to Banbury Cross," to their intense delight. He went on board Garnew's new yacht, the noble Viking, awaiting her trial on Friday, and ate a huge lunch, washed down by copious draughts of sparkling Moselle. He played wildly, desperately, and lost heavily at *écarté*—he did all these things, each in its best way and according to its nature, and yet he never once forgot Annie Bell and her trouble.

Towards eventime he left the Viking, and, it being high tide, was pulled ashore to the club-house steps, thus missing Sam Bell, who was walking down the pier to cross for Winchester with some necessaries for his uncle, and the smallest possible amount of comfort or hope. Islebart could not dine, and would not stay to play pool in the club. He was heated and out of sorts—why he could not tell—and thinking a stroll down the tree-cloistered lanes leading to Quarr Abbey might do him good, he ordered the dog-cart to meet him near Wootton, and started for a meditative walk. It took him past "The Rosery," and he lingered, delaying his steps as he searched with keen eyes the green foliage embowering it, but saw no sign of life—no Annie Bell watering her flowers in the tiny garden, as he had often seen her before. Down a pleasant path between tall sheltering hedges, teeming with insect and bird life, and glorious in the exuberant summer foliage, went Islebart till he reached the very bottom of the hill, where a small stream, crossed by a rustic bridge, murmured busily through a close thicket that completely sheltered it from view for a few hundred yards, until it poured its mite of water into the Solent. He sat a few moments on the bridge to rest, and then, with a sudden impulse, turned away from the path and followed the course of the rivulet to the sea shore. Round a little to the right, seated on a knoll under the hazel bushes, he came upon Annie Bell. Her hat was lying beside her, her chin was resting on her frail, finely-formed hand, she was peering out with a sad, wistful glance over the shore, whence the tide had commenced to retreat, and the setting sun lit up with a great golden glory the thick mane of yellow hair that had fallen in heavy masses over her shoulders. She started suddenly as she heard his step, and a bright current of red blood rushed all over her face and neck, as she half rose, while putting her hands up to restore the fallen hair to its proper bounds.

Captain Islebart was fairly taken aback, and a natural manner, that had been a stranger to him for years, mastered for a time the dainty affectation that had usurped its place. "I beg pardon—I am sure, Miss Bell," he said, "but I had not the least idea I should find you here."

"No?" she queried, resuming her calmness; "this is a favourite spot of mine. I am not well, Captain Islebart, and I though the evening breeze might do me good." Her eyes seemed half filling with tears, and a strange thrill passed through his nerves as he observed them.

"Can I offer you my escort—my arm—home? It is late, and rather a lonely spot."

"Thank you. I think I will. I had no idea it was so late; but I had some trouble that upset me;" and she looked up with a sad glance in the sweet blue eyes; "but you drove Sam, my cousin, over," she went on, while the blood dyed her face once more, "and perhaps he told you all?"

"He said something unpleasant had happened to Mr. Bell—in fact"——

"Oh, you know—I see you know all—and I suppose it is the gossip of all Ryde by this time!" She sank her head, and it took all her pride and strength to refrain from sobbing aloud at the humiliating thought.

He said nothing; but gave her his arm, and led the way up by the stream and the hilly path he had come down. She was glad of his considerate silence, and had time thoroughly to compose herself before he ventured to speak again.

"Is your cousin to stay at 'The Rosery' to-night?"

"No, he left just before I came out, to cross the water and take some things to—up to Winchester. He will be back to-morrow with news."

"I beg your pardon, Miss Bell," began Islebart, who had been pondering deeply all the way up the path—the idea he had been seeking for all day long had come at last. "I hope you will not be angry—will you—if I ask a favour?" She nodded her head in a mystery of what he could want. "Can your cousin see his way to arrange Mr. Bell's affairs so soon as would be desirable?"

It was very delicately put, and Annie could fully appreciate the gentleness of the question. But she hung her head till the fine face was nearly concealed, and then, in a low sad tone murmured: "No; no, I fear not—no chance of what you mean at once."

Then Islebart spoke out his full meaning quietly, respectfully, tenderly, and with an apparently natural, feeling manner. He begged to be placed in possession of full particulars of the debt. He had some money lying quite idle, that would be absolutely useless to him for some time to come. Might he beg permission to visit Mr. Bell to-morrow, and persuade him to accept it as a loan? Surely, this was no obligation from one who respected her father so much as he did? It was merely an every-day temporary convenience from one gentleman to another—and so on, in a smooth, winning strain, and a flow of words that would have literally astonished Annie had she heard them from such a languid swell in an unagitated moment.

Poor girl! her love for her father, her companion's unbroken string of persuasive arguments, her tears that now rained fast, but silent, all overcame her; and with a feeling of lively gratitude, she gave the required permission, and, at "The Rosery" gate, parted from Islebart with such sensations as she had never before experienced and could never hope to analyse.

Before leaving her, he recommended her not to disturb her mother (who had, she said, been very unwell nearly all day long) with what had passed, and then pressing her hand with a long but respectful grasp, he walked straight back to Ryde, chartered a two-horse fly, picked up his own dog-cart at Wootton, and was in Parkhurst barracks some time before midnight.

Captain Lynn Darley and Lieutenant Billingay had made a bad day's work of it in Ryde. The afternoon was wearing to maturity when they landed from Cowes, and poor "Stickleback" was seized at once by the omnipresent Mrs. Skiffer, and treated to a jorum of gossip as she paraded him up and down. At last he effected his escape, when, unfortunately, coming out of the tram-carriage, he almost ran against the three Evans girls, and in common civility was bound to accompany them for some distance while making his uncouth apologies. Winny Evans, the authoress, was not going to lose sight of her "elective affinity" without a struggle, and so threw every obstacle she could think of in the way of his taking leave, engrossing his attention by full details of the misfortune that had befallen the Bells, as obtained first-hand from her friend Annie, whom she had been sitting with and consoling half the morning. Strange to say, these very different girls had struck up an apparently most cordial friendship, but it was little more than apparent, and arose in this way: Winny Evans could not restrain her most contradictory affection for Darley, but as it was such a subject for the ridicule of her sisters, she strove to conceal it from them, and gratify it by haunting Annie, learning from her as much as possible about him, and singing the praises of his secret charities and goodness at every opportunity;

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while Annie's keen desire for position and fashionable society led her eagerly to snap at any advances to close friendship; besides which, she had been, and was, far too fond of her very first admirer not to enjoy exceedingly hearing him lauded even by a girl of whom she might naturally be jealous. But jealousy never entered her queenly nature, she had too strong a belief in her own fascinations; and, in addition, was so dazzled and intoxicated by the brilliant wealth of Islebart, and his close attention and devotedness, that she had almost wrenched her heart away, and would accept him any day he proposed, and deny a true love to gratify a worldly passion.

So that it was near evening before Lynn Darley could make his timid way towards "The Rosery;" and when he did get there he was so upset by hearing Mrs. Bell's dismal groans as he stood in the doorway waiting for the servant, that all his courage deserted him, and he went away without even leaving a card, while his mumbled nervous inquiries were not thought worthy of mention by the parlour-maid who answered his ring. He wandered about the shady roads, the rural paths, even the fields and sea shore, seeking only to avoid observation, and he succeeded. But if he was not seen he saw and heard others, and, dreading interruption to his gloomy thoughts, sneaked by a back way to Ryde, just catching the last boat to Cowes. As for Billingay, when he thought he had worked Darley up to "the scratch," he left him to make some calls, then spent the rest of the evening and night gambling with a set of wild roysterers, and presented himself at eight the next morning in Islebart's room, so much the worse for strong drink that his captain forbade him to go on parade—would not hear of his showing himself even on the staircase—and made him lie down there and then on his own bed, where he soon sank into heavy, stertorous sleep.

Colonel Murrell was in a bad temper; and when that grisly warrior suffered from an attack of ill-humour he usually worked it off by bullying the unfortunate battalion under his command, and drilling them "as fine as herrings." On this particular morning he was more bilious-tempered than usual, and took it out in such marchings, wheelings, and deployments up and down and across the hilly parade ground as nearly to exhaust all the manœuvres in the "Red Book." He bullied Tibbitts, his wretched adjutant; he bullied the captains, he bullied the lieutenants, and he ordered nearly half the ensigns back to preliminary drill. Then he proceeded to hold that idiotic mockery of a court of justice called "Orderly Room," dealing out "slogging" sentences right and left, to the dismay of the trifling offenders against discipline, and the huge delight of the hardened criminals, who were only too glad to see the comparatively innocent dealt with as severely as they themselves were for real guilt. He made sarcastic remarks to captains who were not ready with their defaulters' sheets; he yelled at the sergeants, who tumbled over one another in agonies of zeal and confusion; he damned the paymaster because his papers were not ready for signature; and sent the quarter-master to the infernal regions on account of the bad meat supplied by the contractor.

Islebart was in a foaming rage; he wanted to get away, but the chief's temper was a barrier. At last, most of the accumulated bile had found vent, leaving the colonel's system improving. "Should like a couple of days' leave, sir—private affairs—to Southampton." asked Islebart, approaching the table and saluting.

"Are your monthly returns in?" growled the colonel.

"Not yet, sir, but"——

"Well, you can't go till they are, Captain Islebart," and the colonel jerked his sword from between his legs.

"*I* can finish them, if you will allow it, sir." Darley actually trembled with fear as he ventured on this bold suggestion.

"Very well. You can go, Captain Islebart. Captain Darley can look to it;" and the colonel turned to "wig" the drum-major soundly because one of his boys had appeared on parade with a barely noticeable black eye.

"Thanks, Dar'—much obliged, old man. Come over to my quarters and I will give you the papers; Roden has the forms. Besides, I want to ask your help about another matter." Darley looked up sadly, with those timid, deprecating eyes of his, at Islebart for a moment, and then followed him across the yard, prepared to do anything or everything for one whom, in his humility, he regarded as a superior being.

An hour later Islebart was whipping towards Cowes, with a far lighter heart than he had had when listening to Colonel Murrell's objurgations in the orderly room. Lynn Darley could not go into Ryde that day to offer his condolences—the returns for Islebart's company were in arrears and required careful looking after. Nor could he the next, for he was captain of the day; nor yet the next, on account of a court-martial—and then he was ashamed, for the crisis was past, and old Lawrence Bell had returned to "The Rosery" a free man, and with something in hand besides to go on with until he could arrange his affairs by the sale of some little property. Shortly after it leaked out somehow that Islebart had supplied the funds for the old man's release by selling some stock at a ruinous price, but this was studiously and stoutly denied by Billingay, who said 'Bart was not such a fool as to mix himself up with "that old pauper's" affairs; arguing, moreover, that his captain would hardly take such a step just on the eve of an engagement with Fan Evans, which it was very evident (and this Billingay really did believe to be fact) he was about to make. Sam Bell, too, indignantly turned away whenever the subject was broached, and said, "if 'Bart ever married at all, Miss Evans was 'the one for choice.'" Still the ensigns gossiped and chattered over many pipes and much beer, after parade and in one another's quarters; one party affirming that "'Bart would be a rum 'un, by Jove, to take all that bother with old Bell, and not follow it up with the girl, as they believed he was really doing;" while the others said he "was as hot as ever on that splendid Fan Evans—doosid handsome gal, 'egad; and doosid spooney on 'Bart—and were sure it was all a settled thing, 'egad;" and poor "Stickleback" sickened at heart as he formed his own conclusions from what he knew of the state of things, and became more nervous, more shy, more self-hating, day by day.

PART IV.

ALMOST LOST.

"Who *is* that very handsome girl talking to Captain Islebart?" asked Lady Rawley Champion (a visitor of only two days' standing) as she sat with Mrs. Skiffer apart from the throng assembled at a late autumn flower-show.

"Oh, don't you know? That, dear Lady Champion, is our princess, our queen, our empress!—Miss Annie Bell by name—came here last winter poor and completely unknown, and is now monarch of all she surveys;" answered the blithesome widow, with a good deal of sarcasm in her tone.

"Really? Is she engaged to Captain Islebart?"

"Oh no!—not at all; though people says she has tried hard to be. Captain Islebart only flirts with her—as he does, indeed, with every one. Besides, she has not a penny, and her grasping cupidity would disgust any man."

"Really!" was again her ladyship's not novel interjection, as she surveyed the pair through her eye-glasses: "Really? but Captain Islebart is very well off; I think he has considerable property in our county."

"Yes, he is very rich," gloomily answered Mrs. Skiffer, wishing from her heart *her* chance of sharing his money was a little better; "and no one has more reason to know it than Miss Bell. Why, he actually paid her old father out of gaol—that's a fact—and wicked people, my dear Lady Rawley, will tell you that he is supporting the entire family still."

"Indeed!" and her ladyship, tired of the subject, yawned into other chit-chat about as interesting.

Now, what the Skiffer said about Annie Bell was (for once in a way) tolerably true. She had risen to the very highest position in Ryde society through her own tact, her own winning grace of attraction, her own enthralling beauty, and she held her place by the same qualities coupled with a frank, straightforward openness of manner—laughing at her own poverty, at the unfortunate misadventure that had befallen her father in the summer, at her mother's anxious and very apparent endeavours to have her well married—and, more than all, by the skilful generosity of her demeanour to other girls whom she had outstripped in the race of fashion. It would not be too much to say that in all Ryde there were only two women who really wished her ill and maligned her behind her back, and those were Mrs. Skiffer, who had a bad-natured spite against every woman at all better looking or more pleasing than herself, and poor Fan Evans, whose scarcely controllable love for Islebart blackened and distorted an otherwise good nature. And Annie Bell had beyond doubt the "grasping cupidity" so kindly mentioned by the widow. Though she openly laughed at her parents' poverty, in secret she hated and dreaded and cowered under it. She would have given anything, done anything for wealth—wealth that would enable her to shine in London, in Paris, everywhere—that would make her queen in the worlds of the great cities as she was queen in this petty watering place; and for his wealth she was pining and hoping day by day that Captain Islebart would propose. As for her first girlish innocent love—Lynn Darley—she had striven to tear it out of her heart, to smother it as a useless if not dangerous fire, to put it away as a sweet noxious poison, delightful to the taste but death to all future hope. In this she was backed up by her mother, and even by her father, who could not forget Darley's absence of sympathy in the time of his summer trouble. Indeed, the poor nervous captain had only once, shortly after Lawrence Bell's release, ventured to call at "The Rosery," and then he was met with such chilling coldness by the old man, with such majestic contempt by Mrs. Bell, with such an evident deeply-hurt manner by Annie, that he had never ventured to repeat the experiment, and was never invited to do so.

"I can't bear to hear you talk such nonsense about him," she warmly interrupted one day in autumn, when Winny Evans, as usual (foolish girl! to choose Annie Bell of all the girls in Ryde to be confidant of your hopeless passion), was singing for the thousandth time his praises: "I can't bear such folly, Winny! he *used* to be a friend of mine, but he behaved shamefully in never coming near us when papa was in gaol—and—and in never offering an old friend like papa the only help that he wanted—the help an almost stranger came forward at once to give. I'm not ashamed of it"—she went on, stamping her foot and working herself into a rage—"no, not a bit; at least before you. He had known papa fifteen years, and always pretended great friendship to him and *love* for *me*, if you please!" Annie Bell snorted as she flung up her fine head—"and yet he allowed Captain Islebart, who hadn't known us six months, to lend papa the money. Don't talk to me about his charities and goodness to the poor, and all the rest of it—why don't you marry him if you are so impressed with his virtues?" And poor Winny, only wishing she had the chance, went away quite overcome with Annie's outburst of self-induced passion. Nor did she find much comfort when she got to Linden Grove, for Fan was on her bed almost fainting, and it was long before she could give any reason for the attack. Then, with many gasps and sobs, poor Fan explained that she had never believed until that day that Islebart had supplied the money to old Bell in prison, but now she had no doubt of it, for that horrid Mr. Billingay was tipsy and had told her in his drunkenness (what he had always before steadily contradicted) that it really was Islebart who lent the money—"and oh, Winny! what do you think he dared to add?"

"Never mind now, Fan darling, you will only make yourself worse."

"But I will mind!" broke out the excited girl; "he said, 'by Jove, if you don't look sharp 'Bart will slip through your fingers, and have Annie Bell,'—the impudent wretch—oh, I could"——

"Hush, hush, Fan; he was tipsy and didn't know."

"But isn't it true? All Ryde believes it but me, and, only that Captain Islebart told me deliberately that he did *not*, I also should have believed it."

"Annie told me to-day that it *was* Captain Islebart," said Winny, foolishly, and she was paid out for her folly by having to sit up nearly all night with her excited sister.

After this there was a decided coolness between the gallant Captain Islebart and Fan Evans. She could not make up her mind whether to believe the story told by Billingay and Miss Bell, or to trust implicitly to her admirer's version, and as he made no efforts to come to an explanation of her coolness towards him, poor Fan could not discover the truth and was thoroughly miserable. If he had told her the truth, why then did he not, as he easily could do, contradict the story with which all Ryde was ringing, that he had been and *still was* assisting old Bell with money? while, if he actually had advanced money, of course he must be secretly engaged to the daughter, or the parents would be hardly so mean as to take pecuniary assistance from a mere acquaintance. Besides, Islebart, and Annie too, seemed now more and more drawn together every day; to seek one another's society at parties, bands, yachting trips, and pleasure haunts of every description; to be more bound up the one with the other—in fact, to be on such terms as fully warranted the gossips in declaring they were on the point of an engagement.

These were hard times for Billingay. He had got into a horrible mess with his monetary affairs and those of Sam Bell, and many a long and fruitless discussion did these two hold when in "Committee of Ways and Means." On one point they were thoroughly agreed, viz.: that 'Bart's conduct was shockingly reckless, that he was absolutely throwing himself into the very way of a pauper marriage; and they finally agreed (the one from purely mercenary motives, the other from those plus a hopeless love for his cousin) that every obstacle must be thrown between him and Annie. The immediate cause of their disquietude was a large bill, just coming due, to which they had induced 'Bart to put his name, and unless he could take it up (a doubtful matter considering the enormous rate he had been living at) they would be done for. To be sure the local discounter who held it would make no objection to a renewal on the same names if 'Bart was actually engaged to Miss Evans, but if not he would foreclose.

It was the night of the club ball. All Ryde was there, and yet the rooms were not more overcrowded than ball-rooms usually are. In fact, the contrary was the case, for every hole and corner had been made available for general purposes—a portion even of the sea-terrace having been tented over, tastefully gardened with hot-house plants, and formed into a tempting conservatory for the nonce.

"For heaven's sake come here a moment, Bell," said Billingay about an hour after supper, dragging the young sailor out on the balcony, "just look behind those plants there—it's 'Bart and your cousin. is it not?"

"By Jove it is. Damn him!" and he ground his teeth in suppressed rage.

"Look sharp now—he'll propose to her if you don't. I know the man. Get hold of some one—Miss Prout there will do—take her out on the terrace and interrupt them till I come back. Anything to prevent him making a fool of himself."

Young Bell did at once what he was told and had Miss Prout out on the balcony, "just for a mouthful of fresh air, you know," in a couple of moments. Billingay walked straight up to where Fan Evans was sitting with her *chaperone*—a deaf old lady, retained on the staff of the "Linden Grove" establishment to "do propriety."

Miss Evans bowed very coldly indeed; but he was not to be put off. He came, he said, to ask pardon—he feared he had annoyed Miss Evans last time he had the pleasure of speaking to her—would she forgive him? he had been out all day in the sun and was excited—and he paused.

"I did not notice anything peculiar," she said coldly.

"No? I know I was out of sorts that afternoon, but I am glad you did not perceive it. Do you know," he went on, a strange smile quivering over his face, "I have had a most extraordinary idea that I (quite unintentionally) deceived you—it has been haunting me for days, and I determined to speak to you, if you would allow me, to-night."

Something told her he alluded to Islebart. She blushed slightly and asked, "About what, Mr. Billingay?"

"Well, it was about Captain Islebart and the Bells." She tried to look unconcerned, but failed utterly, and he, seeing his advantage, went on: "As well as I can remember, Miss Evans, I told you that Captain Islebart had actually advanced the money to release Mr. Bell—is it so?"

She only nodded acquiescence to this.

"Now, in simple justice to another, I must explain that statement. It is true, and it is not true. It is true he took the money to Winchester, offered it to old Bell, and got him out with it, but it was *not his own* money."

He paused to watch the effect of his words. She paled, then flushed, and then said, in a low voice, "Pray go on, Mr. Billingay. I shall be glad if you will explain fully."

"Perhaps I had better. The day after Bell was arrested, 'Bart drove over and had a long interview in the evening with Miss Bell in the seashore wood near Binstead (he told me this part himself). She persuaded him"—— Again he stopped a moment to see how this insinuation would work; she stamped her white foot cruelly on the ground, as though wishing Annie Bell were under it. "*She* *persuaded* him to lend her father the money; he promised, and drove back to Parkhurst, but he had been living very fast, and had hardly any money by him, nor could he have raised any for some time. He did not know what to do, but felt bound by the promise—the promise *extorted* from him, mind—and borrowed £500 from Captain Darley, released Mr. Bell, and has since been making capital out of his apparent generosity, and become quite infatuated—really not caring one pin's head for her—by her too apparent gratitude and affection."

Miss Evans was very pale now, and he almost thought she would faint. But she recovered herself, and asked, "But how do you know this? It is hardly likely that either Captain Islebart or Captain Darley would tell you."

"They don't even know that I am aware of it; but it happened that I was unwell and lying down in 'Bart's bedroom when the conversation took place, and through the open door I saw Darley hand him the cheque."

There was a pause for a few moments while the whirl of the ball buzzed unnoticed in the ears of these two as they sat looking at one another. At length she spoke.

"And why do you tell me this, Mr. Billingay?"

"Oh, simply because I wanted to set right what I said the other day to you," he readily replied, "and it is only fair poor Dar' should have his share of the credit. You look faint, Miss Evans; let me take you on the sea terrace for awhile—that will set you up."

She rose without a word to accompany him. "Besides," he went on as they crossed the room, "I am a friend of Islebart's, and don't want him to mistake gratitude for love. If Miss Bell only knew how he has been deceiving her about this money, I fancy all would be soon over between them." He threw out this suggestion in the simplest possible manner, but a quick side-glance and a thrill of the arm resting on his told him the shot had gone home. As they went out on the balcony they met Sam Bell, flushed and agitated, coming up from the terrace.

"What's wrong, Sam?" asked Billingay, nervously.

"Oh, Miss Prout fell going down those confounded steps, and in the confusion they escaped me."

Fan Evans's great black eyes flashed out, as plain as words, the question, "Who escaped him?" to Billingay.

"You don't mean to say you have missed 'Bart and your cousin?" asked the latter.

"I have, and that's all about it!" returned the other, doggedly; "I couldn't leave that girl half-dead, could I?"

Fan Evans gave a perceptible shiver, while Billingay nearly swore aloud. "Never mind Miss Prout now, Sam. Would you like to go back to Mrs. Poulton, Miss Evans?" and without waiting for a reply he hurried her across the room again, muttered in her ear, as he left her, "Miss Bell must be told all," and went off with Sam in search of the errant couple. But they did not find them, for the simple reason that Annie Bell had pleaded a headache to her mamma, and that they had gone home, while 'Bart thought a cigar and a stroll on the esplanade would be the very best thing to cool his brain. For he had just sealed his fate—or rather, had at a very early hour in the evening, before supper, and even before his factotum, Billingay, had entered the ball-room. He had met the Bells almost on their arrival, and claimed Annie—grand in the majestic simplicity of an unornamented attire—for an immediate waltz. Then he led her out through the pleasant conservatory down to the sea-terrace, and, while the satin moon softly lit up with broad streams of shifting light the ripples of the calm full-tide, murmuring ceaselessly and plaintively against the old grey granite bastion, he told her he loved her.

"Love *me*, Captain Islebart!" she whispered in a low, exquisite whisper, while a little tremor shivered all over her form, and the long fine arm beat restlessly against the simple white dress; "Love *me?* Oh no, you cannot say so, you cannot love me from so many?" and she looked up almost beseechingly to his face.

"But I do love you, Annie! have for long months past—pardon me if I have seemed sometimes cold—sometimes to be taken with others. But my course has been a difficult one—I am in very peculiar circumstances—and I have struggled against it; I may confess that now, may I not?" She only shuddered again, and he went on: "I have tried to fight against it, fearing that I could never hope to win you, but now, I can struggle no longer with myself—will you marry me, Annie?"

She had expected—nay, hoped for this question, any time the last two months, and had made up her mind to marry this man, not loving him the least, but content to sacrifice all affection, all hope of woman's happiness, to clutch the wealth she knew him to possess. Still, now that the time was come, she hung back a moment, and almost repented her determination.

"But I do not love you!" she gasped out at last—it was the final effort of her better nature, and her heart almost prayed that he would accept the objection.

But he did not; he only urged fervently and yet more warmly all the old objections to the theory that there must of necessity be love on both sides *before* marriage. He pictured to her a gay, happy life of triumph and conquest and pleasure in all the bright capitals of Europe; he painted with a masterly hand, how with the accessories of wealth and position, the veriest trifle of existence may be turned into a keen artistic delight; he raised up gorgeous pageants of unknown, untasted, unimagined joys lying at her very feet, if she would but stoop to gather them; joys that would never satiate, never cloy, because born of art, intellect, and refinement. He described to her the very things which her own vivid imagination had long before set up as idols and hungered and thirsted after, and, with a long heart-wrung gasp, she consented to be his—or rather, to belong to the dross of earth he had figured.

Then all was over; and at the very time Billingay was seeking to interpose, these two foolish ones had agreed to become man and wife, each fired with desires that could never be satisfied.

Almost immediately after her conversation with Billingay, Miss Evans had called her sisters, and they went home. Then, in a sort of boudoir common to all, she sat down and calmly told them all she had heard of Islebart and Darley in connection with the Bells, knowing well that it would be retailed all over Ryde by the morrow afternoon, and never doubting but that Annie Bell would at once break with Islebart when she fully understood the duplicity with which he had palmed himself off as her father's benefactor; and then —and then he would—not all at once—but doubtless after a little time—come back to her, the woman who really loved and worshipped him, and the happiness of her life would commence. As soon after breakfast the next morning as decency would permit, Winny Evans, foolish and suicidal in her blind love for Lynn Darley, and anxious once for all to justify him completely to Annie, ran off to "The Rosery" and told everything. Lizzie Evans made a round of morning calls, leaving at every house a detailed account of this rich piece of gossip, and wound up by an hour under the pier-awning, where the story formed already a most welcome topic of conversation.

Islebart had slept at the Pier Hotel, and was to be at "The Rosery" for lunch, and afterwards to make arrangements with old Lawrence Bell. He was ushered into the drawing-room, but there was no one there. Presently Annie entered. She was deadly pale, but her step was firm and queenly. Without delay or pause she said:

"Captain Islebart, I must retract the answer I gave you last night."

"My God! Annie—what are you saying?"

"I repeat"—she spoke deliberately and paused on every word—"I repeat, I must retract the answer I gave you last night."

"But why—what in the name of goodness have I done?"

"What have you done? You know well what you have done, Captain Islebart." She stood straight up, her right hand firmly grasping the back of a chair, while her blue eyes flashed out at him with determined rage—"You have deceived me, you have trifled and mocked me—you have palmed yourself off on me, on my parents, on every one, as our benefactor—our rescuer in time of need; you have used another man's generosity for your own purposes; you have behaved as a hypocrite, and—and a *villain!*" She glared at him fiercely a second, then turned sharp round and left him before he could utter a word.

He saw at once that all was finished. How she had found it out he could not imagine, for he knew Darley would never mention the matter to a soul, and he had quite forgotten all about Billingay being on his bed at the time. He could not doubt the meaning of that last fierce glare in her eyes—it was a look of the former slave now freed and revengeful; it was a look that told him what anguish her proud soul must have suffered when writhing under a sense of obligation conferred openly and known to all, and now discovered to be no obligation; it was a look of profound scorn—nay, of hatred; and Captain Islebart rose and left the house. But under it all he never lost his coolness; he looked upon what had happened as he would upon an accidental foul stroke at billiards—a revoke in the whist of life—and only regretted that he had wasted so much time on the game. He could not have this silly beauty he so much desired—and that was all. So he ordered his dog-cart at the hotel and drove over at once to Parkhurst, where there were other and pressing matters waiting his attention; but before leaving Ryde he wrote and despatched by hand one brief note.

Three days afterwards there was a glorious buzz of conversation under the western awning on Ryde Pier. Every one was in the highest possible spirits, for was there not the finest piece of scandal of the whole season to be discussed?

"Yes, indeed, my dear Lady Champion, it is quite true," assured Mrs. Skiffer, pleased with any fate that gave fair exercise to her tongue; "he is quite ruined—estates all mortgaged far above their value; everything in the hands of Israel—in fact, he had come to the end of his tether nine months ago, only it wasn't known. And then to take all that money from poor Captain Darley! Nearly two thousand I hear he has had altogether."

"Yes, yes," interrupted her Ladyship of Champion, rather testily, "but is it true or not about the girl?"

"The girl!" and Mrs. Skiffer laughed sardonically at the term, "the 'girl' has really and truly gone with him. She actually had the impertinence to leave a note for *me*, saying she 'was about to change the name of Prout for that of Islebart, that she had long known he had loved her *only*, and she was so glad all that money had been left her (£50,000, my dear, and none of us knew of it but that cunning fellow!), as she could with it console her dear husband in his misfortunes.' Love her *only* indeed!" continued Mrs. Skiffer, with a toss of her head; "the fact is, dear Lady Champion, the man was a thorough humbug, and has gone off with a lock of *everybody's* hair!"

A year or two after, Lynn Darley told his wife—*née* Annie Bell—that he had been in Binstead and overheard what had passed between her and Islebart the day of her father's arrest—that of course he thought they were engaged, and lent 'Bart £500 the next day (though knowing him to be hopelessly insolvent long before) for her sake. He had never meant to tell her, and after his first repulse at "The Rosery" could not bear to think she had doubted his love for her and friendship for her parents, and for that reason never repeated his visit.

Annie only hugged his arm the closer to hers, and, with wet eyes, said she had deserved by her heartless conduct and criminal vanity never to have known true happiness with such a true and noble husband.

Billingay was arrested the night Islebart eloped with Miss Prout, spent many a weary month in Winchester Gaol, lost his commission; and took himself off to the *refugium peccatorum* called New Zealand.

Sam Bell escaped in a yacht to France, had subsequently a long cruise, and many a smart brush with pirates in Chinese waters, came back in due time to marry the chastened Fan Evans, and made her a tolerable husband.

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THE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

ONE of the very few stories or legends which do duty for English history with most of us is that of the foundation of the Order of the Garter by Edward III., who took occasion from an unfortunate *déchéance* of a certain Countess of Salisbury at a Court ball in 1348 to find both a name and a motto for his new order of knighthood. Five hundred years have passed since then; but this ancient Corporation has survived all manner of changes—of dynasty, of religion, of manners—and illustrates with unimpaired force the idea of nobility in its best and highest sense, which is inseparable from a monarchical form of government. As a singularly interesting and somewhat out of the way illustration of our natural English liking for antiquity and nobility, we desire to present a slight sketch of the history of the Order of the Garter to our readers. It is strange that an institution of which one hears little and sees less should have such singular vitality. No one ever heard of the Order—the Corporation of Garter Knights—doing anything worthy of memory, yet no one can visit Windsor Castle and see the helmets and swords and banners which hang in solemn and useless grandeur above the stalls in the choir of St. George's Chapel without at least having his curiosity excited. Holiday folk of advanced democratic views, when they see the plates of armorial bearings affixed to the oaken panels—some fresh and glittering with the untarnished enamel, others black with the rust of centuries—may stop to wonder at, perhaps secretly to admire, the persistency of an institution which, being no more than the offspring of mediæval feudalism and chivalry, still in these days of popular freedom offers the highest honour to which an Englishman can aspire.

The history of knighthood, from the foundation of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in 1048, and the Teutonic Order in 1109—Orders founded by Christians to overthrow the Moslem Saracens—to the foundation of the Star of India, founded by English Christians to reward their faithful Moslem subjects in Hindostan, would be an interesting chapter in the record of civilisation. Every country has had one or more of these Orders—all of them based on the same principle which united the monkish Knights of Jerusalem or Malta in a brotherhood of chivalrous vows. The last few years have seen this essentially mediæval and Christian idea transformed to the East. Turkey has the Medjidie, India the Order of the Star, and its ultimate development may perhaps be traced in the distribution of medals to victorious soldiers, the possession of which binds them into a sort of knighthood, united by the recollection of common dangers and common glory.

England has never given birth to an order of chivalry of a religious character, which is the type of the earliest class. The Garter was founded when already the Knights of St. John had conferred such honour on the name of knighthood by their achievements that the example of making fraternities of distinguished men for the purpose of giving additional nobility to the members was being followed throughout Christendom. Thus we find that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, while those Orders which were founded on the wreck of the older religious fraternities still preserved a religious element—like of those of Benedict of Aviz, and of Christ of Portugal—others, such as the Garter of England, the White Elephant of Denmark, and perhaps the Seraphim of Sweden, were secular Orders only. It is in this light only that the Order of the Garter is to be regarded. The virtues of knighthood, as they were originally understood, which were of a religious, half monkish character, were falling out of fashion with the end of the Crusades and the disgrace and spoliation of the older fraternities. If we were to be content with the popular story of the occasion on which the great English Order was founded, it would seem to have been a splendid jest of the courteous king—conceived in that spirit of delight at imitating the dignified habits of the past of which our time has not been without examples. But the circumstances of the time of its foundation were remarkable, and perhaps the Countess of Salisbury's garter only gave a name and an occasion to develop a plan the true motives of which are to be sought elsewhere. The battle of Cressy, which was fought in 1346, and the successful campaign which followed it—above all, the distinguished services of Edward the Black Prince—are probably the true secrets of the origin of the Garter, whose actual foundation with complete statutes may be placed in the year 1348, when St. George's Chapel was consecrated as the chapel of the Order. It is to be regarded as the splendid monument of the first triumphs of English arms on foreign soil, won by the first of English kings who had power enough to cherish continental ambitions and interfere in foreign affairs. The King sought to immortalise in this way the glory of the Black Prince, and he succeeded in giving his institution a character which it has never lost, for admission to its ranks has always been regarded as the reward of past achievements rather than a pledge of future services.

The fraternity at the outset consisted of King Edward III. and twenty-five Companions, whose names are fortunately preserved, and among them appear the still familiar ones of Burghersh, and Courtenay, and Wrottesley. Why the King limited the number of Companions to twenty-five does not appear, but this limitation was one of the most important provisions that he made, and was not altered till late in the last century. The selection of the first Knights was made from the contemporaries, very likely the personal friends, of the Prince of Wales. He was himself about eighteen years of age, three of the other Knights were under twenty, and the rest under thirty years of age. For the service of the Church of St. George a warden, or dean, and twenty-five canons, to equal the number of the Knights, were appointed, together with twenty-six poor Knights, on whom, if they were so minded, the Order might exercise the chivalric virtue of charity. The only other officer known at the time of the foundation was the prelate. This office has been attached from the first to the See of Winchester.

The body thus constituted were governed by statutes now lost. The most ancient statutes extant date from a period later than Henry VI., but an entirely new code was drawn up by Henry VIII., which with some modification remains in force at present. In the earlier constitution the chief points of interest are the method of election to vacant stalls, and the ceremony of the feast of the Order, to be held yearly at Windsor on St. George's Day; at which every Companion was bound on pain of fine to attend the Sovereign, and assist at the election of new Companions, which always took place then. For any vacancy each Companion secretly nominated nine persons: three earls, three barons, and three knights bachelors or simply knighted gentlemen. After a scrutiny of the lists the Sovereign declared the holder of a majority of votes elected. Election was followed by investiture, when some of the insignia of the Order were given to the new Companion; investiture was followed by installation, which was the most solemn ceremonial of the Order. This was performed in St. George's Chapel with religious rites. The Knight, arrayed in all the robes, was conducted to his stall, his helmet and sword and mantle were hung above it, and above all his banner. In the early times every new Knight occupied the stall vacated by his predecessor, and there he remained till his death, when his achievements, as they are called—the ornaments of his stall—were removed and solemnly offered at the altar by two of the

Companions. Obedience to the statutes, which, together with gentlemanly behaviour, was about the highest duty exacted of the Knights as such, was enforced by a system of fines given to the ecclesiastics of the chapel, who were for their part under obligation to sing masses for the souls of departed Knights. These duties were regulated by the rank of the deceased. The Sovereign's soul was reckoned at 1,000 masses, a Knight Bachelor's at 100. The fees on entrance and the charitable offerings were likewise regulated by the statutes, and were graduated on the same equitable principle. That part of the ancient provisions which one would have thought was most liable to change has, singularly enough, been less altered than any. The robes worn by the Knights of the present day are, with the exception of the George, which was added by Henry VII., minutely described in the original statutes.

The dignity of the Order gradually increased, without any remarkable circumstance in its history, till the end of the fourteenth century. In the reign of Henry IV., in the beginning of the next century, foreigners were for the first time admitted into it. The selection of the Kings of Portugal, Spain, and Denmark, Sovereigns of Orders in their own countries similar in object and character to the Garter, suggests that these monarchs may have exchanged their Orders as a mutual compliment, though there is no evidence of a practice now very common till Henry VII. received the Golden Fleece from the Emperor Maximilian in return for the Garter which he had sent him. The admission of foreigners into the Order had always been contemplated, and Albert of Bavaria and William Duke of Hainault had been already enrolled among the Companions. The fame of the Order was spreading through Europe, and a story in which a subject of Hainault figures illustrates the estimate in which it was held abroad some sixty years after its foundation. Sir John de Werchin, a nobleman of Hainault, in 1408 wrote to the Sovereign of the Order a letter which breathes, only in very courteous tones, some of that disrespect which young and ardent minds are wont to feel for institutions founded for dignity rather than use. "He was young," he said, "and anxious to improve himself in the science of arms; and having been assured that the new Knights of the Garter were very able and worthy successors of King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table, of whom all the world was aware, he thought he could not do better than to offer to fight them all, one after another, and if they could not find it in their hearts to meet him he would be happy to do battle with any one else who could." The King sent him a very courteous reply, suggesting that as it was the custom of the Round Table

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Knights to fight not all against a single foreigner, but each of them against ten, twenty, thirty, or even forty, as the case might be, all at once, he thought, therefore, Sir John ought to be satisfied if the Order sent one of its Companions to do battle with him. Sir John accepted the King's offer, and in July, 1409, on Clerkenwell Green, received a very effectual thrashing from Sir John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, the English champion.

In the next reign the Emperor Sigismund was elected a Knight, and in gratitude presented the Order with the true head and fingers of their patron saint, St. George, which till the Reformation were presented reverently to be kissed by each Knight as he sat in his stall on installation and feast days. From this time the admission of emperors and kings became so common as to need no remark. The first man who declined the honour was the Duke of Burgundy, in 1483. During the civil war which devastated England in the fifteenth century the Order is not conspicuous. The nation was busied with sterner matters than feasts and pageants at Windsor. Each party as they alternately came into power filled up the vacancies with their own adherents, and contented themselves with fining the Knights of the opposite faction, who, naturally enough, absented themselves from the Chapters of the Order. They never appear to have expelled even their bitterest foes. With the accession of Henry VII. in 1485, peace was restored to England, and one of the King's first cares was to augment and consolidate the honours of the Garter. He assumed in the next year the title of "Sovereign of the Order of the Garter" with his regal style, a fashion which he permitted the Knights to follow, according to their degree, a few years afterwards; and to mark his connection with the Order as Sovereign, he added the Collar and George to its insignia.

At this point the ancient history of the Order may be said to close. Lapse of time and change of manners rendered a revision of the statutes necessary, for an institution which had been originally a company or brotherhood of soldiers who elected one another, like members of a club, under the presidency of the King, had now become an institution in which the King was supreme, and which he used as a convenient channel for dispensing his royal favour. In the reign of Henry VIII. a revision of the statutes was entrusted to Dr. Aldrich, a man of very versatile talent, at once a musician, an architect, and a logician, Dean of Windsor and of Christ Church in Oxford. At his suggestion the ecclesiastical establishment and the foundation of poor Knights was much altered and reduced, while better provision was made for the musical service of St. George's

Chapel, where no doubt the worthy Dean's own anthems were perfectly rendered under his own direction. To the office of Prelate was added that of Chancellor, held by the Bishop of Oxford, in whose diocese Windsor stands; of Registrar, whose functions are discharged by the Dean; of King of Arms and Usher of Arms, commonly called Black Rod. But other changes introduced in the statutes of Henry VIII. amount to a complete alteration in the constitution of the Order. It was no longer incumbent on the Companions to attend the Chapters, and the presence of six was sufficient for the transaction of ordinary business. In fact, however, by the first of the new statutes no business of any kind would ever be submitted to the Companions, for it enacted that, "To the Sovereign shall appertain the declaration, solution, determination, interpretation, reformation, and disposition of all causes concerning anything of obscurity or doubt contained in the statutes." It is obvious how in despotic times the Sovereign with such powers could do as he liked, and need not trouble himself with seeking advice or counsel from the Companions. The powers so vested in the Sovereign have enabled successive monarchs to make such changes that neither King Henry nor Dean Aldrich would now recognise the society which still in name lives by their rules.

If the King had contrived to get into his own hands what we may call the common rights of the Companions, he endeavoured to repay them by adding in every possible way to the social dignity with which the Garter was invested. Two sumptuary Acts of Parliament, passed in 1529 and 1532, allow them a retinue equal to the Lord Chancellor's, and restrict the use of purple to the royal family and to them. Henry VIII. was the first Sovereign who made the Garter an instrument of statecraft—at all events, he used his influence to secure the election of those men who served him most faithfully in the foreign and domestic troubles of his reign. Lord Cromwell, the first born commoner ever elected, Sir John Walcop, and Nicholas Carew were all provided for, though the Prince of Wales, for whom a stall was reserved before his birth, was not elected during his father's lifetime. The election of Cromwell is the more remarkable, as Henry's own statutes declare no one eligible but a "gentleman by blood," and this is to be understood to mean a man "descended of three descents of noblesse, *i.e.* of name and arms on both father's and mother's sides." The first Irish nobleman admitted to the Order was Gerald Fitzgerald, eighth Earl of Kildare, an honour probably conferred on him in the hope of attaching the turbulent chieftain to the English party, rather than as a reward for loyalty or virtue.

The Reformation affected the Order of the Garter, as it did all our other institutions, and though the alterations made by Edward VI. were speedily repealed in the next reign, they are interesting, as showing the thorough change which had come over English religious feeling. The worship of saints was a feature of the expiring faith. St. George was therefore no longer to be the patron of the Order, "lest the honour which is due to God, the Creator of all things, might seem to be given to any creature." The Order being a secular institution only, needed no Prelate; his office was accordingly abolished. The solemn services of St. George's Chapel were discontinued, and along with them the ceremonials of feasts and installations fell into disuse. All this was again altered in the reactionary times of Philip and Mary; but when the Reformers came again into power, they were contented to let things remain as they were, trusting to the Sovereign to interpret the statutes in accordance with the reformed faith. Elizabeth was by no means blind to the importance of the Garter as an engine of statecraft—indeed, she very much improved upon her father's practice in the use made of it. During the last fifteen years of her reign she secured the fidelity of many of her nobility by refusing, even when the formalities of election by the Chapter of Knights had been observed, to complete it, and thus holding the honour in suspense over the expectant's head as a pledge of his loyalty. To do this she had recourse to manœuvres which must have severely taxed the gallantry of the Knights-expectant and the patience and self-respect of the Order. She would often go through all the forms of election, and then absolutely refuse to declare the result. Once she would—she said—have been happy to make the declaration, but unfortunately she had lost the lists of votes; on another occasion she actually went to the chapel in her robes to proceed to an election, but having come without her mantle, nothing could be done, and the Chapter had to be dismissed. On this smaller stage Elizabeth seems to have played the same part which on the wider one of politics so perplexed her enemies and troubled her friends. With more than a man's clearness of head and determination, she had the art to feign an indecision and shallowness which would not have been tolerated in a man, but which in a woman and a queen must be put up with and made the best of. The singular success with which she played her most difficult part reconciles us to the arts by which she played off her position as an unmarried woman against the cleverness and power of the enemies by whom she was surrounded.

Under the Stuart dynasty the Order experienced very little change; but the free election of Companions and even the formalities of the

Chapter were rapidly falling into disuse. The Sovereign was gradually absorbing the whole power of the Knights, which he used and dispensed like other patronage. "Steenie" was appointed hurriedly one morning by James I., before starting for Newmarket, and Charles I. claimed the absolute right of nominating foreigners to the election of the Chapter.

But he was not the less proud of the dignity of the Order, for he endowed it with £1,200 a year, charged on the customs of London, and instituted the Star or Cross for the daily wear of the Knights, an emblem which was impressed on the silver coinage of 1662 by his son. Charles II. did not, however, always use such dignified means of showing his fondness for the insignia of the Order. The robes were intended for wear at solemn ceremonials only, but nothing would satisfy Charles on the occasion of the Feast in 1667, held that year at Whitehall, but he must wear his Garter robes all day. Some of the Companions were to be seen in them that evening in the park; while two of them, Lord Oxford and the Duke of Monmouth, so far forgot their dignity as to appear thus habited in the same fashionable resort in a hackney coach. During Charles's exile at the beginning of his reign, he conferred the Order on his nephew, William of Nassau, the future King of England, then but three years old—the youngest Companion that has ever been elected. Cromwell during his protectorate abstained from meddling with the Order, and the only event which signalised the Restoration was the refusal of the great Lord Chancellor Clarendon to accept it.

We may pass over a century to the reign of George III., when the Order assumed the form and customs which regulate it at the present day. Doubtless the statutes had been growing more and more obsolete every year, but in 1771 the infringement of an apparently unimportant rule was commented on by "Junius," the great public critic of those days. The statutes of Henry VIII. require the presence of six Knights to form a Chapter, but at the election of Lord Gower, then President of the Council, only four Companions were present, which "Junius" says was "a violation of the statutes, which have been religiously respected and observed through so many ages." But the statutes were destined to receive a much more serious blow to their authority than this. Through every change which in the course of four hundred years had befallen the Order, the number of Knights never exceeded the original number of twenty-five. Now King George III. was blessed with seven sons, and it was thought that the Garter would become too much of a family party if all seven of the Royal Princes were admitted into the original twenty-five stalls. It was therefore ordered in 1786 that Princes of the Blood should not be reckoned among the twenty-five ordinary Knights.

The exclusiveness of the Order having been once relaxed, further widening of its portals soon followed. The privileges accorded to the sons of George III. were extended to all descendants of George II. in 1805. The conclusion of the European war in 1813 gave occasion for extending to foreign princes the privileges of the English royal family, but at their election, at which the Emperor Alexander of Russia assisted—the only foreign prince that had taken part in the business of the Order since Francis I. sat in a Chapter held by Henry VIII. on the Field of Cloth of Gold—the ceremony of voting was superseded by the Sovereign's declaration of election. And this rule has been followed ever since in the case of foreign princes. Almost all the ancient ceremonial disappeared under the liberal use of royal warrants of dispensation from observance of the statutes. These appear first to have been used to escape the ceremony of installation, which the troubles of the seventeenth century had rendered impossible, and the taste of the eighteenth objected to. But they have been used also in two or three exceptional cases to supersede the ordinary method of election of Knights. Thus in 1814 Lords Liverpool and Castlereagh were made extra Knights of the Garter by warrant; the privilege hitherto accorded to the Blood Royal and foreign princes was extended to them as there were no vacancies in the twenty-five stalls assignable to ordinary Englishmen. Care, however, was taken not to augment permanently the number of Knights, as an additional statute was made at that time that there should be no further election of English Knights until the number then raised to twenty-seven should fall to the statutable limit of twenty-five. Lord Grey's election by warrant as an extra Knight in 1831 is the only other instance in which the number of the Black Prince's English Companions has been exceeded.

We have now brought this sketch of the history of the Order of the Garter to our own day, when, like all other Crown patronage, its honours are really at the disposal of the Prime Minister, who being for the most part a commoner, is himself incapable of admission to the Order. This is one of the lesser of those anomalies by which the maintenance of ancient forms instinct with modern spirit is indicated in English public life. The romantic fancy of a mediæval king, whose subjects and Court and method of rule have scarcely a point in common with modern England; with little left of its original constitution but its name and the venerable building erected for earliest use, is yet so thoroughly English in its character, so flexible, so easily adaptable to modern ideas and methods of administration, that it survives with undiminished honour as the highest object of an Englishman's ambition.

THEATRICALS IN IRELAND.

A PHILOSOPHIC rhetorician, in suggesting advice regarding the beginning of an article on any subject, has given it as his opinion that the writer should begin with a statement of fact. Following the implied rule, I shall commence by a proposition nearly logical in its form, though the diction employed rarely comes before the eye of the scholastic disputant, "Paddy is very fond of the play." There are many reasons—obvious when they are suggested—why this should be the case. The romantic traditions of their country have so influenced the naturally emotional character of the Irish people as to make them strive after the ideal rather than the real, whilst the religion of the majority has accustomed them to elaborate and ornate spectacles. The appeals of pity and the influence of terror have been made familiar to the people by the sorrowful traditions of their race; it is needless to insist on the effect which the representation of anything comic invariably makes on the mind of an Irishman. Whilst, however, the Irish people love the drama, the tutelary muse is but indifferently worshipped in the Emerald Isle. Indeed, in some parts of the country no temple has yet been erected to her honour, and when special services are organised in her praise they are frequently held in unhallowed places, in which she must feel reluctant to find a local habitation, even for the time specified in the canons of dramatic unity.

The purpose of this brief article is to describe the aspect of theatrical life in Ireland, and also to indicate the circumstances which give hope that the sock and buskin will be honoured more fittingly in the future in the sister island than during the chequered period of Ireland's history which has elapsed since the union of that country with Great Britain.

The reader must not apprehend that I am about to sketch the history of the Irish stage from a period anterior to the time of Thespis, although, of course, the ancestors of the Irish were before every other people in the world in more senses than one, especially in acting. My intention is merely to glance at that part of its records which tells of the vicissitudes of theatrical speculation during the reign of her present gracious Majesty.

The consideration which strikes the mind of the reader most strongly in perusing the history of the Dublin stage is, that political movements have done more than anything else to impede its progress. The agitation initiated by O'Connell for the Repeal of the Union at the end of the reign of William IV. became more and more turbid during the earlier years of the reign of Queen Victoria, when the Loyal National Repeal Association—the object of which is implied in its designation—was founded. From the year 1840 the Theatre Royal became the arena in which members of rival factions denoted their political sympathies by shouts for "Repale" or volleys of Kentish fire. But the prospects of the drama suffered; for those who used to fill the pit and galleries—the paying parts of "the house"—found more congenial attractions in the debates of Conciliation Hall. The manager of this theatre, struggling bravely against a strong tide of adversity, made noble efforts to conciliate fortune in the cause he loved sincerely and promoted generously. His enterprise at this portion of his professional career, 1838—1841, will be appreciated when it is stated that Mr. Balfe, previously famous in London as a composer and a singer, made his first professional appearance in his native land in the opera of "La Sonnambula;" that Tyrone Power roused the enthusiastic mirth of his countrymen by his incomparable impersonations of Pierce O'Hara in "The Irish Attorney," and of O'Callaghan in "His Last Legs;" and that Mr. Charles Kean and Mrs. Charles Kean—then Miss Ellen Tree—received the popular recognition due to their artistic delineation of dramatic characters. It was at that time also that Van Amburgh received £900 for eighteen representations of his lion-taming entertainment—that Grisi and Tamburini, Lablache and Mario, Benedict and Jullien, Braham and Thalberg, arrested the attention of lovers of music amongst the Irish people, that Charles Mathews and Mr. Compton illustrated two of the highest phases of comedy; that Mr. and Mrs. Keeley and Mr. Paul Bedford tested Hibernian morals in Mr. Buckstone's drama of "Jack Sheppard," and Mr. Macready interpreted some of the grandest creations of "the noblest dramatist of them all." Gradually the public excitement increased until it reached its climax when O'Connell, his eldest son, and seven others were prosecuted in the November of 1843. The intensity of interest was renewed when the House of Lords reversed the verdict found against the traversers.

The influence of politics on the stage may be further indicated by the fact that whilst O'Connell was imprisoned in the Richmond

Bridewell he addressed a letter, dated 9th September, 1844, to the manager, protesting against the performance of the "Stabat Mater" in the theatre. But after a considerate explanation the objection of the great Kerryman was overruled. This year was also remarkable for the fact that it introduced as an actor to the Dublin public Captain Tuckett, who had been previously wounded in a duel by Lord Cardigan, the piece chosen for his *début* being "Don Cesar de Bazan."

Then ensued a period more depressing perhaps than any other which has occurred in Ireland's gloomy story. The potato crop failed, and the disease which attacked the plant continued to affect it for the following four years. Whilst it would be impertinent in the literal sense of that word to raise any political question in this discursive paper, it may be stated that the interests of the drama at this epoch were in no wise served by the absence of the Irish landlords. In the face of all these difficulties, however, it was shown that enthusiasm in the cause of the "Heavenly Nine" cannot be destroyed by adverse fortune. It was in the October of the year in which began the famine—which is now mentioned by Irish children then unborn with sorrow which assumes the character of fear—that Mr. Sims Reeves made his first bow before a Dublin audience in the *rôle* of Edgar Ravenswood, in "Lucia di Lammermoor." In the following year "Iphigenia in Aulis" was produced. Poor Gustavus Vaughan Brooke was retained for the part of Achilles; Miss Helen Faucit depicted the woes of the heroine; to Mrs. Ternan the part of Clytemnestra was allotted, and Miss Ellen Ternan appeared as Orestes.

Another political complication arose, when the baneful results of the collision which occurred between the Old Irelanders, led by O'Connell, and the Young Irelanders, headed by Mr. Smith O'Brien (brother of Lord Inchiquin), a man who, with all his faults, "bore an honest heart in an intrepid breast," began to appear in a most distressing light. In the October of 1848 Jenny Lind appeared on the Dublin stage; and it is a significant fact, as demonstrating the love of the Irish people for music, that at a time of intense commercial depression in Dublin the manager of the Theatre Royal was able to give the Swedish Nightingale £5,780, whilst £900 represented the addition to his own treasury. In the following year the sad calamities by which the Irish people of the south and west of Ireland were oppressed afforded an opportunity to the theatrical representatives in Dublin of giving another example of the sympathy between the art of Thespis and the cause of charity. In the middle of the season a night's performance was given for the fund then established for the relief of the distressed, the whole receipts being handed over to the committee organised for assisting the afflicted.

In the August of 1849 the Queen and the Prince Consort visited Ireland, but their attendance at any theatrical performance was not included in the programme of their arrangements. To this more than anything else may be attributed the result that when the season ended the manager had no reason for believing that the presence of Royalty meant profit to his treasury. Two reflections occur to the reader of the history of the Dublin Theatre Royal during the period between 1837 and 1852. One is, that its records contain substantially the panegyric of a man who for twenty-one years fought bravely against fortune for the sake of the drama; and the second, that it was to the lyric drama he had to appeal when the clouds in his horizon were darkest.

The records of the theatre in Ireland for the last twenty years are, so to speak, a chapter of the history of the London stage, for almost every "star" which has shone in the English metropolis has shed its light on the boards of the olden temple of the drama in Dublin. The stage manager of the Theatre Royal, Dublin, Mr. Charles V. Granby, to whom reference was made some time ago with a view of ascertaining the notable occurrences which have happened in that building during his long connection with it, has written in the following words:—"There have been so few remarkable incidents during the time I have been attached to this theatre that it would require a 'considering cap' to bring them to my memory."

To the putting on of the head-dress specified I am indebted for the subject matter of the following incidents:—

In the theatrical world, as in all other spheres, accident has frequently altered the tenour of the lives of men and materially influenced their fortunes. As an instance of this, the cause of Robson leaving the Theatre Royal, Dublin, may be illustratively adduced. He had established himself as a great favourite, not only at the principal theatre, but also at the Queen's Theatre, in Great Brunswick Street, then under the direction of Mr. Harris. He had asked Mr. Granby to play in a piece entitled "A Day after the Fair," in which Robson filled four or five different characters, one of them being a drunken cobbler, who, in reply to some question addressed to him by the old man of the piece, says, "I once was a preacher, but I have left off my evil ways." Unfortunately—or, perhaps, I should say fortunately, as the result showed—some of the lower portion of the audience thought he said "priest," as he, so to speak, slid over the word, speaking as he did at the time as a drunken man. This gave rise to a disturbance which all the efforts of the actor and of Mr. Granby, probably the most popular stage manager who ever directed the business of the theatre, failed to allay. After vainly endeavouring to address the audience, he was hissed and hooted off the stage. To such a pitch did the feeling of the lower class of frequenters of the theatre rise, that the management was obliged to keep Robson's name out of the bills for a week. Meanwhile, he had received an offer from Mr. William Farren, then lessee of the Strand Theatre, London. Mr. Granby urged him strongly to accept the offer, much against Robson's will, as he was nervous about succeeding Compton, who was then leaving the Strand. Mr. Granby told him that Dublin was becoming "too hot for him," and accordingly Robson left for London. The result is unnecessary to indicate. It is probable that at the present day any implied reflection on a priest, as the word is vulgarly understood in Ireland, would be received with applause instead of disapprobation. One of the most striking effects of the Fenian movement has been to diminish the respect of the people for their priests, and as a proof of this, it may be adduced that the so-called National press reserves an excited rhetoric for the deprecation of Cardinal Cullen and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kerry, who have persistently opposed the revolutionary movement. This observation is made merely to strengthen the position that in Ireland politics have exercised an indisputably strong influence on the destinies of the drama and those who represent it.

The incidents which have occurred during the brief opera seasons will be long remembered by those who are either the objects of, or participators in, them. Never, perhaps, except when Mrs. Yelverton obtained a verdict in the famous case in which she was the real plaintiff, was Dublin driven into such wild ecstasies as when Piccolomini's carriage was dragged to her hotel from the theatre by the students of Trinity College. Similar demonstrations have been made in honour of other great singers, proving that the traditional love of the Irish people for music is as fresh and full as ever.

The London reader, who has an opportunity of visiting any one of thirty theatres, may perhaps pause to ask if the records of one dramatic temple constitute the history of the Dublin stage in the present reign. With slight qualifications, the implied query may be answered in the affirmative. The glories of Fishamble-street Theatre —in which Handel's "Messiah" was first heard—had departed in the beginning of the present reign, and years ago degenerated into something worse than "a penny gaff."

It is cheering to know that the future prospects of the drama in Ireland are far from gloomy. The opening of the new Gaiety Theatre, in which the first performances were given on the 27th of November, 1871, is calculated to give a great incentive to theatrical speculators. This elegant house resembles its namesake in London, presenting all the improvements obtained by the experience of the latter. The proverb in one shape or another—that the beginning is half the whole of an enterprise—is as old as Horace; and though proverbs sometimes contain only half a truth, it cannot be questioned that when a good beginning has been made, success is easily induced. It is only a just compliment to Mrs. John Wood, whose company conducted the opening performances, to say that her judicious direction did much to secure at once the favourable verdict of a critical public. With a graceful recognition of the sympathies and traditions of a sensitive people, the first piece presented at the new theatre was the work of an Irishman, namely, "She Stoops to Conquer." Miss Herbert filled the part of Miss Hardcastle, the *rôles* of Marlow and Tony Lumpkin being entrusted to Mr. Price and Mr. Lionel Brough respectively. The applause which greeted every prominent incident in the comedy continued during the burlesque "La Belle Sauvage"—originally written by another Irishman, Mr. John Brougham, the well-known actor—in which Mrs. John Wood sustained the character of Pocohontas, now so closely identified with her name. As Phœbe, in "Paul Pry," and Lady Gay, in "London Assurance," Mrs. Wood continued to secure the favourable opinion of Dublin audiences, until shortly before Christmas she returned to London to fulfil an engagement at the Adelphi, where she appeared in Mr. Charles Millward's elegant and picturesque extravaganza, "Little Snow-White."

Shortly after Christmas, visitors to the Gaiety had an opportunity of hearing the youthful and accomplished *prima donna*, Miss Rose Hersee, who landed in Ireland fresh from her American successes, which, considering the age of the artiste, may be fairly described as triumphs. For three weeks Miss Hersee appeared almost every evening, "Maritana," "Lurline," and "The Rose of Castile," the works of Irish composers, being amongst the works chosen for representation. It was in the "Bohemian Girl," however, that the youthful *prima donna* roused her audience to fervent enthusiasm by interpolating at the beginning of the third act the air of the "Minstrel Boy," which she sang with a manifest appreciation of its spirited and patriotic strains. Amongst those who will watch with pleasurable interest the progress of Miss Hersee through the United States during the engagement she has recently entered into, there are none to whom the news of her success will be more welcome than to her thousands of admirers in the Emerald sle.

From the 19th of February until the 3rd of March Mr. John Clarke fulfilled a very successful engagement, and gave the Dublin audiences the first opportunity afforded them for many years of witnessing the truly artistic delineations of this talented comedian. Mr. Clarke is nothing if not an artist, and in every *rôle* in which he appears he supplies another instance of the rule that the highest art is the concealment of it. As Gaiters in the "Bonny Fishwife," and as Vandyke Brown in another farce, he proved his ability as a low comedian, whilst in his original impersonations of Dr. Brown in "Progresss," and John Chodd, Junior, in "Society," the people of Ireland were able to judge of his abilities in the higher range of comedy. In both he was rewarded with favourable criticisms in private circles, as well as in the public journals, and it may be safely predicted that Mr. Clarke's name will appear at one time or other every year in the playbills of the New Gaiety.

Every country has its favourite actor, and Ireland has certainly marked one worthy of its recognition, as being worthy of the suffrages of the greatest number. I believe that if Ireland were polled from the centre to the sea, the vast majority would record their votes for Mr. Barry Sullivan.

At the Queen's Theatre the drama was cultivated with earnestness and energy at times, especially under the direction of the late Mr. Henry Webb. It could not be said, however, that it was at any time the place in which the critical audiences of Dublin gave their opinion of dramatic works or histrionic talent. It may be stated at the same time that many whose names have since become no mean part of the history of the British drama were at one time recognised favourites at the Queen's.

Belfast next claims our attention, because the unflagging enterprise of the lessee of its Theatre Royal dwarfs by comparison the intermittent exertions of the proprietors of dramatic houses in the few other large Irish towns. Mr. J. F. Warden, who was the lessee of the old building in Arthur Square, has recently given an example of his spirited energy in erecting on its site a structure worthy of the rapidly-extending capital of Ulster. There is no danger in predicting that the lessee will continue to provide entertainments for his future patrons equal in excellence to those afforded on the stage of the old house in which he first appealed to the support of the people of Belfast. Last year the Italian opera company which visited Dublin was engaged by Mr. Warden, and sang with brilliant and encouraging success during its brief stay of a week in "the Athens of the North."

The Queen's Theatre in Londonderry, which is capable of containing 600 persons, is open for about six months in the year.

In Cork there is a theatre which, with tasteful decorations, improvements in ventilation, and modifications in the entrances, may be made a not uninviting home for the drama.

Limerick, which seventeen or eighteen years ago was one of the liveliest cities in the world—now one of the most dismal—possesses a theatre capable of holding an audience of 900 or 1,000 people, but its interior is so inartistically arranged that its aspect, even when full in every part, can never be imposing or picturesque.

When Melpomene condescends to visit the other towns of Ireland, she is compelled to put up with very strange and scant accommodation. The following extract from the private letter of a friend will give some idea of the lodgings with which the tragic muse has sometimes to content herself in the South of Ireland:—"I once attended a dramatic performance during the assize week in the capital of gallant Tipperary. It was attended by the grand jurors, the officers of the garrison, and 'the *élite* of the town and neighbourhood.' The temporary home of the drama was a large loft, ascended by a steep and narrow ladder. The display of Balbriggan hosiery made in that ascent was—as the *Saturday Review* once remarked in speaking of certain Terpsichorean revels—calculated to excite the best feelings of our nature."

The sum of these discursive observations is that while the drama in Ireland cannot be said to be flourishing, it can be safely asserted that its future is promising.

T. F. O'DONNELL.

* * *

SNIPE SHOOTING.

HOW must the English lover of snipe shooting wish he lived in Surinam! Snipe in that favoured land are so plentiful (or were so plentiful—they may have unhappily decreased in numbers, as they have in England) that they may be shot after the manner of starling slaughter in some parts of this country. There are two distinct species of snipe; the little Jack, so difficult to shoot and so loth to rise to a comfortable level, is, although much smaller, a superior order of bird to the common snipe. But in Surinam he is common enough in all conscience, if numbers are meant by that term, for Mr. Fermin remarks, in his account of that country, that, "they are seen there by thousands on the sea-shore; it must be a bad marksman who does not kill sixty at once with fine shot." We, in England, are astounded at reading such extraordinary things, for it is seldom, except when snipe are driven in from the moors by stress of weather, and are even found in turnip fields, and indeed wherever the ground is soft enough for them to insert their bills into it for suction, that the sportsman can find more than a brace at a time. He is accounted a good marksman who can kill the brace so found, shooting to right and left with either barrel. But I suppose we must at all events, from Mr. Fermin's remarks, infer that the snipe family are to some extent gregarious; and there are many stories of extraordinary exploits in snipe shooting performed by sportsmen, even in this country, which should lead us to the same conclusion. It was the Duke of Marlborough's keeper who, according to that pre-eminent authority, Mr. Daniel, "some years since killed twenty-two snipe at one shot." I, myself, once saw a man kill sixty or seventy starlings at one shot with a single-barrelled gun that was not apparently worth five shillings, but it is the only instance I can vouch for of such numbers being killed.

It would be a positive misfortune if snipe could be slaughtered in that wholesale manner in England; snipe shooting would necessarily soon cease to be a sport, and degenerate into a mere pastime for gentlemen whose holidays and "outings" are restricted, and for schoolboys. To good sportsmen, as to the lover, the sweetness of the whole thing consists in the chase. To find your birds and to see your dogs work, even if you should fail to bring the former down, and appear, therefore, an inexperienced duffer to the canine mind—always very discerning under such untoward circumstances—is eminently enjoyable, if not always healthful and instructive. Mr. Thornhill says of the sport of snipe shooting, as we are accustomed to pursue it in England: "Snipe shooting is a sport the best calculated (grouse excepted) to try the keenness of the sportsman, to ascertain his bottom, and if he can stand labour, water, mire, swamps, and bogs. He should be possessed of a strong constitution, not liable to catch cold, and have all the fortitude as well as exertion of a water-spaniel; he should be perpetually inured to wet, dirt, and difficulty, and not be deterred by cold or severe weather." These qualifications are by no means inviting, but they should not deter any ordinarily strong sporting devotee from trying his hand on the snipe of his native country. We have arrived at such a pitch of excellence in waterproof manufacture that a ball-room dandy may now bid defiance to the elements. But I do not incline to the notion that grouse shooting is better calculated to try the keenness of the sportsman than snipe shooting. If by keenness is meant cleverness in approaching the game, there may be some truth in the assertion; but most sportsmen, I think, understand "keenness" to imply hardihood and indifference concerning cold, wet, and fatigue, and surely in snipe shooting these qualities are more likely to be brought into play than in grouse shooting. Moreover, grouse shooting is generally prosecuted under far more favourable circumstances than snipe shooting, and you will find hundreds of followers of the former to one of the latter. There would be numbers more of us who would take up the fashionable sport of popping at game on the Scotch moors in the long vacation if we could afford the necessary expense, even because it is fashionable; and as we should have Sandy and a Scotch gillie to do everything for us except fire at the game, there would be no particular necessity for the exercise of "keenness." *Chacun à son goût*—which, by the way, does not mean that every man who goes out shooting catches the gout, as I once heard the phrase facetiously translated—but it is much to be feared, or at all events it is much to be suspected, that fashion and convenience have very much to do with the popularity of grouse shooting. And there can be no doubt that the pleasure of reading your name in print, and of having performed some noble action in the destruction of grouse and other game over some Highland shooting ground, is well calculated to afford attraction of a kind utterly irresistible to a man of any importance, either in his own estimation or in that of other people.

But the votaries of snipe shooting are so few in number, and the time of year for its enjoyment is so unsuitable to and so incompatible with town and fashionable life, that your most prodigious exploits in its pursuit are likely both to be held of small account, and also to be witnessed by perhaps a solitary friend. For in this sport two guns are all that are necessary if safety is to be studied as well as success. In the legitimate season and in their natural country snipe are mostly to be found in marshy districts; and in trying up or down a bog or marsh, it is as well to have the coast as clear as possible, for the bird is very eccentric and irregular in his flight when he is first sprung. It is this peculiarity of flight that makes the snipe such a difficult bird to shoot, and the tyro is perpetually missing from firing too soon. If he would have the patience to wait for an instant or two, a shot would be easy enough, for the bird after his first gyrations flies very much after the manner of most other birds. Snap shooting, as it is termed, is very effective sometimes by experienced gunners, but by following the practice in snipe shooting, as the bird is very tender, you are more than likely to miss it altogether, or to blow it into space. In Daniel's celebrated book of "Rural Sports" there is a remarkable engraving of a black sow, which from having been allowed to follow the pointers to the field, at last would regularly stand and back to game with the best of them. The brothers Toomer, the gamekeepers who trained her, and who were held to be the best shots of their day and generation, "were shy of firing at a jack snipe, fearing the laugh which would follow should they miss him, as many excellent shots had done before them." Yet these gentlemen would never fail to mark a penny-piece thrown into the air, and would shoot partridges without hardly ever missing a bird.

On the other hand, there are men accustomed to the moors who will shoot left and right at snipe, and never miss throughout an entire day, yet who make but a sorry exhibition when performing on partridges. Snipe, like woodcocks, fly against the wind, when they find which way it is blowing, and if their first uncertainty be waited for, they present a fair mark enough to the sportsman, and are dropped with a very small amount of shot; as, indeed, is the woodcock also. Where they are plentiful they should always be walked up, for there are few dogs, except those bred and trained upon the moors, and are accustomed to hardly any other kind of game, that can be found sufficiently staunch to be of much service. Snipe are very uncertain and shifty with regard to their choice of locality, and therefore well known haunts should be tried frequently, notwithstanding that no game may have been discovered at first. Their screech and suddenness of rise are very apt to throw the novice off his guard, and cause him to fire at random; but he should remember that a snipe may be brought down almost with dust-shot, and that therefore there is plenty of time for taking deliberate aim without any fear of getting out of distance.

Perhaps the best dogs to be used in the sport are a brace of well-broken short-legged spaniels, if they can be depended upon for keeping within range, and are amenable to strict discipline after the shot. If they quest much and are given to chase, as are spaniels that have had any practice on fur as well as on feather, they may as well be left at home, for they will spring more game than you are likely to get shots at. Setters, from their superior ability to endure wet, cold, and fatigue, are far preferable to pointers, though, perhaps, they are not always so steady. But the pointer is not naturally fond of water and cold, and the best of that breed of dog soon either fights shy of moorland work in winter, or gets done up altogether. I saw a very valuable Spanish pointer used for snipe shooting on the Cornish and Devonshire moors, and after a time the dog lost nearly all his hair, and he was eventually destroyed. Of the kind of setter best adapted for this sport it is useless to attempt to give an opinion, as probably no two setter fanciers will ever agree upon that momentous subject.

Of the setter, his breeding, management, and training, the world is greatly indebted to Mr. E. Laverack for the publication of his experience upon that subject, at the age of seventy-three years. The setter cannot have too much hair, nor be too highly bred, for there is no doubt that with him, as with all other animals, good blood is the main consideration. Mr. Laverack can trace his pedigrees for a period extending over eighty years, during forty of which he has himself superintended the breeding in his own kennels. It is a very remarkable history, this of his, and the method by which he has kept the strain pure is yet a comparative mystery. Breeding in and in we had all thought to be a mistake until thus enlightened, but it is by intercrossing that he has preserved the purity of his famed Blue Beltons. Good spaniels, if under command, will do for snipe, for the setter, after all, is but an improved setter spaniel. On the matter of scent, it may be remarked that flesh, if given in proper quantities, is the natural canine food, and it does not injuriously affect scenting power. Mr. Laverack is of this opinion also, and I commend a perusal of his book to all who are interested in the breeding and training of setters.

SIRIUS.

A HAMPSHIRE GHOST STORY.

CONTINUATION OF MRS. RICKETTS'S NARRATIVE.

SOME time after Mr. Ricketts left me, I—then lying in the bedroom over the kitchen—heard frequently the noise of some one walking in the room within, and the rustling as of silk clothes against the door that opened into my room, sometimes so loud and of such continuance as to break my rest. Instant search being often made, we never could discover any appearance of human or brute being.

Repeatedly disturbed in the same manner, I made it my constant practice to search the room and closets within, and to secure the only door that led from that room on the inside in such manner as to be certain no one could gain entrance without passing through my own apartment, which was always made fast by a draw-bolt on the door. Yet this precaution did not preclude the disturbance, which continued with little interruption.

About this time an old man, living in the poor-house at West Meon, came and desired to speak to me. When admitted, he told me he could not rest in his mind without acquainting me that his wife had often related to him that in her younger days a carpenter, whom she had well known, had told her he was once sent for by Sir Hugh Stewkeley, and directed by him to take up some boards in the dining-room, known in our time by the name of lobby, and that Sir Hugh had concealed something underneath which he, the carpenter, conceived was treasure, and then he was ordered to put down the boards in the same manner as they lay before. This account I repeated to Mr. Sainsbury, attorney to Lady Hillsborough, that if he thought it were a probability he might have the floor taken up and examined.

In February, 1770, John Sparks and Ann, his wife, quitted my service, and went to live upon their farm at Rogate. In place of John Sparks I hired Robert Camis, one of six sons of Roger and Mary Camis, of the parish of Hinton, and whose ancestors have been in possession of a little estate there upwards of four hundred years—a family noted for their moral and religious lives. In the room of Ann Sparks I hired Ruth Turpin, but she being disordered in mind continued with me but few months. I then took Elizabeth Godin, of Alresford, sister to an eminent grocer of that place. Lewis Chanson quitted me in August, 1770, and I hired Edward Russel, now living with Mr. Harris, of Alresford, to succeed him.

I mention these changes among my domestics, though in themselves unimportant, to evince the impossibility of a confederacy, for the course of nearly seven years, and with a succession of different persons, so that at the time of my leaving Hinton I had not one servant that lived with me at my first going thither, nor for some time afterwards.

In the summer of 1770, one night that I was lying in the yellow bedchamber (the same I have mentioned that the person in drab-coloured clothes was seen to enter), I had been in bed half an hour, thoroughly awake, and without the least terror or apprehension on my spirits. I plainly heard the footsteps of a man, with plodding step, walking towards the foot of my bed. I thought the danger too near to ring my bell for assistance, but sprang out of bed and in an instant was in the nursery opposite; and with Hannah Streeter and a light I returned to search for what I had heard, but all in vain. There was a light burning in the dressing-room within, as usual, and there was no door or means of escape save at the one that opened to the nursery. This alarm perplexed me more than any preceding, being within my own room, the footsteps as distinct as ever I heard, myself perfectly awake and collected.

I had, nevertheless, resolution to go to bed alone in the same room, and did not form any conclusion as to the cause of this very extraordinary disturbance. For some months afterwards I did not hear any noise that particularly struck my attention, till, in November of the same year, I then being removed to the chintz bedroom over the hall, as a warmer apartment, I once or twice heard sounds of harmony, and one night in particular I heard three distinct and violent knocks as given with a club, or something very ponderous, against a door below stairs; it occurred to me that housebreakers must be forcing into some apartment, and I immediately rang my bell. No one hearing the summons, and the noise ceasing, I thought no further of it at that time. After this, and in the beginning of the year 1771, I was frequently sensible of a hollow murmuring that seemed to possess the whole house; it was independent of wind, being equally heard on the calmest nights, and it was a sound I had never been accustomed to hear.

On the morning of the 27th of February, when Elizabeth Godin came into my room, I inquired what weather. She replying in a very faint tone, I asked if she were ill. She said she was well, but had never in her life been so terrified as during the preceding night; that she had heard the most dismal groans and fluttering round her bed most part of the night, that she had got up to search the room and up the chimney, and though it was a bright moonlight she could not discover anything. I did not pay much attention to her account, but it occurred to me that should any one tell her it was the room formerly occupied by Mrs. Parfait, the old housekeeper, she would be afraid to lie there again. Mrs. Parfait dying a few days before at Kilmston, was brought and interred in Hinton churchyard the evening of the night this disturbance happened.

That very day five weeks, being the 2nd of April, I waked between one and two o'clock, as I found by my watch, which, with a rushlight, was on a table close to my bedside. I lay thoroughly awake for some time, and then heard one or more persons walking to and fro in the lobby adjoining. I got out of bed and listened at the door for the space of twenty minutes, in which time I distinctly heard the walking with the addition of a loud noise like pushing strongly against a door. Being thus assured my senses were not deceived I determined to ring my bell, to which I had before much reluctance on account of disturbing the nursery maid, who was very ill of a fever.

Elizabeth Godin during her illness lay in the room with my sons, and came immediately on hearing my bell. Thoroughly convinced there were persons in the lobby, before I opened my door, I asked her if she saw no one there. On her replying in the negative, I went out to her, examined the window, which was shut, looked under the couch, the only furniture of concealment there; the chimney board was fastened, and when removed, all was clear behind it. She found the door into the lobby shut, as it was every night. After this examination I stood in the middle of the room, pondering with much astonishment, when suddenly the door that opens into the little recess leading to the yellow apartment sounded as if played to and fro by a person standing behind it. This was more than I could bear unmoved. I ran into the nursery and rang the bell there that goes into the men's apartments. Robert Camis came to the door at the landing place, which door was every night secured, so that no person could get to that floor unless through the windows. Upon opening the door to Robert I told him the reason I had to suppose that some one was intrenched behind the door I before mentioned, and giving him a light and arming him with a billet of wood, myself and Elizabeth Godin waited the event. Upon opening the door there was not any being whatever, and the yellow apartment was locked, the key hanging up, and a great bolt drawn across the outside door, as usual when not in use. There was then no further retreat or hiding place. After dismissing Robert and securing the door, I went to bed in my sons' room, and about half an hour afterwards heard three distinct knocks, as described before; they seemed below, but I could not then or ever after ascertain the place. The next night I lay in my own room; I now and then heard noises and frequently the hollow murmur.

On the 7th of May, exactly the day five weeks from the 2nd of April, this murmur was uncommonly loud. I could not sleep, apprehending it the prelude to some greater noise. I got up and went to the nursery, stayed there till half an hour past three, and then, being daybreak, I thought I should get some sleep in my own apartment; I returned and lay till ten minutes before four, and then the great hall door directly under me was slapped to with the utmost violence, so as to shake my room perceivably. I jumped out of bed to the window that commands the porch. There was light to distinguish every object, but none to be seen that could account for what I had heard. Upon examining the door it was found fast locked and bolted as usual.

From this time I determined to have my woman lie in a little bed in my room. The noises grew more frequent, and she was always sensible of the same sounds, and much in the same direction as they struck me. Harassed and perplexed, I was yet very unwilling to divulge my embarrassment. I had taken every method to investigate the cause, and could not discover the least appearance of trick; on the contrary, I became convinced it was beyond the power of any mortal agent to perform, but knowing how exploded such opinions were, I kept them in my own bosom, and hoped my resolution would enable me to support whatever might befall.

After Midsummer the noises became every night more intolerable. They began before I went to bed, and with intermissions were heard till after broad day in the morning. I could frequently distinguish articulate sounds, and usually a shrill female voice would begin, and then two others with deeper and manlike tone seemed to join in the discourse, yet, though this conversation sounded as if close to me, I never could distinguish words.

I have often asked Elizabeth Godin if she heard any noise, and of what sort. She as often described the seeming conversation in the manner I have related, and other noises. One night in particular my bed curtains rustled, and sounded as if dragged by a person walking against them. I then asked her if she heard any noise and of what kind. She spoke of it exactly in the manner I have done. Several times I heard sounds of harmony within the room—no distinct or regular notes, but a vibration of harmonious tones; walking, talking, knocking, opening and slapping of doors were repeated every night. My brother,* who had not long before returned from the Mediterranean, had been to stay with me, yet so great was my reluctance to relate anything beyond the bounds of probability that I could not bring myself to disclose my embarrassed situation to the friend and brother who could most essentially serve and comfort me. The noises continuing in the same manner when he was with me, I wished to learn if he heard them, and one morning I carelessly said: "I was afraid last night the servants would disturb you, and rang my bell to order them to bed." He replied he had not heard them. The morning after he left me to return to Portsmouth, about three o'clock and daylight, Elizabeth Godin and myself both awake—she had been sitting up in bed looking round her, expecting as she always did to see something terrible—I heard with infinite astonishment the most loud, deep, tremendous noise, which seemed to rush and fall with infinite velocity and force on the lobby floor adjoining to my room. I started up, and called to Godin, "Good God! did you hear that noise?" She made no reply; on repeating the question, she answered with a faltering voice, "She was so frightened she scarce durst speak." Just at that instant we heard a shrill and dreadful shriek, seeming to proceed from under the spot where the rushing noise fell, and repeated three or four times, growing fainter as it seemed to descend, till it sank into earth. Hannah Streeter, who lay in the room with my children, heard the same noises, and was so appalled she lay for two hours almost deprived of sense and motion.

Having heard little of the noises preceding, and that little she did not regard, she had rashly expressed a wish to hear more of them, and from that night till she quitted the house there was scarce a night past that she did not hear the sound as if some person walked towards her door, and pushed against it, as though attempting to force it open. This alarm, so more than commonly horrible, determined me to impart the whole series to my brother on his return to Hinton, expected in a week. The frequency of the noises, harassing to my rest, and getting up often at unreasonable hours, fixed a slow fever and deep cough, my health was much impaired, but my resolution firm. I remained in anxious expectation of my brother, and he being detained a week longer at Portsmouth than he had foreseen, it occurred to me to endeavour, by changing my apartment, to obtain a little rest; I removed to that formerly occupied by Elizabeth Godin; I did not mention my intention till ten at night, when the room was prepared, and I went to bed soon after. I had scarce lain down when the same noises surrounded me that I before have related, and I mention the circumstance of changing my room without previous notice, to prove the impossibility of a plan of operations being so suddenly conveyed to another part of the house were they such as human agents could achieve. The week following I was comforted by the arrival of my brother. However desirous to impart the narrative, yet I forbore till the next morning; I wished him to enjoy a night's rest, and therefore contented myself with preparing him to hear on the morrow the most astonishing tale that ever assailed his ears, and that he must summon all his trust of my veracity to meet my relation. He replied it was scarce possible for me to relate any matter he could not believe, little divining the nature of what I had to offer to his faith.

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* John Jervis, born January 20, 1735, second son of Swynfen Jervis, Esq., and Elizabeth his wife; elevated to the peerage 27th May, 1797, by the titles of Baron Jervis of Meaford, County Stafford, and Earl St. Vincent.

The next morning I began my narrative, to which he attended with mixed surprise and wonder. Just as I had finished, Captain Luttrell,* our neighbour at Kilmston, chancing to call, induced my brother to impart the whole to him, who in a very friendly manner offered to unite his endeavours to investigate the cause. It was then agreed he should come late in the evening, and divide the night watch between them, keeping profoundly secret there was any such intention. My brother took the precaution, accompanied by his own servant, John Bolton, to go into every apartment, particularly those on the first and attic story, examined every place of concealment, and saw each door fastened, save those to chambers occupied by the family; this done, he went to bed in the room over the servants' hall.

Captain Luttrell and my brother's man with arms sat up in the chintz room adjoining, and my brother was to be called on any alarm.

I lay that night in Elizabeth Godin's room, and the children in the nurseries; thus every chamber on that floor was occupied. I bolted and locked the door that opened to that floor from the back stairs, so that there was no entrance unless through the room where Captain Luttrell kept watch.

So soon as I lay down, I heard a rustling as of a person close to the door. I ordered Elizabeth Godin to sit up a while, and if the noise continued, to go and acquaint Mr. Luttrell.

She heard it, and instantly Mr. Luttrell's room door was thrown open, and we heard him speak.

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* Connected with Stukeleys (*vide* Baronetage of Stukeley), Joan Stukeley married to Geo. Luttrell of Dunster, High Sheriff of Somersetshire, 1593.

I must now give his account as related to my brother and myself the next morning.

He said he heard the footsteps of a person walking across the lobby, that he instantly threw the door open, and called, "Who goes there?" That something flitted past him, when my brother directly called out "Look against my door." He was awake, and heard what Mr. Luttrell had said, and also the continuance of the same noise till it reached his door. He arose and joined Mr. Luttrell. Both astonished, they heard various other noises, examined everywhere, found the staircase door fast secured as I had left it. I lay so near, and had never closed my eyes, no one could go to that door unheard. My brother and his man proceeded up stairs, and found the servants in their own rooms, and all doors closed as they had seen just before. They sat up together, my brother and Mr. Luttrell, till break of day, when my brother returned to his own chamber. About that time, as I imagined, I heard the chintz room door opened and slammed to with the utmost violence, and immediately that of the hall chamber opened and shut in the same manner. I mentioned to Godin my surprise that my brother, who was ever attentive not to alarm or disturb the children, should hazard both by such vehement noise. An hour after I heard the house door open and slam in the same way, so as to shake the house. No one person was then up, for as I had never slept, I heard the servants rise and go down about half an hour afterwards. When we were assembled at breakfast, I observed the noise my brother had made with the doors.

Mr. Luttrell replied, "I assure you Jervis made not the least noise; it was your door and the next I heard opened and slapped in the way you describe."

My brother did not hear either. He afterwards acknowledged to me that when gone to bed and Mr. Luttrell and I were sitting below, he heard dreadful groans and various noises that he was then and after unable to account for. His servant was at that time with mine below.

Captain Luttrell declared the disturbances of the preceding night were of such a nature that the house was an unfit residence for any human being. My brother, though more guarded in his expressions, concurred in that opinion, and the result of our deliberations was to send an express to Mr. Sainsbury, Lady Hillsborough's steward, to request he would come over immediately on a very particular occasion, with which he would be made acquainted on his arrival.

Unluckily, Mr. Sainsbury was confined with the gout, and sent over his clerk, a youth of fifteen, to whom we judged it useless and improper to divulge the circumstances.

My brother sat up every night of the week he then passed at Hinton. In the middle of one of these nights I was surprised with the sound of a gun or pistol let off near me, immediately followed by groans as of a person in agonies, or expiring, that seemed to proceed between my chamber and the next, the nursery. I sent Godin to Nurse Horner, to ask if she had heard any noise; she had not. Upon my inquiry the next morning of my brother, he had heard it, though the report and groans were loud and deep.

Several instances occurred where very loud noises were heard by one or two persons, when those equally near and in the same direction were not sensible of the least impression.

As the watching every night made it necessary for my brother to gain rest in the day, he usually lay down after dinner. During one of these times he was gone to rest. I had sent the children and their attendants out to walk, the dairymaid gone to milk, the cook in the scullery, my own woman with my brother's man sitting together in the servants' hall; I, reading in the parlour, heard my brother's bell ring with great quickness. I ran to his room, and he asked me if I had heard any noise, "because," said he, "as I was lying wide awake an immense weight seemed to fall through the ceiling to the floor just by that mahogany press, and it is impossible I should be deceived." His man was by this time come up, and said he was sitting underneath the room as I before mentioned, and heard not the least noise. The inquiry and attention my brother devoted to investigate this affair was such as from the reach of his capacity and ardent spirit might be expected; the result was his earnest request that I would quit the place, and when obliged to return to Portsmouth, that I would permit him to send Mr. Nichols, his Lieutenant of Marines, and an old friend of the family, to continue till my removal with me.

One circumstance is of a nature so singularly striking that I cannot omit to relate it. In one of our evening's conversations on this wonderful train of disturbances I mentioned a very extraordinary effect I had frequently observed in a favourite cat that was usually in the parlour with me, and when sitting on table or chair with accustomed unconcern she would suddenly slink down as if struck with the greatest terror, conceal herself under my chair, and put her head close to my feet. In a short space of time she would come forth quite unconcerned. I had not long given him this account before it was verified to him in a striking manner. We neither then, nor I at other times, perceived the least noise that could give alarm to the animal, nor did I ever perceive the like effect before these disturbances, nor afterwards when she was removed with me to another habitation. The servants gave the same account of a spaniel that lived in the house, but to that, as I did not witness, I cannot testify.

There is another copy, and no more to be taken unless either be destroyed. Mary Ricketts.

These two narratives are for my grand-daughters Martha and Henrietta Jervis, not to be read until twenty-one or upwards, nor then unless their nerves are firm. The letters, &c., belonging to be carefully preserved.

First Narrative, in Mrs. Rickett's Handwriting. To be Read at Leisure.

I do not recollect ever hearing of the circumstance mentioned by Mrs. Boyle in respect to her father and his friends at Hinton, and do not think it ever reached me; for her intimacy with Mr. Ricketts, who was received by her father, Stephen Poyntz, as a son, justified his going without permission, which was asked by the late Lord Clanricarde, then Colonel De Burgh, who came armed, as did the park-keepers from Holt Forest, belonging to the then Lady Stawell, the owner of Hinton.

Thomas, Bishop of Winchester, whose lady was first cousin to my mother (thence our relationship with Bullers, Agles, Bouveries, &c.), was satisfied with my narration that it was not achieved by human being, till wrought on by others. The late Lord Carhampton had, by laughing at the present lord, weakened his zeal for truth; doubts arose. He, good man, was preceptor to our late excellent King.

The unbelief of Chancellor Hoadley went nearest my heart. He that once, upon Mrs. Hoadley half jokingly saying, "I cannot believe her," said "I *do* believe her, *for she is truth itself*," and when I replied, it was hard not to be believed, said, with mild yet firm voice, "Jesus Christ Himself could not be believed!"

£60 reward was offered on discovery by Lady Stawell, which Mr. Ricketts, on his return, increased to £100. The Bishop of Winton lent me the old Palace Wolvesey at Winton, to occupy at races or on any public occasion, and thither I removed when it was no longer thought proper I should remain at Hinton; and when I left, the Bishop of St. Asaph offered me his house in town, where I stayed till I had taken one in Curzon Street.

What determined my removal to Winton was, after trying to obtain rest by removing to Dame Camis's house, when I returned to the mansion I was soon after assailed by a noise I never before heard, very near me, and the terror I felt not to be described. It then appeared I was no longer to be supported, after my brother was convinced I ought not to delay my removal. I therefore accepted the earnest invitation of my friends Mr. and Mrs. Newbolt, and continued with them till Wolvesey was prepared for my dear children, where we remained till November, with the exception of three days, with Dr. Gilbert, Canon of Salisbury, and his daughter; and there Lord Radnor—then Lord Folkestone—was very desirous to see the lady that came from the haunted house.

The Bishop of St. Asaph opposed, on the ground that such means were unworthy the Deity to employ, while the good Bishop of Winton, when I related that Robert Camis had been thrice called at the window in a voice he well remembered, that of the steward of the late Lord Stawell, said he should have conjured him by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; which I told him, but believe no such occasion occurred, or courage failed. This steward stole his lord's gold buckles, and was much suspected of other dishonesty; whence, probably, arose the idea of concealed treasure. I never heard that any was found.

When Lord Stawell was seized with the fit that carried him off, he called to his man, "Cut a vein, cut a vein!" but no vein was cut. The excellent Dame Camis, from whom I had much information of the Stewkeley and Stawell family. Dr. Durnford, minister of Bramdean, who performed duty at Hinton, also told me that, in the number of years he had officiated, he had never known her miss Divine Service, unless illness of any one of her family or of herself prevented.

When Mr. Ricketts returned from Jamaica, having continued to keep Hinton on account of our cattle and the manor, Mr. Ricketts took the Parsonage, where we resided for two years, when the purchase of Longwood was made, and we removed thither.

NARRATIVE NO. 2, IN MRS. RICKETTS'S HANDWRITING, AND ATTESTED BY HER SECOND SON, EDWARD JERVIS RICKETTS, AFTERWARDS VISCOUNT ST. VINCENT.

After Mrs. Ricketts had quitted Hinton House, and before possession had been given to Lady Hillsborough, the keys were left with Dame Camis, who came over every fair day to open the windows, she living close by.

Mr. George Ricketts and Mr. Poyntz Ricketts, active young men in the prime of life, were walking to and fro close to the house on the paddock side, when a great noise was heard within it, upon which one of them said, "They are at their tricks again, let us go in and see." They lost no time getting through the drawing-room window on the ground floor, and proceeding throughout the house. No living creature was to be found in it, neither was there any appearance of anything that could have been moved so as to occasion the sounds they had heard.

(Signed) EDWARD JERVIS RICKETTS.

NARRATIVE NO. 3.—NOTES TAKEN BY OSBORNE MARKHAM, ESQ., FROM MRS. RICKETTS'S DICTATION.

Miss Parker, mentioned in page 8 (page 558 in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of last month), was afterwards Lady St. Vincent, who with her sister (afterwards Mrs. Heathcote) was staying in the house during the time their father, Chief Baron Parker, was going the circuit.

It is understood that when Mrs. Ricketts left Hinton she went to the palace of the Bishop of Winchester, of which his kindness gave her the occasional use, she being an intimate friend and relation to his wife. After Mrs. Ricketts left Hinton (say within a year) another family (Mr. Lawrence) came to reside there, who stayed about a year and then suddenly quitted it.

After this the house was never occupied. On being pulled down there was found by the workmen under the floor of one of the rooms a small skull, said to be that of a monkey; but the matter was never brought forward by any regular inquiry, or professional opinion resorted to as to the real nature of the skull.

The first appearance of anything being seen or heard was before Mrs. Ricketts took possession of Hinton, which did not come to her knowledge until some time after the disturbances had been heard in the house. Joseph (the groom) then being one of the servants left in occupation of the house, and being in bed in the garret, the moon shining brightly into the room, and he being clearly awake, saw a man in a drab coat with his hands behind him, in the manner his late master held them, looking steadfastly upon him.

Note by Martha H.G. Jervis.—A number of papers (broadsides, &c.) which had been concealed during the civil wars were found under the floor of the lobby when the house was pulled down, and a small box containing what was said to be the skull of a monkey.

Notes in the handwriting of Martha Honora Georgina Jervis, elder of Mrs. Ricketts's two grand-daughters, to whom the manuscripts were left, and second wife of Osborne Markham, Esq., the writer of the foregoing pages:—

NARRATIVE BY MARTHA H. G. JERVIS.

Rosehill, July 10, 1818.

I called on old Lucy Camis at the farm and inquired if she had recently heard of Hannah Streeter. She replied that she lived at the Lower Brook, Winchester, and that she (Lucy) had been to see her last year, and asked her if she remembered having been disturbed by the noises at Hinton Ampner, particularly one night when the other servants were gone to bed, when, being in the servants' hall, they heard a sound as of the great iron brazier falling through the roof of the pantry (over which there was no room), and that it went "*Twirl! twirl! twirl!*" till it sank in the ground. They were so much terrified that Lucy would not venture up to the garrets, but slept that night in the nursery. They found the brazier the next morning in the place where it had been left.

When Lord St. Vincent was in the house, and the servants were suspected of making the disturbances, Mrs. Ricketts went one night for something she wanted to the housekeeper's room, which opened into the kitchen, where the domestics were all assembled at supper. She then heard noises, and was near fainting, and called to some one to accompany her up to her brother.

The morning after Mrs. Parfait's interment Elizabeth Godin complained to the other servants that she had been dreadfully disturbed the preceding night, and that soon after she was in bed something fell with force against the window, succeeded by a dismal groan.

Lucy said, "God knows whether these noises were not in consequence of their sins."

I replied, "What did you suppose they were guilty of?"

She said, "God knows whether she had a child and killed it; but I cannot say; it is not for us to suspect them, God knows."

She spoke of Mrs. Ricketts in the highest terms and with many tears; said she did so much good in the neighbourhood that it was very unlikely any should seek to drive her away, above all, her servants, who loved her and were in perfect harmony with each other.

One night Lucy slept in a small bed in Mrs. Ricketts's room, Elizabeth Godin being ill. Mrs. Ricketts woke her and asked if she did not hear music, which she did, and "the steps of some one moving *stately* to it." The noises seemed mostly in the lobby and the yellow and adjoining chambers.

Lucy said that when Mr. Lawrence afterwards took possession of the house he forbid the servants from saying a word of the disturbances under penalty of losing their places. She heard that once, as his housemaid was standing in the lobby, a female figure rushed by and disappeared, but of the truth of this she could not vouch.

The foregoing information was given me by Lucy Camis, who was perfectly collected, and I merely made such queries as should lead her on without in any degree prompting her recollection.

MARTHA H. G. JERVIS.

IN THE HEART OF A SCOTTISH COUNTY.

IN these captious, grievance-mongering days of ours one can scarce venture to talk of rural sports without running the risk of involvement in that embittering controversy about game laws, their amendment or abolition, which has raised questions lying to some extent beyond the sphere of legislative interference. Located as I am in the heart of a Scottish county, where "the wild buck bells from ferny brake," and "the moorcock springs, on whirring wings, amang the blooming heather," and where men's minds are fermenting with theories inimical to the due distinction betwixt *meum* and *tuum*, I have been taught by experience to avoid discussions which can only end in an angry muddle. I desire at present, therefore, to steer clear of those "agitated points," my purpose being simply to throw together some scattered notanda illustrative of sport and pastime in the "Land o' Cakes."

There was once a "good old time" when, although game was hedged round with the severest restrictions, the country people of Scotland were periodically called out *en masse*, by Act of Parliament, to pursue the pleasures of the chase in its most exciting form, under pains and penalties for neglect of the summons. The poacher of three or four centuries back might in a fashion gratify his *penchant* for sport, yea, and reap profit besides, under the broad *ægis* of statute law. But a wilder beast of venerie awaited him than the antlered stag. Many parts of Caledonia were overrun with wolves, the last surviving species of savage animals which had infested the land from the pre-historic ages. Their depredations were not confined to the flocks and herds: frequently the sparse population of the glens had to mourn over more afflicting losses; so that eventually Government was forced to grapple with the evil. The same thing had occurred both in England and Wales. The Principality was cleared by the tribute of wolves' heads imposed by King Edgar; and the like result was more slowly reached in England through the measures of Edward I. Such examples, however, were not followed by the Scottish rulers till the lupine scourge became intolerable. In several places houses of refuge or "hospitals" (*spittals* as they were commonly called) had to be erected, to which benighted travellers might resort for protection against the prowling rout; and along an extensive tract on the north-west coast of Sutherlandshire the wolves, when pinched with hunger, ransacked the churchyards, like eastern ghouls, compelling the people to transfer the burial of their dead to a small island in the sea. So matters stood in 1427, when the seventh Parliament of James I. ordered every baron to raise his vassals four times in the year to "chase and seek the whelps of the wolves," recusants to be fined in the price of a wedder (sheep) each man, and the slayer of a wolf to be rewarded with two shillings for the head. Evidently this enactment was a failure, perhaps from the backwardness of the barons to obey it; for in the next reign—James II., 1457—the sheriffs of counties were commanded to "gather the country folk three times in the year, betwixt St. Mark's Day and Lammas," in order to destroy the wolves and their cubs. The sheriffs seem to have executed their commission better than the barons—at least, for some time—as we hear no more of the wolf-pest till the days of Queen Mary, a hundred years after, when it suddenly broke out, causing unexampled loss. A system of the most vigorous repression was then adopted, which left only a few straggling ravagers about the Highland wastes. The breed did not become extinct for more than another century. In one of the Sutherland account books is an entry, under date 1621, of £6 13s. 4d. Scots being paid "for the killing of ane wolff, and that according to the Acts of the countrey." Various districts far apart retain each its legend of the death of the last wolf. Sir Ewen Cameron, the valiant chief of Lochiel, who fought on Dundee's side at Killiecrankie, killed, it is said, the last one in his country, in 1680; and another was slain in Forfarshire, in the same era, by a scion of the noble house of Ogilvy. But there is a respectable tradition which goes to prove that the last wolf in Scotland existed so late as 1743, when it was shot, on the banks of the Findhorn, by a famous Highland hunter named Macqueen, a few hours after it had throttled two children on the hills.

While Government was hounding out the peasantry to the wolf-hunt, it was also waging war with certain popular pastimes, one of which is held in the highest repute at the present day. I allude to golf, so admirably adapted as a healthy recreation for those worthy old stagers who cannot engage in any open-air game of a more active character. The crusade against golf, &c., sprang from patriotic motives. During their long strife with England, the Scots found good cause to dread the superiority of their "auld enemies" in the use of the long bow; and yet this was a weapon which the Lowland infantry persistently neglected for the spear. In the Highlands, however, the bow found favour among the clan-warriors, who brought it into the field of battle down to the campaigns of Montrose; and while Charles I. was mustering soldiers for the French war, in 1627, he requested the Laird of Glenorchy to assist in levying a body of two hundred Celtic archers, having heard the best accounts of their skill. Highland bowmen often displayed an accuracy in transfixing the stag in the height of his career that would have done honour to the merry men of Sherwood. But in the fifteenth century the Scottish Government strove with commendable energy to promote the art in the Lowlands; and as all sorts of men there were passionately fond of football and golf, it was determined to suppress these sports in the interest of the valued bow. Here, again, England afforded a precedent—Edward III. having issued an edict in 1349 prohibitory of football, and some other amusements, with a similar purpose in view. Accordingly, in 1424, when James I. had just returned from his protracted captivity at Windsor, where he wooed and won his fair and faithful consort, a statute was passed enacting that "Na man play at the fute-ball, under the paine of fiftie shillinges;" and another that "all men busk them to be archers fra they be twelve yeir of age," under the penalty of "a wedder a man," and that bow-butts or targets be set up beside every parish kirk. The young monarch, richly endowed with poetic genius, invoked satire in support of law; and his poem of "Christ's Kirk on the Green" ridicules with great force of humour the blundering unskilfulness of his subjects in shooting with the bow. His son in 1457 ordered provincial military musters and the universal practice of archery, and "that the fute-ball and golfe be utterly cried downe and not to be used." Again, in 1491, James IV. denounced "fute-ball, golfe, or other sik unprofitable sports," and renewed the previous Acts in favour of archery. But despite the national importance of the object, the Lowland Scots never took kindly to the bow; and history relates what their huddled masses of spearmen suffered at Flodden, where "fell England's arrow-flight like rain." Curiously enough, at the very juncture when firearms were beginning to change the whole system of warfare, the English Government evinced much anxiety for the encouragement of archery, and resuscitated the old mandates against games supposed to be prejudicial thereto. Moreover, it was in 1545 that Roger Ascham published his "Toxophilus," arguing "That styll, accordyng to the oulde wont of England, youth should use it (the bow) for the most honest pastyme in peace, that men myght handle it as a moost sure weapon in warre." But we need not smile at Ascham's advocacy of what the musket was fast relegating to the category of the obsolete so far as military equipment went, when we find a notable general of last century—John, Earl of Craufurd—gravely recommending the adoption of archery in the British army, as "an advantage to these nations."*

Acts of Parliament failed to put down the proscribed games in Scotland. The popularity of football knew no abatement for many a day. It was long the chief pastime on the border, where it often occasioned broil and bloodshed amongst the rude Armstrongs, Jardines, Johnstones, and the rest of the moss-trooping race. But *tempora mutantur*—taste, fashion, everything changes. The boisterous play gradually lost its hold, and at the present day its patrons are comparatively few. Glasgow University now occupies a similar position in relation to it as Rugby School in England. As for golf, it seems to have been conjoined with archery in the athletic exercises taught at the Scottish parochial schools immediately after the Reformation; for the ecclesiastical diarist, James Melvill, tells us that in the "happie and golden tyme" of his boyhood, about 1566, he and his schoolmates "were teached," by their master, "to handle the bow for archerie, the club for goff, the batons for fencing, also to rin, to loup, to swoom, to warsell," &c. I am unable to discover whether golf was once popular all over Scotland. I rather think it must have been confined in a great measure to those east-coast provinces which possess the best grounds for its practice, and where it still maintains its place in general estimation. But there is no reason why golf should be characterised as peculiarly Scottish. It was known, in some shape or other, to the ancient Romans, who termed the ball *paganica*, because the peasantry were fond of the game; and we learn from Strutt's researches that it was commonly played in England in former times, though subsequently forgotten. Scotland, however, can justly claim the merit of keeping it up for ages.

A special appointment of golf-club maker in Edinburgh was conferred by James VI. in 1603. Afterwards, in 1618, the same Sovereign "understanding that there is no small quantity of gold and silver transported yearly out of His Highness's Kingdom of Scotland, for buying of golf-balls used in that kingdom, for recreation of His Majesty's subjects," granted a patent for the native manufacture of these articles, under the condition that the patentees "exceed not the price of four shillings money of the realm for every one of the said golf-balls as for the price thereof." Both Charles I. and James II. enjoyed the pastime in their ancient kingdom. While the former monarch was in Edinburgh in 1641 he frequently played golf on the Links of Leith with his Scottish courtiers, most of whom, although loaded with his favours, were secretly disloyal to his cause. In the midst of a busy game he received news of the outbreak of the Irish rebellion. The club dropped from his hand, and calling his coach, the King returned in saddened cheer to the city, and hastened his departure to the south. James II., while Duke of York, and resident in Holyrood Palace as Royal Commissioner to the Scottish Parliament, wielded the club with apparent zest on the breezy Links, and by an affability which was perhaps foreign to his narrow, gloomy nature, acquired reputation with the populace. On one occasion, the Duke, it is said, had a match with two English noblemen for heavy stakes, when he selected as his partner a poor cobbler, but crack hand, named John Paterson, with whom he won an easy victory. The son of St. Crispin was presented with the stakes, which enabled him to build a substantial dwelling house in Edinburgh, and the celebrated Jacobite wit, Dr. Pitcairn, furnished it with a Latin over-door inscription to perpetuate its happy owner's fame. Many eminent Scotsmen have been votaries of golf. President Forbes records in his Journal, of date 1st November, 1728—"This day, after a very hard pull, I got the better of my son at the gouf on Musselburgh Links. If he was as good at any other thing as he is at that, there would be some hopes of him." The President loved the sport so well that he sometimes had a turn of the Links when they were sheeted with snow. Nor was he singular in his enthusiasm. Stories are told of an Edinburgh worthy who frequently prolonged his rounds of the Links till night overtook him, when he would continue the game, on a circumscribed scale, by the aid of a lantern; and his spouse tried in vain to shame him home by sending him sometimes his supper and sometimes his night-cap! So much for golf. If the reader desires to see it played in all its integrity and perfection, let him go to Musselburgh, St. Andrews, or the North Inch of Perth.

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* "Rolt's Life of Craufurd," p. 431. (London. 1753.)

Curling—I need not stop to describe it—has been claimed as indigenous to Scotland. After closely scrutinising its meagre, fragmentary history, however, I incline to believe that it was an importation from Flanders about the beginning of the sixteenth century, when a crowd of emigrant Flemings came over. Certainly the Teutonic tongue still lingers in many of the familiar technical terms of the play. Until a recent date the game was unknown beyond particular districts of the Scottish Lowlands. No old curling-stones of higher antiquity than the seventeenth century have yet been found. These facts support the theory of introduction at the period I have mentioned. It would appear that curling had its origin in the imitation of quoit playing upon a sheet of ice, the quoits in that case being large round stones or masses of ice: hence it has been also called *kuting*. But no matter where or how it originated, what winter pastime can compare with the *bonspiel*? While many a favourite out-door sport is tabooed by the rough weather, the "Keen, keen curler" exults in the bitterest mood of John Frost and his ally Boreas. Look at the rink on a clear, hard, nipping winter's day, and your heart will leap in unison with the geniality that pervades the icy scene.

> For on the water's face are met,
> Wi' mony a merry joke, man,
> The tenant and his jolly laird,
> The pastor and his flock, man.

In promoting a genuine fraternity among all classes, high and low, rich and poor, curling must be pronounced unrivalled. The great annual bonspiel in Scotland is between the brethren south and north of the Forth. From 1847 to 1870 ten matches have come off, in seven of which the south were victorious. The national association—The "Royal Caledonian Curling Club"—is now in the thirty-fifth year of its existence, and embraces 442 local clubs, while it has numerous affiliations on the other side of the Atlantic.

The Highland games have unquestionably descended from remote ages. There is *Camanachd*—

> The Camac fight! the Camac fight!
> The hardy Highlandman's delight:
> It beats a' play clean out o' sight,
> Our matchless game—the Camac fight!

It is the same as that which the Lowlanders call "shinty," and the English "club-ball." About Christmas-tide it comes into great favour, the contest generally lying between the men of adjacent parishes, and the bagpipes, "savage and shrill," skirling all the time. Next we have the "putting-stone"—*clach-neart*, or stone of strength—a heavy round stone being poised in one hand above the shoulder, and thence propelled to the farthest possible distance. "Throwing the hammer"—always a ponderous implement—requires no explanation. "Tossing the cabar" is a difficult feat in which few excel. The cabar is the branchless trunk of a young tree, which is balanced perpendicularly in both hands, and then suddenly thrown upwards with a jerk, intended to make it describe a somersault before it touches the ground. Foot-racing is another pastime of the Highlanders—the race being usually up the breast of a steep hill and back again, an exertion which thoroughly tests the wind of the kilted runners. These games, with the exception of *camac*, form the principal and most attractive portion of the programme of "Highland Competitions" held up and down the country.

Leaving other means of recreation unnoticed, let us call up a vision of moor and forest, lake and river. The glorious panorama rises. We see the golden mist of an autumn morn scattering before sun and gale. It rolls in huge billows across a wide undulating waste, knee-deep in heather, glowing deeply-purple in those darting streaks of light that here and there evoke sparkles from the moss-hags, while the hazy prospect is ringed in, at a far distance, by mountains dim enough to seem but cloud-banks, the dwelling-places of the thunder. Its wreaths are festooning the crests of a conglomeration of rugged hills and rocks, where scarce a tree breaks the bald, wilderness-like uniformity of what is misnamed a forest, and the near sky-line is filled by clusters of branching antlers, tossed in the pride of wild freedom, as a herd of deer, headed by the monarch-stag, tilt gaily over the sunny ridge. It spreads like a gauzy veil on the shimmering bosom of yonder noble loch, encircled by towering heights now clad with heather, and now waving with the dark fir: and it coils along the winding course of the river that, issuing from the parent lake with a brawling voice of triumph, pours down the fertile strath to gladden the low country. We are in the Highlands; and the—

> Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
> Land of the mountain and the flood,

is pre-eminently the land of deer-stalking, grouse-shooting, and salmon-angling.

The chase of the deer can never be robbed of its romance. But when we speak of deer-*stalking*, we must bear in mind that the fashion of "killing at the stalk," which was the delight of the mighty hunters of yore, is not the Alpha and Omega of their modern successors. The bulk of the slaughter nowadays is effected by a much more convenient method, namely, a modification of the *tinchel*, or system of driving, by which the deer are beaten up and forced to run the gauntlet of a narrow pass, where the sportsman, posted well, fires away as fast as his attendant gillies can supply him with loaded rifles. Thus the patient endurance and consummate skill essential for successful stalking are now less exemplified on the hills than of old. It was in the forest of Glenartney, near the head of Strathearn, that the late Prince Consort, during the royal visit to Scotland in September, 1842, stalked his first stag, and stalked it too in the genuine Highland style. Mr. Campbell of Monzie undertook to initiate His Royal Highness in the "curious sport," and discharged his office to admiration. An amusing incident, which occurred at a crisis when deer were suspected to be approaching, has been recorded by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder:—

"As it was absolutely essential that silence should be preserved, Monzie whispered to the old forester, 'Hold the Prince back, Donald, whilst I creep to the brow and see where the deer are.' 'How am I to do that?' replied Donald Cameron. 'Just lay hold of his arm, if the deer come forward, until it is time to fire.' 'Haud the Prince!' said Donald, with a degree of astonishment which, forty years' deer-stalker as he was, had nearly deprived him of his presence of mind. 'Haud the Prince! I'll no do that. Ye maun just grip him yoursel, Monzie, and *I'll* look ower the broo.' Monzie was obliged to consent to old Donald's arrangement, and to ensure success was compelled to take the necessary liberty with the Prince's arm. The herd did not come forward, but turned back round the hill." *

The Prince soon afterwards brought down his deer, and was very proud of it. Writing to Prince Leiningen, he described the sport as "one of the most fatiguing but one of the most interesting of pursuits."

Deer-hunting in any form is a very costly affair. The rent of a forest and contingent outlay cannot be realised by the market value of the animals killed. In the best of cases, I understand, the produce scarcely covers what may be termed in unsportsmanlike phrase the "working expenses," composed of wages, &c. As regards the moors, however, matters are generally on a somewhat different scale. Despite the heavy rents—which now form a most important element in the value of Highland estates—it often happens when seasons are favourable that moor lessees succeed in at least making the two ends meet. Nay, speculators find their account by acting as middle men between proprietors and sportsmen. But bad seasons are now more than ever to be dreaded, for of late years the moors have been repeatedly devastated by what is called the grouse disease, the cause of which seems as yet to have baffled discovery. The visitations of this distemper have taken place at regular intervals of half a dozen years, beginning with 1849; so that, according to this ratio, we may expect its return (which Fate forfend) in 1873 or 1874. It must be traced, I suspect, to atmospheric influences—in other words, exceptional and protracted disturbance of the due temperature—acting prejudicially on the natural food of the grouse; and in this view I may note the opinion of certain meteorologists that within the last three or four decades the climate of Scotland has been undergoing gradual deterioration, by which "we are gradually losing the benefit of a prolonged summer." But I have no wish to dogmatise on the subject.

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* "Memorial of the Royal Progress in Scotland," p. 393. (Edin. 1843.)

And now a closing reference to the waters on which the "honest angler" pursues his darling vocation. It is to be regretted that seasons have been frequent in which the salmon rivers of Scotland have proved comparatively barren in an angling point of view. But this has been entirely owing to the long droughts, which prevented the fish ascending; and on every occasion of a flood it brought them up in shoals. The extension of field drainage along the course of a river, especially in a hilly country, has the effect of rendering such droughts more felt by carrying off the rainfall or surface water too rapidly. The paucity of sport and of captures by the net need not, therefore, have given rise to so many theoretic propositions for the improvement of the fisheries. To all appearance our existing regulations are working well. Enlightened legislation is bearing good fruit. We find the individual weight of salmon unmistakably on the increase, and under ordinary circumstances the fish plentiful. The summer of 1872 has shown on the Tay, the first of Scottish rivers, that while the water was kept in ordinary depths by the rains, the supply of salmon, grilse, and sea trout proved abundant; and angling was successful after the nets came off in the end of August. For these reasons rash interference with present arrangements ought to be deprecated as much by the lovers of sport as by the river proprietary themselves.

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LIFE IN LONDON.

II.—LITERARY AND ARTISTIC SOCIETY.

FEW men or women, I suspect, are building up independent history of the times in which they live. The spirit of the age seems to be against diaries. Everything of note stands out in the public eye. The newspapers from day to day contain such close and detailed narratives of the world's progress, that people imagine there is no room for private memoranda. Even if a club receives at its board a distinguished guest, some one is sure to tell the outer world what he said and how he looked. Mr. Stanley dined at the Garrick, and his speech was reported. Mark Twain went to the Savage Club, and some clever person described in a country paper "An Evening with the Jumping Frog." I wonder no one has yet been found to report the "At Homes," and receptions of Literary Bohemia. The public has a continual craving for personal news, and journalists are ministering to this appetite more and more. Do I blame them? Not when they keep within reasonable and proper bounds. It is difficult to draw the line, but I think a man should be permitted to stand on his own ground. The gossip of the press has no business to surround the portrait which he hits off in type with a family group of persons and things that ought to be studies apart from the chief character. If a man becomes famous as an actor, author, painter, he cannot help it; it is not fair that the world should be told he squints, and is separated from his wife; that in his early days he was insolvent; that his father was hanged; that he gets drunk and leaves his boots on the doorstep. I offer this as a suggestion to any lady or gentleman who may be making notes or keeping diaries. There may be some who are not borne down by the idea that so much is published that there is nothing left to tell in a posthumous book on men and manners. Fifty years hence a carefully kept diary, the work of an observant person in the world of letters, would be full of curious and lasting interest, even if everything that had been published by the journals were eliminated. There is so much to see, and so much to tell.

For example, when England has become a republic, or despotic monarchy, what a curious illustration of changing views and manners would be found in the Lyceum story of Charles I.; how in an age of professed Liberalism, in the days of household suffrage and the ballot, Charles I. was held up as a blessed martyr, and Cromwell as a time-serving villain and impostor; how the gallery applauded to the echo the King's withering sneers at the Protector's patriotism; and how the proprietor of the theatre was an American citizen, father of the wonderful Bateman children; how the author of the piece was an Irishman; and the chief actor a man who at one bound had come to the front as the leading player of his day. Then the diary might describe how the Prince and Princess of Wales went to see the play; how the ladies of the party applauded, and how His Royal Highness observed a strict neutrality, neither applauding nor expressing dissent, like a discreet and wise Prince, careful to do nothing that might not become the heir to the throne. The same modern Pepys might then revert back to the Prince's visit, before his illness, to the Gallery of Illustration, to see Mark Lemon as Falstaff. There would be much to note in this, of the Princess's laughter at Hal's rogueries, and what their Royal Highnesses said to Mark Lemon at the close of the entertainment. What Mr. Toole said to the Prince over a game at billiards, which amused His Royal Highness so much; how Carlyle looked while strolling about Cheyne Walk, and what he said to an obtrusive stranger; how "George Eliot" and her husband work at their books in the same room, and what the lady said to this modern Pepys concerning the real people who are described in "Adam Bede;" what Mr. Stanley said, over a cigar, that was not published in his book, and how Her Majesty the Queen received him in Scotland; how Artemus Ward used to make dry jokes between his dry hacking fits of coughing, and what Mark Twain said at a private dinner about a Piccadilly publisher; how the writer met Mr. Schenck at the height of the Alabama dispute, and sat down to dinner with him, knowing that he had just received "The American Answer;" how a popular journalist who had got hold of this fact tried to pump the American diplomatist, and then in fun, but with an earnest twinkle of the eye, proposed to waylay him and rob him of his papers; what Mr. Tennyson said to Longfellow, and why a certain critic calls Walt Whitman the Browning of America; how a popular dramatist invited a friend to meet Henry Irving, and said "Come and dine—Charles I. is here; don't let it be known, or people may think I have an execution in the house." If some chiel is making notes for the future on this programme, with the details well and truthfully put in, our grandchildren will lament that they did not live in our days, just as some people in the present day foolishly wish they could have ante-dated their births.

Trust me, in spite of Mr. Jacox's compilation of out-of-the-way notes selected to prove that literary society is dull, stupid, and arrogant, it is one of the pleasantest features of life in London. Men who knew the Garrick smoking room in the old days, and who have the *entrée* into real literary society in the present, will have a thousand examples in opposition to those which Mr. Jacox has cited. I dined with two old men the other day; one of them had lived in America forty years; the other had been all his life of seventy-five years in England; they were both commercial in their training and instincts; yet the two incidents of their lives which seemed to be best remembered were, the one dining among literary men at the Cock and the Rainbow forty-five years ago, and the other spending an evening with some literary friends in the north, and sitting next to Nathaniel Hawthorne, "the Scott of America." It is absurd to deny that literary society has a special charm. I envied my ancient friend his evening with the author of the "Scarlet Letter." Do you remember Hawthorne's suggestive note for a subject?—"An old man, on a summer day, sits on a hill-top, or on the observatory of his house, and sees the sun's light pass from one object to another connected with the events of his past life,—as the school house, the place where his wife lived in her maidenhood—its setting beams falling in the churchyard."

There is a freemasonry in literary and artistic society which exists among no other class. "Shop" is not tabooed. It is the proper topic of conversation. The new play, the new book, the new picture—what could afford more delightful conversation among writers, actors, artists! The successful actor in the successful play, he will talk about his part, and show you how he has worked up the main idea; the artist whose picture made a hit at the last Academy exhibition, he will talk to you of the work upon which he is engaged for next year; the author, he will explain upon what principles he constructs his new theory of light; or the novelist, he will inform you where the story really opens, and what inspired the leading idea; while the special correspondent, he represents a new institution, since Southey and De Quincey weighed literary society in the balance of their stupendous intellects, and found it wanting. I imagine the "Opium Eater" and the "Lake Poet" were too great for the minnows that floated round them. Moreover, to enjoy literary society you must be content to listen; you must help others to talk, draw them out, play upon them like instruments, know their stops, and understand the nature of their music. I am inclined to believe that independence of judgment is found more commonly among literary and art men than in any other society. They are the men who think. As a rule the general mass of people do not think ; one of the defects of modern education is this non-cultivation of the thinking and discursive faculties. It is for this reason that I like so much the leading principle of "Ethics for Undenominational Schools," which is to teach children to think as well as to read and write. It is a clever *mot* of somebody, said somewhere in literary society, that "thinking is one of the least exerted privileges of cultivated humanity." Fontenelle said he would make mankind believe that the sun was the source of neither light nor heat if half a dozen philosophers would uphold his assertions. It is pretty clear that the men who write and mould public opinion must think, and a real talking evening in their society would soon convince the sceptic that Hartley Coleridge and Thomas de Quincey must have had sarcastic intentions when they found more eloquence and natural information among the tradesmen of Birmingham, Kendal, and Bridgwater than is usual in literary circles or in places professedly learned. As I said before, you must be a good listener to enjoy intellectual society. Mr. Jacox himself has some happy thoughts upon this subject in "Cues from all Quarters." Commonplace people are mentioned as often possessing the faculty of listening well. "But what comes to commonplace people by nature and temperament may be attained by their intellectual superiors as a habit, a moral acquirement in their 'studies for kindness' sake,' and out of the will to please. A steady resolve to check the selfishness of social impatience, so far as it is selfish, and to condescend to men of low estate, will eventually make of a haughty scorner a courteous listener." Sydney Smith credits Sir James Macintosh with the good taste of hearing patiently, though he was fond of talking. Coleridge admired the faculty in Sir Alexander Ball. Bennett Langton endeared himself to Johnson and others for listening even better than he talked. Hazlitt showed the greatest respect towards any endeavour to interest him. Sir Walter Scott is another instance. You must emulate these wise and great men if you would enjoy yourself, round the fire at "Our Club," in a box "after hours" at the Albion, during an evening after dinner with literary talkers in the strangers' room at the Garrick, or on a Sunday evening at quiet houses in Kensington, Regent's Park, St. John's Wood, where professional people, who are before the footlights six nights in the week, drop in to enjoy the society of those who have sat in front, or looked in behind; a Sunday evening exchange of civilities which is regarded by some people as a wicked desecration of the day. For my part I do not judge my fellow mortals; I only know that at one house where on Sunday I occasionally smoke my cigar, in an atmosphere of art and poetry, the hostess and her children have generally been to church twice during the day. How far this may exonerate them in the eyes of the Pharisees I know not. It must, however, be admitted that the scoffer at religion is to be found in literary as well as in general society; and in the former he is formidable because thought is free, and the scoffer is proud of his self-abasement. As a rule he is young, of an ardent temperament, disappointed, a sufferer from some internal malady that seres and scorches mind as well as body; but he will live to learn that, apart from the more serious aspects of the question, there is really nothing to be gained by pretending to confront and defy God. If we could examine the real feelings of the professed scoffer, who has made a wild sort of reputation for his bold and senseless scepticism, it is not unlikely we might discover that he is simply playing a part; that indeed he is free from much of the viciousness of which he boasts; that there is far more good in him than we credit him with or than he claims to possess. It is in the power of the great moving spirits of literary society to check a growing toleration of the few daring and fame-seeking young men who think it a fine thing to treat religious names with contempt, calling the Bible Jewish mythology, and throwing dirt upon the most cherished hopes of the vast majority of high-minded and sober people, unhinging weak minds, and cutting loose the moral ties which keep many a viciously inclined person within reasonable bounds of action. Bad examples seem to have much greater powers of fascination than good. Look at our suicides. A London coroner urged a jury the other day to bring in a verdict of *felo de se* against a poor dead mortal as a check upon suicide, and a magistrate sent a woman to prison for attempting her own life, because, he said, continued leniency and sympathy only induced other weak people to emulate the folly and crime of those who had done likewise. Look at the crime of the two Germans at Chelsea; the last tragedy at Hoxton (Ellen Moore died the day before my last paper was published); and the kindred tragedy of Golden-square. Human nature requires the elevating and hopeful encouragement of religion; we cannot be too careful how we comport ourselves, the more so if our conduct is likely to be noticed from our having made a position in the world; we do not know how wide our influence may be for good or evil; it behoves us, therefore, to have a care how we talk as well as how we write. The thought is trite, it may be as old as the hills,—if we were content with only new ideas, there would be few books, certainly no more plays. The dramas of real life, the tragedies that go on under our very eyes from day to day, present us with no new revelations; they are all moulded on past deeds, they all spring from the commonest passions of the heart, and are played out in the most prosaic fashion. It is only now and then that the horror of a dull crime is heightened by a flash of genius, profane or religious, such as that which marked a suicide the other day in Germany. "Have you any message for St. Peter?" asked a man at the bar of a restaurant. "No," said the waiting woman. "If you had, I would have taken it," he replied, tossing off a mixture of prussic acid, and falling dead at her feet.

JOSEPH HATTON.

My Escape.

IT was at the end of the summer term, and a wine party was going on at the large college of Supercilious, Oxford.

"Who got through the schools to-day?" inquired George Harrison, of his guests generally.

"Borthwick and Blake. Joe Warner ploughed, whereby I've lost a sov," answered a man sitting in an arm chair behind the first speaker, as he blew off his words shortly, between the puffs of his pipe.

"Well," said Harrison, not turning round, "I should have won if I'd laid on that event: to my certain knowledge he hadn't looked at his Latin, and his divinity was enough to pluck a parish."

"I'd backed him, though, because he and Warrington were reading together, and as Warrington got through I didn't see why he shouldn't. Of course I got odds."

"Ah," said Lord Warrington, who, to use his own expression, was "soaked" in Scripture history, owing to a fortnight's study thereof, "but what says the Psalmist? 'Two men shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken and the other left.'"

A quick step was now heard outside, the door opened, and a man came in who was loudly greeted as "Joe Warner." "By Jove," he cried, "what strong tobacco you fellows smoke! I winded you half up the staircase."

"Never mind the tobaccy, Joseph, my son," called a small youth, with a strong Irish accent, partly real, partly assumed. "Come up by me, till ye get dhrunk."

"Drunk? Why am I to get drunk, Paddy?" asked Warner, as he lounged up the long room to where Paddy Taylor and a few choice spirits were swarming over a sofa. "Oh, ah, the little misfortune in the schools, you mean? Yes, we made a mull of it somehow."

"As you have brought up the subject, Joe," said one man, "perhaps you won't mind my asking how it came to pass."

"Yes," said Harrison, who had just been denouncing his ignorance of divinity as enough to "pluck a parish," "we've all been saying we were so certain of you. How was it?"

"Well," began Warner, "I was pretty bad all round, but I think it was the Scripture history did it. The fellow asked me the names of the twelve apostles, you see. I gave him the four Evangelists all right, and St. Paul, and—and—Judas, you know; and then I tried to lead him off, and said there were twelve of 'em, though, as I could only account for eight, I wished afterwards I'd left him in the dark. Then I can't help thinking I ran into the minor prophets, and came to grief."

"Some apostles, some prophets," commented Warrington.

"Extraordinary thing to me," I whispered to Harrison, "that Joe don't know more of his Bible, considering who his father is." For Joe Warner was the son of the well-known Bishop of Clapham.

"Ah," he returned, "I fancy he's been more in the way of hearing it explained than read."

The summer term, as I have said, was nearly over. Time had passed easily during the last few months—as, indeed, it usually does at Oxford—but this especial season had been blessed beyond its fellows. The weather had been finer, the discipline more lax, and things generally of a more satisfactory character than at any period within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, which at college extends over four years. Money—never very scarce in Supercilious—had seemed more plentiful than ever. Champagne had been poured forth like soda-water, and claret (the duty had not been taken off then) had been like pale ale for abundance. The state of society had been not untruly described by Warrington the Scriptural as a foretaste of the millennium, for the dun might be said to have lain down with his creditor, and the don to have drunk beer like the undergraduate.

True, there had been wars and rumours of wars in the outer world of the university. Examinations had been holden—men plucked. But we of Supercilious let such disturbances pass by unheeded. A few, indeed, of our people had plunged into the whirlpool of trouble, and emerged on the whole with fair luck. It had suddenly occurred to Charley Vernon that he might as well pass "Great Go," and on the spur of the moment he had put his name down, in defiance of his awe-stricken tutor, who was perfectly aware that he had not opened a book for the last six months, and who told him that it was utterly impossible that he should get through. Charley, however, said that he certainly couldn't if he didn't try, firmly refusing to "scratch," as he termed it. And when the Rev. James Clayton observed, "But the thing is absurd, Mr. Vernon—the chances are ten thousand to one against you," he made answer, "Well, sir, I'll take it at that price—in ponies." Had the bet been concluded the reverend gentleman would have lost £250,000. For Vernon, after six days' study, went in, facing moral danger, as he always did physical, with a placid, half contemptuous look, and, thanks to the luck that attends drunken men and children, actually shaved through. He then "backed himself for the double event," and went in for "second schools," the last bar to a B.A. taking up mathematics—not that he knew anything of them, but because he had once had a quarrel with the examiner, which he thought a point in his favour. As, however, he had no other qualifications, it was expecting rather too much from chivalry to hope that that alone should save him, and here he certainly got plucked. But he had, without taking the smallest trouble, or in the least deserving it, overcome by far the greater part of the difficulties on the road to his degree.

George Paker, too, had been equally fortunate; for, not knowing enough for a mere pass, he had boldly gone in for honours, and he spent the few days allotted to him in learning by heart the names of the books which he professed to take up. The examiners, awed by the imposing array of subjects, pitied his ill luck rather than condemned his ignorance, and at the end of the trial said: "You have been very unfortunate, Mr. Paker. We shall give you your *testamur*, but, really, you can hardly expect anything more." Paker, who had scarcely expected so much, bowed with ill-concealed delight, and that evening found that by dint of sheer impudence he had got through "Great Go."

Some others had been nearly as lucky, but I, not having Vernon's pluck or Paker's impudence, thought it better to defer my entry till next term, and read for it at my leisure. I had therefore spent the last few weeks in amusement only; but a small cloud of trouble was in the distance. Our college (in common, I believe, with others) held a private examination at the end of every term on the work that had been done by each man. This was troublesome enough to those who had something to show, but to those who, like me, had nothing, it was a terrible bugbear. Added to this, I was in a sort of undefined scrape for divers reasons, as shall soon be explained, and I well knew that any break-down in the examination would infallibly bring things to a crisis.

But I must return to George Harrison's wine party.

"I say, Swan," shouted Paddy Taylor to me, "what's this I hear about your pistol-shooting?"

"What do you hear?" I answered, calmly as far as appearance went, but in reality somewhat fluttered, for I was pardonably vain of my skill in that art, due mainly to my habit of uncorking bottles with a bullet, my corkscrew having from long service become straight. "What do you hear?" I asked.

"Why, did you know you had shot a man in the meadows?"

"Nonsense!" I exclaimed, while nearly every one cried out—"Hullo—what's that?" "Did you really, Swan?" "Has he really, Paddy?"

Taylor, when silence was partly restored, explained: "Yes, really you did, Swan, when you were firing this morning: it was a bagman stopping at the Mitre; it might have been his hat by the bye, but it was either him or his hat, I know."

Somewhat relieved by this saving clause, I expressed a hope that it might prove to be his hat, and asked my informer if he was sure of his facts.

"Oh, the facts are all right: some one has sent a bullet through a bagman's hat, and a precious rage he's in about it. It must have been you, because it was just in the meadows there, and you do shoot there, and nobody does but you. *Q. E. D.*—If it's any comfort, nobody knows who it was."

"Well, it is a comfort," said I, a little crest-fallen at the idea of shooting a man by mistake; "still, it would have been more satisfactory if he'd been killed, as dead men tell no tales, and living ones do, rather. Are bagmen cheap, I wonder?"

No one could answer this question, excepting Lord Warrington, who was understood to murmur something about "five of them being sold for a farthing."

"They'll sit upon you at Collections, Swan, my friend," said Harrison, complacently; "there must be an average long bill against you as it is—battledore in the lecture-room, Aunt Sally in quad, midnight cricket, and now a bagman murdered. You'll be rusticated for certain."

I was much of this opinion myself, and having special reasons for wishing to take my degree that year, I felt remarkably uneasy. As, however, there was no use in showing it I concealed my anxiety, and saying generally that I committed myself to Providence, tried to change the subject by asking when "Collections" were to begin.

"On Monday," Harrison said; "the list came out to-day. By the bye, I see your name's not down; you ought to be in, oughtn't you?"

"Why, I suppose so; it's only the Great Go men that are let off, I believe: are you sure?"

"Yes, I noticed particularly—it's a mistake, I suppose."

"At any rate," I said, "I'm not bound to know that, and it's a mistake I shall take advantage of."

"It'll be no use, I can tell you," said my friend, consolingly; "they'll be sure to find it out and send for you."

"It's your best chance, though," cried Paddy Taylor, "and if you just stay quiet for the next few days, and don't obtrude yourself at chapel, or lecture, or anywhere, they'll maybe forget all about you. 'Out of sight out of mind,' they say."

This conversation set me thinking. However satisfactory the term had been in other ways, I had become gradually aware that as far as the authorities were concerned I was rather under a cloud, owing to various small offences, each perhaps intangible in itself, but whose aggregate made a heavy sum. It was not my fault, for instance, that when my cousin-esses came to see me they objected to my rooms as too low for battledore and shuttlecock, and commanded me to take them to the lecture-room, which they had favourably noticed as well adapted for that game. Nor ought I to be blamed because, not knowing much of the habits of lecturers, I so chose my time that in the middle of an exciting game the Professor of Hebrew entered. The Professor of Hebrew, to do him justice, fairly turned tail (the tail consisting of twenty or thirty scholars), and went home, all the better for a holiday, and his pupils probably none the worse.

It would have been absurd, too, to suppose I could have any control over Lord Warrington's sisters, so as to prevent their playing at Aunt Sally in the quad, with their brother and some friends, and I could not possibly have refused his request that I would photograph the party.

I admit that I had had a good deal to do with getting up the cricket match, "Plucked *v.* Unplucked," which was played at midnight in the large quad, with moderator lamps for wickets; but as I was put out my first ball I could scarcely be blamed for my share in that.

Still, many a mickle makes muckle, and it struck me that I had been sailing quite as near the wind as was prudent, and that it would be well to keep out of the way, even putting the bagman (or his ghost) out of the question.

The examination lasted five days, but each man was occupied for only one. We went up in order of seniority, and were allowed to go home when our day's trial was over. Lest, however, any moral claims should remain unsatisfied, it was necessary to call on the Dean and the two Censors and give them a written application (in Latin, by the bye) asking *veniam abeundi.*

The first day had come and was going. My object was to join the rush of men who would be leaving their papers, among whom I might hope to pass unnoticed.

I began with the Dean, whose immediate remark was, "You have been in to Collections, I suppose;" and who, on my replying boldly that my name was not down, merely said "Ah, yes; good morning."

So far, so good; but the two Censors were next to be faced. Far more to be dreaded were they, for, independently of their knowing my shortcomings, they at least might be expected to remember who should and who should not appear at Collections. However, if more knowing, they were less important than the Dean, and I decided that it would be near enough for practical purposes if I had them watched out of their rooms and left my papers in the letter-boxes.

It was now nearly five o'clock, and calm in my wise resolve I was going back to my rooms when I met one Willy Beresford.

Beresford was a man with whom I had never been very intimate, and my acquaintance with him, slight as it was, was due chiefly to a rather remarkable likeness between us. He was not a "double" of me such as we hear of in novels, and no one who knew either of us well could make a mistake; but there was a good working likeness —quite enough to confuse strangers.

He now said hurriedly, "Don't go to your rooms, Swan; come with me a minute. I say," he added, as we walked towards his staircase, "I hear you don't mean to go in to Collections?"

"Well," I said, "what then?"

"Why, I heard Clayton asking why you and Rigby weren't in the list, and Fotheringham said, 'It doesn't signify; we can send for them to-morrow.'"

"They may please themselves about that," I remarked contentedly, "but I'm going away to-night."

"Yes, exactly; that's where it is. Now, I just went into your rooms to ask you for a 'Bradshaw,' and I was hunting for it in a corner when Clayton's scout came in and said, 'If you please, sir, Mr. Clayton wishes to see you to-night, or after chapel to-morrow.' I said, 'All right;' but it struck me directly afterwards he must have taken me for you—being in your rooms and all."

"Of course he must," I exclaimed, as I sat down on Beresford's sofa—for we had now reached his rooms—"What an awful nuisance!"

"It's rather a good thing for you, I think. He'll tell Clayton he has given the message, and if you can slip off to-night I'll see him in the morning. I'm not obliged to know it was you he wanted."

"Thanks, very much; but there'll be a *ne exeat regno* at the gates —river-gate and all—I shall never be able to get out."

Here we fell into deep thought. It was now dinner time, and as I saw the men streaming towards "hall," it struck me that I might at any rate get my papers lodged. "Paddy!" I shouted to my friend Taylor, who drew near, "are you particular about your dinner?"

"Well, I'm rather hungry," he answered meekly; "why?"

"Why do, like a good fellow, wait till the Censors have gone to hall and leave my papers in their rooms—in the letter-boxes, you know. I daren't go myself."

"All right," said Taylor; "if there are any more on the table I'd better put them there instead: if I shove them under a lot of others they won't be noticed too soon."

In due time he reported this as done, but I had still to get out of college. It seemed useless to brave the porters' lodges, where I was sure to be stopped, and even if it were possible to scramble from a window to the meadows, there would be policemen there whose chief duty was to prevent any such wickedness.

Not being able to hit upon a plan, I could but fall back on my usual habit of procrastination, and waited to see what might turn up. Towards eleven o'clock I found myself in Joe Warner's rooms, which overlooked the meadows. "What a thundering row those freshmen are making overhead," I remarked to my friend.

"Yes," he said; "it's young Owen having what he calls a temperance meeting, from which no one goes home sober. By the bye, I see Paddy's up there."

"Why, I didn't fancy he knew fellows of that sort. Horrid lot, aren't they?"

"I don't think he does, but he told me he was hungry, and there was supper going on, so he should introduce himself. It's a way he's got."

Warner and I, with a few more, now proposed to take a turn in the cool air of the quad below. While doing so a champagne bottle was flung at us by one of the revellers upstairs.

"Oh, come! I'm not going to have my head broken by some sanguinary freshman," cried George Harrison, as though no more degrading fate could befall a man. "Let's go up and pitch into them."

"No—what's the use?" said Warner, stopping him; "they're all drunk, you know. We had better merely keep out of the way."

"At any rate I'll set a man-trap for them," Harrison said; and no opposition being made, he proceeded to lay out the ground.

To put out all the lamps and place them on the staircase was such an obvious precaution that I need not perhaps mention it; but I own to some pride at having poured the oil on the landing above, and having strewn coals on the stairs below, while to Warner is due the sole credit of ranging three slop-pails half way down. The result was beyond our hopes. Soon the "temperance meeting" broke up. The first man who came escaped the slippery oil and the strewn coal, only to plunge his leg into a slop-pail, which of course threw him down and deluged him from foot to head in his descent. No. 2 tripped on the landing and came to grief among the coals, after which Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 appeared, floundering at the bottom in a chaos of oil, coal, and slop-pails.

Paddy Taylor now bounded down the stairs, four at a time, and landed in Warner's rooms, unhurt, but irresponsibly drunk. Dashing against a moderator, he upset it, and with a confused idea that it was his own, and that Joe had broken it, he tried in the most gentlemanly manner to set him quite at his ease, assuring him over and over again that it was of no consequence whatever.

Having sat upon a mahogany stereoscope and smashed it, he chopped it up with a penknife, thinking it tobacco, which he put into a pipe and tried to light at my slightly carrotty whiskers.

Then going to the window he addressed a speech on general subjects to a policeman in the meadow, who had probably been attracted by the noise of the freshmen. Having offered the man a glass of grog, he was making a muddled attempt to lower it by a string, when a thought flashed across me. "Stop," I said, "I'll go below and give it him through the grating." I did so, and introduced myself to the officer, whose acquaintance cost me exactly half-a-crown. Ten minutes later I had lowered myself by a gymnastic rope. The policeman was waiting for me. Half-a-crown had procured his acquaintance: five shillings bought his warmest friendship—as friendship goes. I was now in the Supercilious meadows, locked in on all sides but one, where was the river. Making my way noiselessly over the grass I cut a boat adrift and shoved across—and I take this opportunity of apologising to the owner for having forgotten in my hurry to make it fast, and of assuring him that I do hope it didn't go down "Iffley lasher." A seven miles walk to Abingdon through the fresh midnight was a relief after my worry of mind and body. I slept there, luggageless, and took the first morning train to —I forget where—certainly not home, well knowing that letters and telegrams would pursue me thither. The faithful Joe Warner had my portmanteaus packed and sent to some London hotel, and I thought it wise to start on my Swiss tour a week earlier than I had intended.

It was nearly a month afterwards that I came across the Rev. James Clayton, senior Censor, on the Rosenlauer glacier. My instinct—to say truth—was to fly, but as it struck me that he could scarcely hold Collections there, or rusticate me then, I boldly shook hands with him. After a few remarks, he said, "By the bye, Mr. Swan, I sent for you the day you went down, only somehow your *fac simile*, Mr. Beresford, got the message." "Oh, dear," I said, "there must have been some mistake." "I shouldn't wonder," he remarked, shortly.

We spent the afternoon together, and at parting I said, "Between ourselves, Mr. Clayton, I knew it was me you wanted."

"Between ourselves, Mr. Swan," he replied, "I was quite aware that you did, only you contrived to checkmate us."

PLAYERS OF OUR DAY.

XXVI.—BURLESQUE ACTORS AND ACTRESSES.

(Concluded.)

WE must not pass by two comparatively recent recruits, Messrs. Paulton and Righton. Mr. Paulton is properly a comedian, of an old school, too, who would have done, and does indeed, the honest countrymen in red waistcoats, at whom these burlesques make us laugh. He has certainly breadth of style, a dry, sour face, excellent in comedy, and humour of a certain kind. But he wants what so many actors of merit want—flexibility and variety. This comes from playing in burlesques, which have a few rigid and wretched traditions, and the narrowest and most meagre domain. For, if we consider, whoever tries to amuse by kicking his (or her) legs about will very soon exhaust the motions of which human limbs are capable. Even on the theory of permutation and combination we soon arrive at the end of the series of legs and arms in violent motion, simulating even catherine-wheels—the motions are surprisingly limited. On the contrary, the mind is boundless. In some of the little Strand comediettas, such as "Neighbours," he was excellent, showing good old comedy gifts. In farces he is not nearly so good. He would have done excellently in Morton's comedies.

Mr. Righton, of the Court Theatre, has a fresher style in this miserable walk of burlesque, and in one which had great success, "Isaac of York," won much applause. But then it is not acting. A Jew's face with a false nose and forehead, a queer Israelitish twang in the voice, comic Ethiopian dancing and singing, grotesque contortioning—this, as was said before, is borrowed from the fair green. "Isaac of York" itself had, of course, nothing in common with burlesque. It was simply a *mélange* of dancing, tumbling, singing, and puns labelled "Isaac of York." The receipt for making such things is strictly regulated by precedent. A story that is engaging public attention on the stage, or elsewhere, is seized on and dealt with. The characters, with the same names, are mixed up somehow, only certain changes, obvious to the craft, are made after fixed canons. Isaac of course becomes a comic

Jew, the various knights are seized on by the young ladies, as offering splendid opportunities for short tunics, &c. Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert becomes O'Brian, and of course speaks with a brogue and blunders abundantly; while Rebecca wears a showy dress and says comic things. All this, no doubt, answers the purpose desired, which is to secure a good framework on which to place songs, dances, dresses, and buffoonery, and make these effective. But it is not burlesque, nor has it the genuine effect of dramatic humour. How different, even to the unpractised ear, the hearty, universal roar that comes from the intellectual joke or situation—how the audience revels in the embarrassment; what relish, what satisfaction! Compare this with the short, conventional laugh that comes when some bit of horse-play is successfully carried out. To treat the subject of "Ivanhoe" as a burlesque, one would have supposed that there were certain principles of drollery to be applied, of which the subject was specially capable. But this is not so; for any subject, capable or otherwise, is treated in the same way. Now MM. Meilhac-Halévy aforesaid would not have laid hands on a subject that did not offer tempting opportunities for ridicule. We could thus conceive that there might be a comic side to this notion of the Jew and his daughter. Persecuted as the Jews were then, it might be readily conceived that persons of such wealth could purchase exceptional privileges. A picture might be drawn of a griping, greedy Israelite, affecting the air of a martyr, and glad to play that *rôle*, while all the time he was filling his coffers and entangling young spendthrift knights. So with his daughter, who might appear as "setting her cap" at some rich Christian, and all the time affecting theatrical airs of rigid virtue. This, though not a very brilliant idea, comes nearer to burlesque than the late attempt at the Court Theatre.

As for the ladies who figure in this department, their ability is fast waning every day. We look down the list of theatres, and only one name of repute meets the eye, that of Miss Power—or "Nellie Power," to speak of her with the familiarity which signifies true popularity. There is, indeed, Miss Parkes and Miss Jenny Lee, Miss Goodall, not forgetting "Amy" Sheridan, who left the Strand to give what her theatre called a "chaste" impersonation—viz., that of Lady Godiva on horseback. It is a nice point to decide what is "chaste," as the degrees tone off imperceptibly; and the management had better leave the matter to the public, who can judge by the photographs now exhibited in the windows. The truth is, the business is limited and does not offer the same variety as it does to the men. *They* can do what they please with their limbs;

and though a handsome latitude has been allowed to the ladies, still there *are* limits, the o'erpassing of which might be resented. We rarely have the pleasure of seeing the favourite "Nellie" out of a young fairy-tale prince's garments. As for the rank and file who follow where these ladies of mark lead, they are no more than a rabble of impudent, vulgar girls, unredeemed by a spark of cleverness: such as Charles Lamb described in his paper on Elliston—and though the language is free, we may be privileged to quote it: "One of those little tawdry things that flirt at the tails of choruses—a probationer for the town, in either of its senses—the pertest little drab—a dirty fringe and appendage of the lamp's smoke." These are the words of the "Gentle Elia;" and they always come back on us, as in some of these dramatic revels we see some of these little brazen "appendages," in their gauze and tinsel, pushing past to get well into the glare of the footlights, and with impudent looks ranging the stalls while the verses of "the topical song" are being sung. Their familiarity is grown so marked that we can see them talking and playing practical jokes on each other as they stand in a glittering herd.

It will not therefore be supposed from what has now been said that the exclusion of burlesque from the stage is here advocated. Constructed on true principles, nothing more amusing or varied could be imagined. There is one writer who works in the true direction, whose pieces are already enjoying a real popularity, and whose praises are sounded by the intellectual and the cultivated; and persons who are fanatical admirers of the French stage and French actors come away from the Haymarket Theatre almost as interested as they have been by their favourite entertainments. This they owe to Mr. W. S. Gilbert, whose "Palace of Truth" and "Pygmalion" really mark an era in dramatic progress. The reason of this success is that the author, with much fancy and refined taste, has made no use of the vulgar tools of burlesque, the mere conventional "common forms"—those material and earthy elements which can be compounded together but a few times and then lose all novelty and interest. He has wisely disdained pantomimic and mumming dresses, grotesque dances, flash songs, dressing up of men as women, and the rest, and has entered on the gay regions of humour and parody, where there is a boundless variety and entertainment. As an illustration take the story of "Pygmalion and Galatea." After the school of Mr. Planché, it would have been treated like a fairy tale, with a serious elegance and with a rich spectacular effect. There would have been a good deal of refined wit, but the story would have been followed with a sort of reverence. But a writer of humour would have discovered elements of burlesque in the legend. He would have considered what the female nature is in all times and ages, and how, assuming the change of the statue into a living person to have taken place, the ordinary weaknesses and caprices of the woman would have broken out. From this basis might be then conveyed a sly doubt as to the genuineness of the metamorphosis itself. In short, this would be the same "note" as is struck in the "Belle Hélène," where the old pagan priest of the temple is heard asking "if the man had sent home the thunderbolt." Nor must it be forgotten, as Mr. Gilbert owns in his preface, that this airy tone of the piece is well sustained by the actors of the Haymarket, who exhibit a treatment and handling of the characters as airy. A popular German comic opera, curiously enough on the same subject, was given at another theatre, and the actors and actresses interpreted the piece after quite a different fashion—viz., according to the rules and traditions of common English burlesque—that is, by endeavouring to "get fun" out of each character, according to the gifts of the interpreter, without regard to the sense of the piece. There is "the art critic," who, but for the announcement in the bill, might be a funny Roman out of a pantomime. A French actor wholly independent of the words of his part would have had a comic seriousness, and would have enriched the character by gestures and by-play and personal bearing. So, too, with Galatea, who suggests nothing pagan, nothing poetical, nothing that evinces the situation of a being suddenly changed from a statue into a living person. The impression therefore left is something singularly dull and prosaic.

The only risk that Mr. Gilbert runs is that he may become a little monotonous by keeping too closely to a particular class of subject. "The Princess," "Thespis," "The Palace of Truth," and "Pygmalion" are sufficiently in the same key. Not that he has given too much of that music, but enough; with more he will grow tame, and find his powers cramped through repetition. Let him, for instance, try something out of the Roman history. Or better still, let him treat some popular child's story after the fashion that "Blue Beard" was arranged for Offenbach's opera—that is, a grave reduction of the absurdities to real life, giving as it were the real shape out of which the legend had grown. One of Mr. Gilbert's happiest efforts was "The Sensation Novel," written for the "chamber" audience of Mr. and Mrs. German Reed, where he seemed to have given freer range to his fancy. Nothing more playful or more carefully or spiritedly written can be conceived, and there is no reason why such a piece should not be transferred to the broader scene of a regular theatre. It is just such a piece as MM. Halévy and Meilhac might have written, only with bolder touches. His "Ages Ago" was also singularly pretty, and full of that mixture of sentiment and humour which is such an advantage for both. Indeed, generally Mr. Gilbert might be bolder and firmer in his strokes; and in striving to be careful he runs the risk of becoming trifling in his excellent attempts to be refined. But on the whole the English stage is vastly indebted to him, far more than to the late Mr. Robertson, to whom he is infinitely superior, alike in conception, fancy, power, and workmanship.

In truth, when we look to those who guide public opinion, those who ought to discriminate and point out what is true humour, we get really bewildered. Who shall blame the public for going astray when they are so misled? The other day an intelligent and capable critic in a leading journal, while criticising Mr. Wilkie Collins's new story, "Poor Miss Finch," pronounced that there was "humour" and "fun" in the following passages:—"I" (Madame Pratolungo) "sat down with *my legs anyhow, like a man*. . . . Did I cry? A word in your ear, and let it go no farther. *I swore*." "The fun would have been better had the last word been more realistic. *But it is good fun as fun goes*." Heaven preserve us from such funny persons! and it is to be hoped that very little fun of the kind is "going." "So, too, is the *fun*," goes on the critic, "got out of Herr Grosse, who opines that when Gott made the womens he was sorry afterwards for the poor mens, and he made tobaccos to comfort them. And in addition to this sense of fun," &c. There is a class who would be amused by this sort of thing, which we may venture to say Mr. Collins never intended to be quoted as "fun," but merely as illustrative of character. But the mind of the writer who could see humour and find pleasure in such expressions is a fairly representative one, and stands for those meagrely endowed theatre-goers who would roar when the clown stole a ham or when the comic man emerged with his face covered with flour. The truth is innumerable plays are written on this plan for educing mirth, and whose idea of "fun" is very much the same as the other critic's.

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLANTS OF BARTON," "THE VALLEY OF POPPIES," &c.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

IN WHICH RETRIBUTION OVERTAKES THE WICKED.

Of course everybody in Middleton-on-the-Water knew that Magar was a bad fellow. The barber had said to himself many a time—so he informed several of his customers—"that man was not born to be drowned." Though, by the bye, several men had said the same thing about Gripps the lawyer, and had made a mistake. For it seems that although Gripps heard the Mayor sentenced to death, Magar was the longer liver of the two. Gripps had made a great effort to save his friend Magar: he had not only engaged the best counsel, and suborned several witnesses (who were not called) to perjure themselves; but in the famous chapel where he was wont to hold forth he had himself startled the congregation by a special prayer for the charitable Mayor of Middleton, who was like to die the death of a martyr; he had also laid a heavy bet about the matter, which he had doubled when the grand jury threw out the bill against Tom Titsy.

Whether defeat preyed upon his mind to such an extent as to unseat his reason and prompt him to commit suicide, or whether he lost his way in a fog, cannot now be ascertained; but one night, soon after Magar's conviction, he walked into a pond near his own house, and was drowned. His hat floating on the rank surface of the stagnant pool, he was found there the next morning with his blue bag still in his hand, which was considered by an intelligent jury evidence sufficient of his having accidentally walked into the water. They returned "a verdict accordingly," coupled with "a recommendation to the owner of the pool to protect (by posts and rails) other persons from a similar fatal mistake."

So that unkind people who said Mr. Gripps was not born to be drowned were mistaken. Mr. Northcotes, however, told the superintendent of police, who told the inspector, who told the oldest officer in the force, who told the barber, that Gripps had only saved himself from a worse end. The lawyer, therefore, it will be seen, had few friends in Middleton. Even his chapel-going acquaintances were glad to be rid of him, because he had a mortgage on their house of prayer, out of which he made money and compelled friendship and "brotherly love."

It was not a little surprising to discover after Magar's condemnation how many people in Middleton had "suspected" something for years past. It was a delicate matter to speak about, they all agreed; but many shrewd burgesses had wondered over their pipes how it was that Magar "got on in life so rapidly after Collinson's disappearance."

Several people had had "their suspicions" about the young yeoman's visit to America. The postman said it was true he had left American letters at Magar's; but he had often turned them over and thought they had a doubtful appearance. The watchman who heard the noises at the mill had started up in his sleep, as his wife could bear witness, with that strange midnight screech ringing in his ears. The man who paused a moment to listen on the fatal night had often thought "if there should have been some foul play at work," but had not dared to speak about it, or somehow had not thought to do so. The waiter at the inn where the three men met could have sworn there was "something queer going on," but how was he to know?

The town was divided about Jennings. One half of it would not believe that such a mild fellow as he could have really been concerned in killing his friend; while the other half had no faith in the sneaking, canting, pious manner which Jennings had always affected, and with which he covered his villainy, as Magar's was hidden beneath a cloak of assumed benevolence.

There was no difference of opinion about the righteousness of the verdict against Magar. Only one person evinced any feeling about the matter. This was a wretched woman to whom he had promised marriage when he was a young man. She came from a town near Middleton, and demanded admission to his cell as a relative. "If I am not his wife I ought to have been," she said in a hoarse, broken voice to the governor of the gaol. "It is true," said Magar, "let her come in." Even Gripps and Magar had their mourners. When the jurymen went to view the lawyer's body, cold and wet and ghastly, at the body's own cold cheerless lonely house, they found a wretched cur sitting by the corpse, whining piteously, utterly forgetting and forgiving all the hard kicks it had received from its dead master's heavy boots. Gripps had his dog mourner; Magar in his last hours was solaced by a woman. Ruined, humiliated, disgraced as she had been by this hypocrite and murderer, the woman threw herself upon his neck, and sobbed as earnestly as if he had deserved her tenderness and affection. She never once thought of her wrongs; I am not prepared to say that she would not if she could have changed places with him, and died praying for his happiness. For she remembered when Magar had been kind to her; when he came to her father's house at nights, and they went out together in the fields. They had been lovers in the early days; but for a vile mischief-maker they would have been married in their innocency. Eventually Magar's own selfishness led to their living together without the rites of marriage. There were unhappily many local precedents for this kind of arrangement; how far it demoralised Magar, brutalised his nature, this setting law, morality, religion, and true love at defiance, it is hard to say; but I suspect he was a brute to begin with, and his love of money and vulgar ambition overthrew him at last.

Soon after this woman left the gaol on that last day, the prisoner, who had wailed and cried and asserted his innocence in the most abject way, requested to be provided with writing materials. He was occupied until far into the night, preparing a full confession of his crime, which he placed in the hands of the chaplain, on condition that if he were reprieved it should be returned to him unsealed; and that if he were not, the packet should remain unopened until two years after the execution, when the contents were to be made public. The chaplain accepted this trust, and pledged himself, as a clergyman, to do his best to fulfil it to the letter.

The prisoner paused occasionally to listen; but whenever he did so, one of the men who sat there watching him made a noise with his feet, or moved about: he was rather tender-hearted, this officer, despite his long experience, and did not wish the convict to hear what *he* heard, and what many people heard during that long night, when the weight of some dire event seemed to lie heavily upon the town, and the thud, thud of the carpenter's hammer sent a cold shiver through many a stalwart frame.

An evening mist hung about the Dinsley County Prisons, and rain fell at intervals. The old church bells were chiming for evening service, which was held there twice during the week: but the sound of the bells seemed to die away in the fog, as if the one little breath of air that moved the mist refused to carry it. In front of the prisons joiners were at work, watched by a few bystanders, who stared vaguely at something which loomed up in the thick atmosphere, and grew under the hammers of the workmen. At length the bells ceased; the lamplighter lighted the town lamps; a few stars made shambling efforts to peer through the murky night; a couple of lanterns moved mysteriously about the ugly excrescence that was gradually deforming the symmetry of a well designed building, and the hammering was continued until the night was well-nigh worn out and the scaffold had grown its full. They put black boards about it to hide its ugliness; but when morning came, it loomed forth with frightful reality, a dreadful blot upon the world's civilisation. Black, gaunt, and grim, the monster, hammered into existence the day before, boldly challenged the daylight, and awaited its victim. "Blood for blood," it seemed to say; every balk and beam stood out defiantly as if to assert the bloody right of sacrifice. In the presence of such an enemy to man it was almost necessary, ere man's right to set it up could be acknowledged, that the imagination should wander to that dark low building by the Middleton river, and conjure up the deed that had been done there, when the cries of the victim went up unavailingly in the darkness. But supported even by these memories, that black, dread instrument made the heart sick, and inspired in the minds of many who passed it, besides Jacob Martyn, a wish that Justice could do her needful work without the aid of such a minister. . . . . Before the morning was far advanced, Silas Collinson was avenged, and the monster gallows was gorged with a strangled corpse.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MRS. SMICK GIVES JACOB A PROOF OF HER FRIENDLY REGARD.

"SHE *is* indeed a pretty girl," said Jacob, looking over the way, as the Dinsley bells were peacefully chiming for church.

"A round face, a dimple in each cheek, and how graceful! By Jove, the editor is right. And no, yes—she's going to look up—no, on she goes, like Saint Cecilia, to prayers."

Jacob was standing at the window of the sitting-room shared in common by Mr. Williams and himself, when he made these observations.

The young lady over the way was going to church, and Jacob was watching her with marked interest. Why a young fellow so desperately in love as he was, and engaged, in fact, as he considered himself to be, to a beautiful woman, worthy the hand of a peer, should be wasting time and thought upon a girl whom he had only seen half a dozen times, I cannot undertake to say.

As an admirer of beauty in nature and art, a young man has a perfect right to study both, and however much his affections might have been engaged elsewhere, I do not see why Jacob should not admire the pretty, graceful ways, and sunny eyes, and dimpled cheeks of Edith Winthorpe, who lived over the way. But surely it was not necessary that he should look up every time he saw Edith appear anywhere near the drawing-room window; nor was it necessary every time the sounds of a piano came from the same quarter that he should make a point of opening the window to hear the music.

Perhaps Edith might not have been called by most people a fine pianist; but Jacob thought the player fairly interpreted the compositions of some of the great masters; so he listened to the player, and looked at her also.

On this Sunday morning he was particularly struck with Miss Edith Winthorpe's graceful and pretty appearance; and he wondered who her two hard and haughty-looking companions were.

Mrs. Smick entered the room, opportunely, to remove the remains of his late breakfast. She sat down, crossed her arms, and composed herself for a talk, in token of her desire to be friendly with Jacob, and of her readiness to answer the questions which he commenced to ask concerning the Winthorpes.

"Oh, yes, nice sort of people as you say, which it were not for a neighbour to say otherwise, though one as has known better days, and can remember them when things were not so easy as they are now; as decent a gentleman as you'd wish to have knowed, sir, the deceased Mr. Winthorpe, which was a teacher of music and drawin, though he might have follerd a better trade; but which my poor Smick liked the gentleman for his kind ways, and always a comin to see him when he came home from forring parts with his ship, which traded to Spreadless at the mouth of the river what runs through Dinsley, and which he took me down onst in a boat, and paid, I don't know how much, to get through the locks as is made to stop the barges from getting down too cheap: a good creatur, sir, though I says it as shouldn't, was Capting James Smick," and the relict of the defunct salt began to weep tears of particular saline density, to judge from the perverse way in which they would rear themselves up into formidable globules at the end of her nose, and refuse for a long time to fall over the precipice that lay between that prominent organ and her chin.

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"But as you was a sayin, sir, the Winthorpes is tidy people, though proud as should be humility, when you considers the difference of a capting to a teacher of the pianner, as Edith, which is the youngest of six, no doubt plays well, which she oughter, seeing that she has no knolidge of domestick matters, beyond a dustin of the drawink-room, which the furniture is mostly old, though good no doubt. My Joanna, sir, though I says it myself, is more perfeck in all things pertainink to what a womin should know than all the three, which three died when they was young, leavink the three that has gone to church, and much good may they derive, though there was a time when I always went of a mornings; but as I was sayin, Mrs. Winthorpe, which is a widder like myself, had a little property in her own right, and they lives on it pretty comfortable no doubt, though I'm not one, Mr. Martyn, as is a hadvocate for starving the belly to make the back look fine, and which maxim I ever tells Joanna to bear in mind, together with the one that booty is only skin deep, and a contented mind, and a happy disposition, and bein able to mend your own stockins. and do your own cookin, is more likely to win a usband than otherwise."

Jacob listened attentively, though Mrs. Smick evidently thought she detected signs of restlessness in his manner.

"No, thanky, sir, you aint a detainin of me; I likes my lodgers when they does me the onner to consult me, and any information that I can give is welcome, I'm sure; as I was sayin, sir, the two eldest is awful proud, though what they has to be proud of beyond livink on their mother, which has a little property, when they oughter be doin somethink for themselves, it is not for me to say, though dressmakin might do something for them to help out their income, which, I believe, is small, though they did refuse to let their rooms when there was a great to-do here, and all the houses was let, even to Mr. Smythe's, which he spells it with a why, because, he says, his aunt's sisters did, though I never knew them. 'I'm not proud,' he said, 'and if a ginny a night is to be the price, why, say a ginny,' which was very hansum; but Edith, most people don't objeck to her, which she is a good deal put on by the elder ones, who is not much to look at, and has tried to get off this many a year, but which is on the shelf now; and though she is defected in her ways, and her ankles is not so good as they might be, the youngest is not ugly. People as likes dimples, which is certainly better than pimples, which does not hiten the booty of the oldest, says she is nice lookin, and of the three, I being a young man, which of course I am not, would prefer her, but 'handsim is as andsim does,' which was a maxim that the late capting as giv'n over his glass, which he was a temperate drinker, though his favrite toast was 'Them in our harms as we loves in our arts.'"

"Mauther! the meat's a burnin!" exclaimed Joanna, dashing into the room, and seizing Jacob's tray and emptying the contents into the half-open dressing-gown of Mr. Williams, just as that gentleman entered the room.

"Confound it!—shrimps and sawdust!—Jupiter and Jumbo!—by all the gods, but this is infernally annoying," exclaimed Mr. Williams, shaking the bread crumbs and coffee grounds from his gown.

"She did *not* know as you were a coming, which accidents will happin in the best regilated families, and if gentlemen will lay in bed and come down in their stockin feet, they can't expeck to be heard," said Mrs. Smick, going to the rescue of Joanna, and picking up the broken pieces.

"No, but hang it, Mrs. Smick, Joanna should not be dashing out like a flash of greasy lightning followed by a thunderbolt, and burying a fellow in cups and saucers," and then he burst out laughing.

"I'll pay for the damage," said Jacob; "it was my fault for detaining you, Mrs. Smick."

"Spoken like a gentleman, sir, which is more than I can say for some people," Mrs. Smick replied, as she left the scene of Joanna's misfortune.

"And so she's been enlightening you a little about her neighbours," said Mr. Williams, after he had exhausted his laughter and dried his dressing gown—"ah, and by Jove she can—talk for a week, sir—never knew anything like it, except an old landlady of mine at Pimlico (I believe Mrs. Smick was born within the sound of Bow bells), when I edited the *Slasher*, after the *Smasher* became defunct—she had talking fits—came on all of a sudden—they used to put her to bed after the first hour when they found it was really the fit—lay her on her back and let her talk—sometimes she'd go on all night as if she was wound up and must run down like an alarum—one day she quarrelled with a cabman about a fare, and talked herself to death—fact."

"Indeed!" was Jacob's only reply.

"Well, now, I'll tell you another fact; perhaps you won't believe it; the little sketch which you wrote last week is copied, in full, by the *Sunday Post*, with this introduction: 'We take the following graphic and picturesque sketch from the *Dinsley Courant*.' Will you believe that—eh?"

"No," said Jacob, "I cannot."

"You would like to believe it—young fellows are awfully proud when they're quoted—and by the beard of the prophet, you *may* feel a touch of pride at being noticed in the *Post.* I don't say Fitzatkins, the editor, whom I know well, has not done it out of compliment to me; but take it for what it is worth, the sketch is devilish good, as I told you, and the compliment of our London friend is deserved—there's the paper, read for yourself, while I dress for a stroll before dinner—I came down on purpose to congratulate you."

Sure enough, Mr. Williams had spoken the truth this time, at any rate. Jacob would not have been mortal if he had not felt some little gratification at the compliment paid to him by the *Post.* Looking at the prominent place assigned to his sketch, Jacob felt his heart beating a little quicker than usual, and after reading his own composition in its new place, he rose and said to himself before Mrs. Smick's mirror: "Lucy, I will be worthy of you yet." And just then he turned round, and saw Edith Winthorpe pass the window.

"I shall go to church," said Jacob, in the evening.

"And I'll walk with you on your way thither."

"Come all the way, and go in too," said Jacob.

"No, my boy, I cannot to-night; to tell you the truth, I rather fancy it is one of my sermons that will be preached; I have written half a dozen for the Rev. Slocum Pantaway; and I shouldn't like to hear my own good thoughts and moral sentiments murdered by his shocking delivery—no, I will walk down the street, because I want to propound unto you something for your welfare."

And so the two walked out together. They were just the sort of men whom you would be inclined to look at twice if you had met them in the street. There was something rather "stagey" in the appearance of the elder one, with a cut of the old-fashioned beau; his coat blue, with brass buttons, his waistcoat a light drab, his trousers almost of the same colour, and his boots shining splendidly; his hat, slightly the worse for wear, stuck jauntily on one side of his head; and the evening being rather dusty, he wore a pair of spectacles, not however the green protectors which he sometimes affected; he was marked in one or two places with the small-pox; he had a merry eye and a trifle of whisker.

Jacob, though himself rather a dandy, was exceedingly quiet in his style compared to Mr. Williams, and he still wore a narrow band of crape round his hat; he was about the same height as his companion, who was considered to be a little over the average standard.

On their way down the High Street they passed Miss Winthorpe, her mother, and her two sisters. Edith and her mother walked first, and Sarah and Ann, arm linked in arm, as a fond and loving pair should be linked, followed. Mr. Williams politely raised his hat to the party as he passed.

"You know the Winthorpes, then," said Jacob.

"Just sufficiently to be polite when we meet; rather a nice girl that young one, must say; mind what you're about, sir; you'll be over head and ears in love before you know where you are, Jacob. I once knew a young fellow who fell in love with a girl in the street—she had been shopping and was on her way home—he was in love with her at the top of the High Street, proposed at the bottom, was accepted—and a church being hard by, they went home man and wife."

"Remember that I am going to church, Mr. Williams; 'the nearer the church the farther,' &c.—you are not particular when and where you let off your fibs," said Jacob.

"Fibs! Perhaps you do not believe what I said about the sermon. Well, we shall see, but here you are—*au revoir!* Tell me what you think of the application of the text when it comes to thirdly." And the careless and thoughtless Williams passed on his way, while his friend entered St. Mary's, one of the five churches of Dinsley.

Jacob sat nearly opposite the Winthorpes, and twice his eyes met Edith's—and once, during the prayers, they met those of her eldest sister, who looked through him, and said "Amen" in a sneering, snappish sort of way, that reminded Jacob of one of Hogarth's pictures and a vinegar cruet: so Jacob hid his face in his book; and afterwards, despite the wheezy clerk, who began the responses long before the people, and finished with a croak and a gasp long after them, succeeded in feeling devout, and then in becoming very miserable and depressed. But he was a strange, romantic fellow, this Jacob Martyn; and when the service was over, he never even glanced towards the Winthorpe pew, but pushed his way out in an opposite direction, and went for a long ramble by the gaslight, until he found himself on a common, by a river in which a few stars were reflected.

It was a half-imaginary, half-real sketch of this river which had been copied into the *Post*. It was the same stream that had its rise beyond Middleton, and Jacob, who had wandered many an hour by its brink, and now knew many of the towns and villages which it passed on its way to the sea, embodied some of this knowledge and some of his thoughts and a good deal of happy description in a sketch entitled "From the Mountain to the Sea," which Mr. Williams had published in the manner already explained. It was a graphic sketch—something like a vigorous water-colour drawing, with a background roughly rubbed in. You could see the river, with the children coming down from the villages to dabble in the water; you could hear the water-wheel; you could see the dark sluggish stream crawling through big manufacturing towns, and then bounding off again into the meadows; farther on you had pictures of lazy barges drawn by horses; by-and-by you came to ships; then you met the salmon coming up with the tide: and after all this, you could not but feel that you had read a very natural piece of word-painting, to say nothing of the bits of philosophy and moralising that cropped up here and there, and made the paper almost a sermon as well as a picture.

"If it were not Sunday night," said Mr. Williams, on Jacob's return, "I should advise you to write to the *Post* people and offer your services as a contributor of miscellaneous essays—been thinking the matter over as I walked home."

"Do you think there would be any good in doing so?" inquired Jacob, much more interested, I am bound to say, in this editorial hint than in the clerical advice to which he had listened at St. Mary's Church.

"Of course I do—might be the means of making your fortune—besides, the proprietors are the famous publishers, Ginghem and Co.—who knows what the result might be?"

Jacob said he would write in the morning; and forthwith he began to build more castles in the air, which, after writing to Ginghem and Co. on the following day, he furnished in gorgeous and fantastic fashion.

One of Jacob Martyn's old reporting books lies before me while I write, side by side with some careless notes from which I have transcribed a portion of this history. Mr. Pitman has much to answer for: many a headache, many a heartache. But he has taught thousands to wield a special power. The early struggles of a beginner at shorthand-reporting have been described once for all by the great master who lies under that plain slab in Westminster Abbey. Those who know the picture (and who does not?) will understand how to sympathise with Jacob Martyn's first phonographic efforts. Here they are on my table—queer hieroglyphics even to a shorthand writer. Curves and lines and dots and stars and angles of all sorts, straggling down the centre of leaf after leaf, like Sanscrit gone mad; with here and there a proper name written in English to show up the peculiar character of the mania. There are collectors who would give a trifle for this note-book. What would they not give for that in which Dickens made his first House of Commons notes? Yet who but a practical shorthand writer could understand the labour, the misery, the disappointments of which these early note-books tell. Many persons write shorthand; they can sit down at a public meeting, and, in Pitman's style or Harding's, take down word for word all that is said, but—the reading, the transcription, my friend! "Aye, there's the rub." Well, Jacob had long since achieved all this; he had suffered and was strong in this respect; and, as I said before, the proofs of his early struggles are now before me—including the very note-book in the latter pages of which he commenced the report of Magar's trial. Here and there a leaf is turned down at the commencement of an article or an essay, the leading idea of which had occurred to Jacob during some reporting peregrination. Magar's trial is adorned with a rough sketch of the prisoner at the bar. Farther on there is an outline of the old bridge at Middleton, done from memory, with an indication in the distance of the mill and the singing weir, which used to join in the factory chorus. One of the note-books contains scraps of French and German exercises and bits of Latin, with some memoranda of "Spawling's Maxims." Every page gives token of thought and study and hard work. On the last page of the latest of these reminiscences of Jacob is written, "There is no knowing what a little genius may accomplish tempered by adversity, stimulated with love, trained by perseverance."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"UNDER AN OBLIGATION TO A QUACK."

"You look gloomy to-night," said Windgate Williams to Jacob, who was nursing his left leg over the fire.

"I do not feel merry," was the reply.

"What's up?—found a hole in your pocket—or been snubbed by that pretty girl over the way?"

"I have made an unpleasant discovery."

"You are always doing something wonderful—what is it?"

"I am under an obligation to a quack."

"Yes," said Williams, waiting for some further explanation.

"A quack, and therefore a humbug," continued Jacob, in the same hard, deliberate tone in which he pitched his first remark.

"Strong words," said Williams, "strong enough fifty years ago to have ended in pistols and coffee for two—getting up before sunrise—cold, damp, and miserable—twenty-five paces—bang, bang, and there you are!"

"It has only recently dawned on me," said Jacob, "and the discovery is all the more galling because I have a sincere regard for him; indeed I believe him to be a large-hearted, high-minded, and generous man in his way—in his way, mind you, Mr. Williams."

"In his way, certainly," said Williams.

"It is possible that he was the means of saving my life; he has placed me in another matter under an eternal obligation; and yet he is living and making money by deception, by fraud, by an imposture of the grossest kind."

"What is it?—out with it—what the deuce are you driving at?"

"Sir, the man who goes forth among the ignorant multitude and sells them a pill warranted to cure every ailment that flesh is heir to, is a rascal, and may be even guilty of murder."

"You are surely not speaking of our friend *Moniti meliora sequamur?*"

"I am speaking of Horatio Johnson," said Jacob, seriously. "What can you say of a man who deludes the sick and dying with nostrums the effects of which he does not understand? offers them for every disease one single medicine—some wretched combination that is foreign altogether to the malady, and while it cannot cure may possibly kill?"

"What can I say? That he is not likely to do any more harm than the Faculty, nearly every member of which differs from the other about nearly every disease under the sun."

"I differ with you entirely."

"By all means. The practice of medicine is a series of blunders and mistakes—doctors kill more than they cure—knew a conscientious doctor once who rarely gave his patients anything but bread pills and coloured water."

"He was a humbug, then."

"Yes; his patients would have something to take—they would have left him to starve if he had been honest with them. Knew another fellow who mostly gave a little pale brandy disguised in some filthy bitters."

"A truce to your wise saws and modern instances; I tell you our friend Johnson is a miserable quack, and that I am under a lasting obligation to him. I will be out of it; I cannot thrive on such a foundation."

"You forget, Mr. Jacob Martyn, that Johnson is an herbalist—a shrewd man, a student of botany, and what is more, a student of human nature. Years ago the herb doctor was an important person in every town; you must not class Johnson with the common pill vendor."

"I do—I will—I must."

"You are absurd, Jacob, excuse me," said Williams warmly.

"Perhaps I am; let me be absurd. I despise myself and the herb doctor at this moment equally. I respect Johnson as a man—is that sufficient?"

"It is a little better. Say you have some regard for him apart from his pills, and then we will proceed."

"All right. I say so."

"I am satisfied."

"Thanks; you are easily satisfied," said Jacob smiling, "and now be kind enough to remit to Mr. Horatio Johnson the money which you have in hand on my account, and I will as quickly as possible forward the balance."

"Are you serious?"

"I was never more so; and since you do not agree with me, I must act upon my own feelings in this matter, and explain myself to Johnson in a letter."

"The Doctor will write in reply, commencing with his favourite quotation, 'Throw physic to the dogs;' and tell you that, as all diseases arise from impurities of the blood, one medicine is sufficient for all; and that the Oriental is a compound approved by some of the most eminent practitioners for that purpose."

"He will not convince me; and I shall advise him to throw *his* physic to the dogs."

It was a severe shock to Mr. Horatio Johnson, the epistle which he received from Jacob, on the morning following that red-letter night when the Doctor had inaugurated those changes in the prospects of the Titsy household with which the reader is already acquainted. His occupation had certainly never appeared to him to be as objectionable as it seemed to be in the opinion of Jacob Martyn. The letter was couched in friendly and delicate terms; but the Doctor did not fail to comprehend it thoroughly. He brooded over it all day, and applied to his tobacco-box for advice and consolation at such unseasonable times that poor Mrs. Titsy began to fear he had repented of his recent proposal to her. The Doctor smoked and thought, notwithstanding; and, in order to look at the case without prejudice in his own favour, he put at the bar the quack who had saved the Indian officer, tried him on the counts suggested by Jacob, and found him guilty. Then he put himself through the same ordeal, and came to the conclusion that there might be something in what Jacob said, and that he would talk the matter over with Mrs. Titsy.

The widow, in a little fluster of anxiety, heard all the Doctor had to say, and was very angry with Jacob Martyn. She called to mind, and *would* speak of them (although the Doctor frequently bade her say no more), the many cases in which the amiable Doctor had supplied many a poor family with what she called kitchen physic, as well as pills; she mentioned more than one illness in which her noble lodger had paid for professional medical aid, in addition to supplies of this kitchen physic of which she made so great a point; and she "wondered at Master Jacob"—"she would not have thought it of him."

Nevertheless, Jacob's letter made the Doctor very uncomfortable; and eventually he added to the plans already decided upon another which he thought would not only satisfy his young friend, but set at rest any scruples of conscience which he had awakened.

In the evening he said to Mrs. Titsy, "You are aware, Mrs. T., that I had intended to withdraw from the active prosecution of my profession (the Doctor could not help being a little pompous) before the arrival of that letter from my friend Mr. Martyn, whose opinion we all value."

"I am; but I beg to say"——

"Do not say it then, my dear Mrs. Titsy; let me have my own way this time."

"Of course, Mr. Johnson, and always," said Mrs. Titsy, a little confused, and with something like a blush on her fair plump face.

"Well, then, I shall give up this medical business altogether; the remedy which I have vended is undoubtedly very good for very many things; I don't think I have anything upon my conscience in the way of having misused it; though perhaps—but there, it needs no speech, my dear; we will be gentleman and lady in the future, and not soil our fingers with either trade or profession. Have you any objection, Mrs. Titsy?"

"Oh dear no, sir," said Mrs. Titsy; and the Doctor put his arm round her waist as gently as a young lover; but it was a comical sight to see.

The next day the Doctor received a remittance from Mr. Windgate Williams, with a note informing him that Mr. Martyn found himself so very rich, on two pounds ten a week, that he had no further use for the funds invested on his account; and that he would shortly remit, with interest, the amount which had been expended. Mr. Williams, in a pleasant way, further suggested that his friend Mr. Martyn had some thoughts of starting a bank; but he should advise him to devote his princely fortune to other purposes, though he feared that Jacob would insist upon buying up all the Dinsley Canal shares, for the express purpose of fighting the railway, which had just been opened there, in order that the question of locomotion, its cost and expedition, might be fairly and finally settled.

Mr. Johnson, who greatly admired the loquacious Williams, was very much tickled with this humorous letter; but he felt miserable about Jacob's view of his medical career; and more especially as he began to be more and more convinced in his own mind that there was something in what Jacob had said.

Meanwhile Jacob received a letter which afforded him very considerable pleasure—so much so, indeed, that my young friend found it difficult to control his feelings.

"If Mr. Martyn can make it convenient to come to town shortly, Mr. Ginghem will be glad to have a personal interview with him."

"It has come!" said Jacob, bursting into Mr. Williams's bedroom, just as that gentleman was preparing to descend to breakfast.

"It's come! what's come? An earthquake, or the last day?" exclaimed Mr. Williams, starting round from the contemplation of his own face in the mirror which had once reflected the rubicund features of the departed Smick.

"Hurrah!" was Jacob's only reply, followed by a scamper downstairs, which eclipsed in noise the commotion of the Thunderbolt.

Bang went the front door; and Mr. Williams, looking from his window, could see Jacob walking down the Grove at a brisk rate, and with an elastic, joyous step.

"An extraordinary young chap that," soliloquised Mr. Williams. "There's something about that fellow that marks him down for success—he's got it in his eye. By the powers, although I come it heavy sometimes, I can't help feeling, in that young fellow's society, that I am in superior company—lots of brain and lots of activity. Something's up this morning—well, we shall see." And then the eccentric Mr Williams betook himself to breakfast.

By-and-by Jacob returned, flushed and excited.

"Well—what is it?—found a gold mine?—going to be married?—matriculating for a lunatic asylum?—or have you invented a new pill?"

"Hang the pill! That is a sore subject, Mr. Williams; don't touch it."

"Very well—then wot's the row?"

"You shall hear all in good time. Let me say, once more, *it* has come, sir; *it* has arrived; I found it lying on the breakfast table when I came down, as quietly and unassumingly as if it were the most unimportant thing possible."

"It, it, it—it, be blowed; what is *it?*" said Mr. Williams.

"That is it," said Jacob; and he spread Mr. Ginghem's note before the editor.

Mr. Williams read the communication twice; and then, making a satisfactory washing of his hands in imaginary soap and water, he rose from his seat, and walked from one end of Mrs. Smick's apartment to the other, in a fit of meditative delight.

"Jack Rugabee, come, take up your rapier and follow after mine heels to ze Cohrt," said Jacob, taking the lead in the pacing of Mrs. Smick's apartment, and laughing heartily at Williams's gait and manner.

"'Tis ready, sir, in the porch," said Williams, immediately falling into Jacob's humour.

"But I remember me," said Williams, stopping suddenly and assuming an air of great gravity, "of something else, more *à propos* to the time, which that same wise man has writ—'There is a tide in the affairs of man'—for you, Jacob, the flood has come—launch your boat, and away you go on the top of the first wave—and you'll find safe anchorage in the ports of Fame and Fortune—by Jove, I'm serious."

Extravagant as Jacob professed to regard the editor's hopeful picture, he could not help believing that his fortunes were decidedly looking up. But he was full of fun at his own expense. He burlesqued his hopes, by outdoing the extravagance of Mr. Williams. He talked of having had an interview with Fortunatus, and securing the wishing cap; he asked Williams if there was any particular estate he would like to buy; he wanted his opinion about the colour of a private brougham; but all this extravagance was only a cover for the aerial buildings which would tower up in his imagination, and show him bright, bright pictures in the future.

The day passed delightfully. Everything looked genial and sunny. Spring had gradually merged into summer, without losing the freshness and beauty that are so invigorating and hopeful when the new leaves first appear. Jacob's thoughts and feelings were in harmony with the time. Even his dingy office looked sunny, and his work was so much like play that he had finished it and started off for a ramble in the fields, long before the editor was on his way home.

Sent for to London! his ambitious dreams returned full upon him, and gave inspiration to his thoughts. The famous letter had given his whole nature such a fillip that he felt there was nothing he could not do to secure a footing in the great city, where prizes were to be fought for and won.

When he reached the Grove once more, soft-flowing harmonies were stealing out into the sunshiny air from the upper window of the Winthorpes; and Jacob sat listening and wondering, and almost fearing that the player was becoming as interesting to him as the music.

Edith Winthorpe had touched his sympathies. She was evidently not happy. Her elder sisters were both jealous of her good looks and her great abilities. He was sure of this without Mrs. Smick's information; and he thought what a delightful thing it would be to be the champion of such a Cinderella. If he had never known Lucy, he would like to have been a prince for the sake of Edith.

CHAPTER XL.

JACOB STANDS ON THE THRESHOLD OF HIS FUTURE.

He stood where his father had contemplated his own fate years before; he stood at the door of the Covent Garden Hotel as the evening shadows were beginning to fall, grey and dirty, upon the great city. Jacob had arrived in town that day—arrived by train, and been bumped and jolted in a cab to his hotel. Since his arrival he had dined; dined where his father had eaten and called for his bill and paid it with the conviction that this was his last visit to London. Jacob did not know how his father had suffered during that visit to town when Jacob addressed him by letter to this hotel and hoped he might some day see the modern Babylon; Jacob did not know how sad and forlorn and heart-broken his father had been on that last day in London; but he knew that Mr. Bonsall, the member for Middleton, was morally guilty of his father's financial difficulties, and therefore of his death. The fact troubled Jacob as he stood contemplating sundry loads of garden stuff, a couple of cabs, and some children feeding on the garbage of the locality. He put an imaginary stone in his pocket for Mr. Bonsall, then pulled himself together, smoked vigorously, and it was a quaint fancy in his mind that he was standing on the threshold of his future, and that he would knock at the door boldly demanding admission.

Jacob knew nothing of London by experience. He had read it up and dreamed of it often enough, and pictured himself among the crowd clearing his way for Lucy's sake; but that was in the old days. Lucy had been beforehand with him and had found a key that opened all thoroughfares, a talisman that made the crowd give way and break a passage for her. He had an appointment in Paternoster Row the next day; he knew that was near St. Paul's; he would go and reconnoitre the locality. "To the left and keep straight down the Strand, under Temple Bar, cross Farringdon Street, up Ludgate Hill, and there you are, sir," said the waiter; "all in a straight line; can't miss it, sir."

The lamplighters were just dotting the Strand with feeble stars as Jacob entered it from Southampton Street; the shops were illuminated for the night; the famous thoroughfare was all alive with traffic. The scene was new to Jacob, and it impressed him with a sense of loneliness. The traffic bewildered him, but every shop window had attractions for him. Temple Bar pulled him up. He could not pass it without a multitude of thoughts rushing in upon him. The national history of the spot did not haunt him so much as the figure of the illustrious Dr. Johnson attending his lady visitors to their carriages, to the amusement of the little crowd that gathered round the stalwart form in Fleet Street. Then the famous men who had stood hereabouts with the traditional shilling, and that only, in their pockets, and the grand topers of the Mitre Tavern and the Cock; visions of Goldsmith and Garrick, and farther back to "rare Ben Jonson" and his companions who frequented the Devil Tavern on the site of the Rainbow. But Jacob found it impossible to stand and think and dream here; the crowd hustled him, and asked him where he was "a shovin to;" he therefore hurried on with the rest, and in due time found himself in the shadow of St. Paul's. Strange are the tricks of memory. All Jacob could think about in presence of this glorious structure was an incident in a work of fiction popular with Susan Harley in Jacob's early youth, wherein the exploits of a celebrated highwayman and one Jonathan Wild were narrated with a sensational power that had been sufficient to frighten both Jacob and Susan in those long past days anterior to the appearance of Mrs. Gompson at Middleton.

Among the adventures related in this now well-remembered book, Jacob called to mind how the gentleman robber had entered St. Paul's with his band, early in the morning, to the horror and astonishment of the beadle, for the purpose of securing the register of the marriage of the highwayman's father with a duchess; and how the military had tracked the robbers into the church, and finally fought a battle with them in the crypt; and how, when a great crowd had been collected outside by the report of firearms, the gentleman highwayman, after defeating the foe, had come forth with his band, successfully deceiving the crowd outside by pretending to be a prisoner to one of his gang, who cheered lustily, and told the crowd of their great capture.

Having been round St. Paul's and satisfied himself of the whereabouts of "the Row," Jacob again began to feel creeping over him that sense of loneliness which strangers invariably experience in great cities. He returned and walked back again down Ludgate Hill, like one in a dream, eventually crossing Trafalgar Square, and passing by the very spot where his father had walked about with his great trouble.

Presently Jacob found his way impeded by a great crowd. On inquiry, he learned that he was in front of a famous theatre, and that this was the benefit night of an eminent actor. Jacob therefore determined to do what the crowd did; and in a few minutes he found himself carried away into the pit, where he took a seat near two elderly people who almost immediately began to talk about the drama as it was in their younger days, and to regret that as the great old actors died out so few great young ones sprang up.

Gradually the pit became crowded, and the dress circle and boxes began to fill up gaily, budding from a few bright hues into quite a *parterre* of gorgeous dresses, increasing from one or two groups into throngs of fashionable people, who, after a great deal of preparation, settled themselves down into their seats, as if with a full determination of remaining there for a long time. Then the lights in the great chandelier, which hung over Jacob's head, suddenly became more and more brilliant, until the whole house radiated with a warm and ruddy glow. This was accompanied by a few bars of solemn music from the orchestra (the members of which had, for some little time, been dropping in one by one), gradually swelling into stirring music, and formed a fitting prelude to a world of poetry and romance that seemed to open up as the curtain gradually rose upon the first scene of the most complete and beautiful of comedies—"As You Like It."

It had never occurred to Jacob to look at a bill of the play; he was too much occupied with everything else; and so much in a dream of wonder and hope about the great future, into which he felt he was entering, that he was content to sit there quietly and dreamily, and accept all that occurred. When he discovered by the text what the representation was, his thoughts, however, immediately wandered away from the theatre to the school at Cartown, where Spenzonian Whiffler had commenced his study of Shakespeare, under the great-hearted mysterious schoolmaster. To-morrow, he thought, he might see that same Spen, for he had written to the General Post Office, and requested his school companion to meet him at the hotel. Then Rosalind entered, and Jacob could not help thinking of Lucy, more especially as Rosalind's appearance, her fair bright face and light hair and musical voice, reminded him of her who used to lure him away from rambles with Spen on pilgrimages through leafy woods in summer. Jacob's thoughts were suddenly recalled from these memories by a burst of applause, that was renewed again and again, while a figure, in motley, stood bowing upon the stage. This was Touchstone, represented by a gentleman who was evidently a great favourite.

Jacob applauded with the rest; but he did so in memory of Cartown and Spen, and almost with tears in his eyes, because this was one of Spen's favourite parts in those latter days, when the schoolmaster opened the magic book, up in the little room that was adorned with the theatrical pictures. "London with thy thousand wonders," thought Jacob, "I would freely sacrifice all, for one day at Cartown in the happy, happy times!"

The play went on, and no sooner did Touchstone begin to speak than Jacob could have sworn he was listening to Spen himself. This must be mere folly; he rubbed his eyes, and looked and listened again. "Yes, yes, it is, it is," at length he exclaimed aloud; only to be confused and confounded by a cry of "Order, order," and a consciousness that a great number of eyes had been suddenly turned upon him. He held down his head and waited until the curtain fell on the first act. Then he borrowed his neighbour's bill, and saw that he must be mistaken. He read that the performance of the evening was for the benefit of Mr. Paul Ferris, upon which occasion he was "to be supported by his eminent tutor, Mr. Liston Dudley (his first appearance since his retirement from the stage twenty years ago):—Jaques, Mr. Liston Dudley; Touchstone, Mr. Paul Ferris."

Although Jacob found that Touchstone was played by Mr. Paul Ferris and not by Mr. Spen Whiffler, he fully believed that the wit of Cartown School was here before him, enjoying the realisation of those dreams of ambition in which he had so often indulged when mixing Indian ink at the pump on mapping days, or rambling through the Cartown meadows. The fifth scene confirmed him; for wh
but Mr. Gregory Spawling's was that sad yet benignant face whi

turned a sorrowful smile of recognition when the applause shook the very house?

Jacob was almost beside himself with astonishment and delight. He clapped his hands and cried "Bravo" till he was hoarse. The two old playgoers were astonished at the young man's enthusiasm, though the whole house was moved with joy. Ladies waved their handkerchiefs; bouquets and flowers were showered upon the stage from every box; the pit rose to its feet, rose *en masse* close up to the orchestra and cheered frantically. Presently the rich deep voice spoke—

More, more, I pr'ythee, more!

How well Jacob remembered those kind yet melancholy tones! There were many others in this theatre who had not forgotten them; men who were growing old, and who fancied they were young again, now that they heard once more a voice which carried them back for a quarter of a century, when Liston Dudley was the delight of the playgoing world.

As the action of the play went on Jacob could not help likening the woods near Cartown to the Forest of Arden; especially when the Jaques of the latter was the philosopher of the former—the teacher who had guided his mind with fine maxims and noble thoughts in pleasant rambles through rural glades and woody mazes. "Many a time and oft," too, had Jacob heard that epitome of life—"All the world's a stage," spoken by the schoolmaster; but never had the picture seemed so striking as now, every fresh phase of "the seven ages" stamping his imagination with a vignette, as perfect as if limned by the painter's art.

The applause was like the rattle of falling water, and it continued for many minutes.

Then came the song of Amiens; and once again the old time and the old sensations and the old thoughts agitated Jacob so much that he would fain have rushed into the street to compose himself; but that might not be, for the theatre was too crowded to admit of any single person forcing a passage out.

Jacob was therefore compelled to sit as calmly as his agitated feelings would permit, until Rosalind spoke the epilogue and the theatrical gates were shut upon the forest paradise.

The enthusiasm of the audience now knew no bounds. In deference to it the curtain went up upon all the performers; then Jaques and Touchstone, with Rosalind between them, came before the curtain, and it was with difficulty that Spen gathered up all the bouquets, and loaded the lady's kirtle with them.

Then there was a loud call for Jaques, who came forward to the footlights, and in a voice tremulous with emotion expressed his gratitude for the kindness of the audience.

"My dear friends," he said, "your generous recognition overwhelms me. My desertion of you years ago without explanation makes your forgiveness more than kind; I shall never forget it. Twenty years have passed. It was a painful event that dragged me from you. I am an old man now."

The actor spoke in disjointed sentences, and with an evident desire to say something that he could not quite express. Whenever he paused the house applauded him with a strange sympathetic earnestness.

"During my exile, Fortune was kind to me. It threw in my way a pupil who awakened some of the old feelings (applause); awakened a love of my early profession so warmly that I am here (cheers). Paul Ferris has reunited the broken links; he brought me here to-night to share these honours which he is modest enough to say you have showered upon him in memory of me. My dear friends, this reunion has cast a sunbeam on the autumnal path of age (cheers). My tongue is not eloquent. I cannot express in words what I feel in my heart. Permit me to say 'Farewell' (cries of "No, no," and applause. A voice: "God bless you, Dudley"). Dear friends, Farewell.

I were but little happy if I could say how much.

Farewell! Farewell!"

The applause broke out afresh as the old actor retired; and there were tears in many other eyes besides those of Jacob Martyn.

Jacob now made the best of his way to the door. Half-stifled, and under the influence of a variety of strong emotions, he pushed on from the pit to the box entrance, and there inquired how he could send his card to Mr. Ferris. He was directed to the stage door, which, after many inquiries, Jacob found at the top of a damp mildewy alley.

Following sundry shabby looking people, Jacob entered the door pointed out to him, and found himself in the presence of the stage porter.

"Can I send my card to Mr. Paul Ferris?" inquired Jacob.

"He's just gone on in the second piece," said the porter (a fat inquisitive thick-headed looking fellow) over the half door, which barred egress to his den, and enabled him to see who passed and repassed.

"My business with him is of the utmost importance," said Jacob, civilly.

"Has Mr. Simmons nearly done?" said a slipshod woman, thrusting herself before Jacob.

"No, he ain't," said the porter.

"Will you tell him little Jane's very bad, and he's to come home quick," said the woman, hurriedly.

"Worse to-night, then?" inquired the porter in a low, sudden, sympathetic manner.

"Very bad," said the woman; "we fear she'll not get the night over."

"Here, you," said the porter, calling to a boy who was passing, "tell Mr. Simmons that he's wanted at home as soon as he can get away."

Woman and boy disappeared, and Jacob resumed his business.

"What would you advise me to do, sir?" said he pacifically and respectfully, for he felt that he had only to win the porter's interest to do almost what he pleased.

"You wish to send to Mr. Ferris?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"Merely my card, and a message that Mr. Martyn is waiting."

"Would you like to step in, out of the draught?"

Jacob stepped in out of the draught, and did all he could to open a conversation with the porter, who took the first opportunity to send up Jacob's card. The stage Argus, notwithstanding, said but little to him, devoting his chief attention to a kettle on a few smouldering cinders, and to a conversation about canaries with an old fellow who had just limped in.

During this conversation Jacob had time to examine the disorderly apartment in which he had been so fortunate as to obtain a seat. It presented to the eye a strange conglomeration of litter—two tables, a bench, two chairs, a glue-pot, a battered fender, a broken poker, an empty bottle, a yellow jug, a box, a number of old playbills, several dirty newspapers, a greasy book, a hammer, and other miscellaneous articles; besides several notices, in bad writing, hanging from the dirty walls, one of which said manifestos particularly attracted Jacob's attention.

It informed daring and presumptuous authors that the management of that theatre would not be responsible for the return of any manuscripts which might be left there for consideration. Jacob little thought how many hope-sick Triplets had looked at that sign, almost with tears in their eyes, and begged like suppliant slaves for some reply about their plays, which, if only enacted, would make the fortune of the house !

Men, women, and children passed and repassed Jacob as he stood in the porter's room. They were all busy and shabby, most of them were merry, some of them carried jugs of beer, some had mysterious parcels under their aprons. Jacob could hear the rumbling of scenery in the distance, and the faint echoes of applause and laughter in the house. The farce had just begun.

"What's the message, Tom?" presently said a man, thrusting his head over the porter's half-door. The questioner was very profusely painted, and dressed in a gaudy Spanish suit.

"Is that Mr. Simmons?" said the porter, rising from his knees after an attempt to rouse the fire into a sufficient heat to warm the kettle.

"Yes, be quick—I shall be called in a moment. What's the news?"

"Well, it's bad—little Jane is worse."

"Poor darling !" said the actor, with a sigh that was pitiful; and then Jacob heard a voice say, "Mr. Simmons called," and the player was gone.

"Is that the father of the sick child?" Jacob ventured to inquire.

"Aye, poor fellow !" said the old man, who had been talking about canaries, "he only lost his wife six months since, and he's playing a comic lover—do you hear the house, how it's laughing? Mr. Ferris has got him by the ear now, after discovering him in a cupboard, where a domestic is supposed to have hidden him. A pleasant situation while your heart's breaking about a dying child! Ah ! thank God, I've given over work, and have neither chick nor child !"

At this moment a figure leaned over the porter's door which attracted everybody's attention. The old man rose respectfully from his seat; the porter bowed obsequiously; and Jacob Martyn fixed his eyes upon Mr. Spawling of Cartown, who was Mr. Liston Dudley of London. But how altered now that he was off the stage ! Before the footlights he had looked younger than when Jacob knew him at Cartown; but now the wrinkles were all to be seen, and the bushy eyebrows were as white as snow. The mouth was a little more sunken, the chin slightly more prominent than of yore; but there was all the former benignant expression there.

"Do you know if my cab is ready?" inquired Mr. Dudley.

"It is, sir," said a voice from behind, and Jacob's old friend was about to turn away.

"Stay, sir, a moment, if you please," said Jacob, advancing and opening the half-door. "Do you not know me?"

"The voice is familiar to me," said Mr. Spawling, slowly; "but my sight is not so good as it was; come a little nearer."

Jacob advanced; and, unable any longer to endure the vacant gaze of his old friend, he suddenly seized him by the hand and pronounced his own name.

Then the great man knew him immediately, and the joy at this unexpected meeting was mutual.

"Why, what a fine fellow you have grown, to be sure—and 'bearded like the pard.'"

"Not exactly," said Jacob, laughing at this sally about certain signs of manliness which had made by no means an uncertain appearance on the lower part of Jacob's face.

"Well, we will not stand gossipping here," said Mr. Spawling; "come home with me. I have refused a score of invitations to supper, and declined to take any one home, feeling that I must rest and get this excitement over; but you will help me; we shall get back to the country; come along;" and turning to the porter and putting something in his hand, he said: "Tell Mr. Ferris to follow us immediately—tell him that Mr. Jacob Martyn and his friend Mr. Spawling have gone to sup with Mr. Dudley."

Jacob's old friend smiled sadly at his own joke; and, in a few minutes afterwards, Jacob and the famous actor were being driven through the busy streets to the north side of Regent's Park, where Mr. Liston Dudley and his pupil lived in happy companionship together.

CHAPTER XLI.

RETURNS ONCE MORE TO THE GROVE, WHERE JACOB NARRATES HIS LONDON ADVENTURES TO MR. WINDGATE WILLIAMS.

"So you found the tide at the flood, as I predicted?" said the Dinsley editor, sticking a glass in his eye, and looking admiringly at Jacob over the steam of a hot glass of grog.

"Yes; and I had some adventures on the rapid current," said Jacob.

"First about Ginghems'—let's have it brief and pointed, like an epigram."

"They accepted my sketches; the title they liked best was the one you liked best—'On the Track of a Sunbeam.'"

"Bravo ! go on—go on, favoured of Fortune."

"Two hundred pounds, and something more in case it is the success they think it may be."

"Hurrah—go it, Midas !"

"A guinea for every column I write for the *Post*—they must be sketches of places or character."

"Yes, Crœsus ; yes, gold-coiner, yes, yes."

Mr. Williams rose from his seat and contemplated Jacob closely. Jacob, in his turn, smoked and looked calmly up into his friend's gloomy face.

"No humbug, Jacob ?"

"None at all—truth, sir ; no romancing."

"Go on, then."

"An engagement to go into Wales and finish a book commenced by a poor fellow who died after the first fifty pages were written."

"Why, people are actually dying that you may inherit ! You've not been up to the 'Faust' trick—no, you are too young for that—once knew a fellow who tried to sell himself to the devil. But what is this Welsh book ?"

"The Romantic History of the Welsh."

"To be followed by the 'Romantic History of Jacob Martyn ?'"

"All in good time," said Jacob. "A cynical fellow whom I met at Ginghems'—I had luncheon there—a seedy fellow—an Oxford man, I think, and a doctor—very clever he seemed—he told me I had better be a shoeblack than a literary man ; my end would be sure to be miserable."

"You will be an exception, Jacob."

"The doctor said perhaps that was my thought ; all men thought so ; every man thought every other man mortal but himself, and so on."

"True ; but you are the exception, Jacob."

"The seedy doctor—he was really a nice fellow, but awfully cynical—asked me how I could expect to meet a better fate than Cervantes, Spenser, Otway, Butler, Dryden. I said we lived in better days. He laughed and said I was young and hopeful, and that the sun had broken in upon my path early ; but I had better go and sweep a crossing, for the cloud and the storm and the tempest would soon be upon me."

"Ah, he was a disappointed man—but a struggle in London is no joke. To be a bookseller's hack is to drag a chain on an empty stomach—lots of clever men starving in London. Sometim ruin them—but, poor devils, a drink and a chat is their chief pleasure; and many of them pretend they are doing well when they are dying of chagrin and want of food. Ah, Jacob—you are a lucky dog!"

"Then you think I have had no troubles?"

"None sir, none."

"Very well; I will not argue the point. Do you know Piccadilly?"

"I do. Once dined with Lord de Withers—had a house near the Duke of Allcourt's place—not far from Hyde Park Corner."

"Yes, all right," said Jacob; "I had a call to make in Piccadilly."

"Indeed! More triumphs?"

"No, the lady had gone abroad."

Jacob's voice trembled just a little. He was trying to be cool. He wanted to talk about Lucy. He thought if he could only gossip with Williams about his early love, he might come to regard it as all over, and get the image of that dear face out of his mind. It was his only secret from Williams. He had almost given up hoping that Lucy would still think of him. If he could only have been told that she was married he would have gone with a damaged heart to Edith Winthorpe, and looked for complete repairs in time. But for his wonderful success in the Row, and the vista of distinction which it opened before him, he would not have dared to ring the Thornton bell. He did it in a moment of desperation. He was almost glad there was no one at home.

"The lady?" said Williams.

"I will tell you that incident some other time," said Jacob, knocking the ashes of his cigar into the fire.

"Now; no time like the present."

"Not now, thank you," said Jacob. "By-and-by. There is something else that will be quite as interesting to you. I have often talked to you about Mr. Spawling and Spen Whiffler?"

"Yes, and I know them by heart. Schoolmaster and merriman—clown and Shakespeare—Petroski and ghost—friend came at last—and all that."

"I saw them in London."

"Of course—everybody sees everybody in London—Spen on the stage, of course."

"Yes, and *entre nous*, Mr. Spawling too."

"Poor old boy—doing the old man, eh?—ah! old men should be able to leave the stage when they are themselves literally in the sere and yellow leaf. 'Superfluous lags'——, &c."

"No; I'll tell you a secret, Mr. Williams—a bit of real romance. Have you ever heard of Mr. Liston Dudley?"

"Heard of him—aye, marry that have I—and seen him—great man, sir—left the stage twenty years ago."

"He is my Mr. Spawling," said Jacob, thrusting his hands into his pockets and gazing at Windgate, with the satisfaction of one who communicates startling news.

"No, no—come, no chaff."

"I tell you, Mr. Spawling is Mr. Liston Dudley; and that Spen Whiffler is Mr. Paul Ferris, who is such an immense favourite."

"By all the Fates, but this is a wonderful story!—you'll believe some of my anecdotes now."

"I saw Spen on his benefit night; Mr. Spawling played Jaques to his Touchstone."

"Well, go on with your romance, *as you like it*, but don't chaff me."

"I am telling you the truth in every particular; I supped with them, and the next morning carried a letter of introduction and recommendation from Mr. Liston Dudley to Ginghems."

"Marvellous!—the whole thing has been specially arranged—the tide was not only at the flood, but there was a big ship ready fitted out and loaded to your hands—a sort of 'Arabian Nights' affair."

"Spen and I went to the General Post Office and found two letters there, besides the one I wrote before I started for town. Spen had called so frequently, during a couple of years, for letters and found none, that he had given me up; I had treated his instructions, you know, as a joke, and when I discovered my own stupidity, it was too late."

"You are too much in the habit of treating things which you consider extraordinary as jokes—that affair of mine with the Prussian Count and the swindler—aye, and other incidents of London life—but you'll get over that kind of scepticism."

"No doubt; but stay a moment; I have not finished yet. You will never guess who I met at the hotel in the evening."

"An acquaintance—a friend—an enemy—or what?"

"He can scarcely be said to belong to either category, though he swears he will be my friend."

"Of course—to him that hath shall be given—but name, name—who is the *gallant homme.*"

"Do you remember the jolly, pompous magistrate of Middleton, Squire Northcotes?"

"Yes, with a lively recollection of the fear of being brought before him for the *Star* affair."

"I found him sitting over whisky punch in a lonely corner of the coffee-room; we exchanged looks of curiosity for some little time, which ended in mutual recognition. You remember my telling you of the interview I had with him."

"Yes; the Fates preserve him!"

"He reminded me of it, made me give him my address and promise to call and see him whenever I visited Middleton."

"I always told you he was good at the bottom—odd and pompous, I grant you—not over refined—shows a most laudable desire, moreover, to wipe out any little injustice to the father by kindness to the son. Well, Jacob, I congratulate you with all my heart—and when you rise to be a very great man, don't forget poor old Windgate Williams, who might also have been something more than he is if he had had half your industry; though he never found out, as you have done, the exact time when the tide was at the flood—if he *had* made that discovery he would have found no ship to embark in—and supposing he had found the ship, he would have been wrecked before he was fairly out of port. Fortune never did anything for me—perhaps she was right—but believe me I am happy in your success—God bless you, Jacob, my boy, God bless you!" And Mr. Williams marched out of the room to compose his feelings; while Jacob sat down to compose a letter, in reply to one from Dr. Johnson placed in his hands that morning.

Mrs. Smick, to some extent, interfered with Jacob's epistolary work by stepping in to make some trivial inquiry, and remaining to worm out of Jacob, if possible, the secret of his recent sudden journey, which she had reason to fear in some way threatened the loss of a lodger.

Jacob speedily confirmed Mrs. Smick's fears; and that voluble lady shed several tears over the prospect of Mr. Martyn's departure.

It was just as her dear Smick so often said, which his remarks were always naturally good, that you no sooner got used to a thing, not that she meant Mr. Martyn was a thing, but the remark was allegorical, as poor Smick used to say, and no sooner did you get used to it than you lost it. Never had she had a gentleman, who more behaved himself as sich, though Mr. Williams was very kind, and all that, which it were not for a poor widow to undervalue, but she should never have felt his leaving her as she would Mr. Martyn.

Jacob soothed his landlady by a glowing eulogium of her kindness and attention since he had had the pleasure of living at the Grove.

After a few more tears, Mrs. Smick continued her discourse.

"It is not as I wish to make mischief, which were never a weakness of anybody belonging to me, but if you have told that Edith Winthorpe"——

"*That* Edith Winthorpe! I really do not see why you should speak of the young lady in an offensive manner," said Jacob, turning a reproachful look upon Mrs. Smick.

"Well, of course it is not for me to question people's likes and dislikes, and if you prefer it, Mr. Martyn, I will drop the subjeck."

"You may please yourself about that, Mrs. Smick," said Jacob, curtly.

"Well, I'll say no more, but it does seem strange that two young people, who have made eyes at each other so long, should be both tired of the Grove at the same time: but I wish you good night, sir." Mrs. Smick, after drying her crocodile tears, swept out of the room, with a majestic air that both puzzled and amused him.

Her strange words were soon forgotten in his plans for the future. Having answered Mr. Johnson's letter, Jacob drew his chair towards the fire and wondered. He looked back to the days of the factory angel; he saw Middleton in the red embers of the fire; he walked up the long straggling street from the bridge, and into the little back garden; he heard the factory hymn; he saw that dear face at the window; he sat beside the mail driver, and wandered in the woods of Cartown; he watched a lovely girl gathering apples; he heard the clock beating away the moments during that last day in her dear society; he saw himself a wanderer in highways and byeways; he saw the frost and snow, and the ice-bound river of his hopes, and now, lo! the sunshine was coming. If he could know one thing he would be the happiest fellow in all the world. Oh! for a real magician's glass in which he might see the face of her who should be his wife!

(To be continued.)

TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

I HOPE when Mark Twain arrives in America after his visit to London that he will devote a portion of his valuable time to the international copyright question. What he is suffering in England at the hands of Mr. Hotten is a sort of martyrdom with which scores of English authors are acquainted. It would, however, be easy for Mr. Hotten to come to some understanding with Mark Twain, and I trust, for the credit of English publishing, that he will do so, though Mr. Hotten's training and instincts are American. All Mark Twain now desires is that he should have an opportunity of revising the books which the Piccadilly publisher issues in his name. Surely this can be arranged. There can be no question about Mr. Hotten having popularised American humour in this country. I have before me some of his earliest publications. At the date of them they were quite new in style and matter. Moreover, they are turned out in a fashion that is novel, piquant, and effective, and it is a pity that an enterprising publisher should lose much of the credit he deserves by an unseemly quarrel with one of the men whom he delights to honour in large type and showy covers. Mr. Hotten has published some of the most curious and interesting books of the day; it is to be regretted that he is not as popular with his authors as he seems to be with the public. By this time, however, he has probably learnt that the public neither understands nor cares about battles between authors and publishers; and I dare say newspaper letters and discussions do him an infinite amount of good as advertisements. "Screamers," "Eye-openers," and his other well-known shilling books have increased largely in circulation since Mark Twain objected to the titles. I have not met a more agreeable or interesting American gentleman than Mark Twain (his name is Samuel L. Clemens), and I am sorry that the pleasure of his visit should be marred by reminiscences of Piccadilly. He is writing a book upon us. I believe the story of the last Constable of the Tower has impressed him more than humorously; but he does not know that the constable refused a peerage.

PROFESSOR W. K. CLIFFORD very happily distinguishes "scientific thought" from "technical thought." Technical thought predicted correctly all the facts of a solar eclipse long before the phenomenon occurred; scientific thought discovered a new planet in theory before it was discovered in fact. Technical thought reasons from admitted premises not only to old results, but to new adaptations of old results; scientific thought takes a speculative "leap in the dark," trusting in a law of nature wider than the discovered law, but in strict analogy with it, and presents a result in advance of any previously arrived at. Having expounded that distinction, this most promising young philosopher of Cambridge points out that scientific thought is not an accompaniment or condition of human progress, but "human progress itself." I am tempted to add an illustration to those advanced by Professor Clifford in elucidation of his position. Modern Chinese civilisation is a good example of the working out of technical thought; while the contemporary history of the Anglo-Saxon race demonstrates the working of scientific thought. We are apt, perhaps, to underrate the mental processes which form the motive power of the national life of the Chinese. Some observers have spoken of mechanical and industrial operations in the Celestial Empire as purely and blindly imitative. But the Chinese do not go to work blindly. In the designing and construction of palaces and bridges their engineers and architects exercise a form of intelligence scarcely distinguishable from that of our own engineers and architects, who design and build on well recognised principles. The Chinaman is, in fact, not specially imitative; he is conservative. He does not copy anything new, but follows always in the old track. We must give the race credit for intelligence equal to the work they are doing, but there is no margin. They have no scientific thought, and therefore no progress. When did original thinking cease to operate in China? Is Chinese civilisation the monument raised by an early family of men whose inheritance was taken from them and their work carried on, without improvement, by the inferior race which now occupies the country? Or is that stagnation, extending back to pre-historic times, the consequence of the accidental setting up of a conservative fetish which has somehow obtained an almost supernatural power over the mental faculties of the people?

"THE arts and sciences humbly crave audience of Your Majesty." I am quoting from a dedication addressed to King George the Second in the year 1727. The writer was the famous old globe-maker, Ephraim Chambers; the book was the "Cyclopædia"—the first dictionary of arts and sciences and general knowledge ever published in England. Is it not a notable fact in the history of the arts and sciences that words which formed a neat and courtier-like compliment to the Sovereign one hundred and forty-five years ago, would to-day, if addressed to the Queen, sound like an elaborate insult? "The arts and sciences humbly crave audience!" Ephraim Chambers was not a satirist. The words were not set down in irony. They may be taken to represent in a rough fashion the relations between the throne and intellectual pursuits in 1727.

Mr. Lampton Young, maintains that the pilchards caught off the Cornish coast, and the sardines which we import so largely from the French shores of the Bay of Biscay are identical, only grown larger by the time when the shoals reach England. He thereupon recommends the preserving of pilchards in oil in Cornwall for home consumption; but he takes no notice of the fact that of all the fish caught in the south of England there are none so largely exported as pilchards. In lonely huts in the cavernous shelter of the magnificent rocks which overlook the ocean between St. Just and Land's End the wanderer in the autumn vacation—now unhappily over—might watch the process of pressing the oil out of those fish and preparing them for the markets of Spain and Alexandria. Vessels freighted with pilchards for the south meet in their passage the deeply-laden ships bringing whole cargoes of sardines for British consumption. Sardines are costly, and pilchards are cheap. I wish Mr. Young success in his project for teaching Cornishmen the art of preserving their fish in tins of oil.

Very seriously Mr. A. Hall follows me in my somewhat random speculations as to the ultimate fate of European races settled in North America. I warned our Transatlantic cousins that they must accustom themselves to contemplate the possibility of their descendants assuming the physique and perhaps some other characteristics of Red Indians. Mr. Hall thinks the North American Yankees must die out, if ever the stream of immigration should cease, unless they infuse their blood with that of an alien race. They must, in fact, mix with the remnants of the Cherokees, the Chocktaws, and the Chickasaws to save themselves. I would rather not, however, be hasty in jumping to a conclusion on any one of these very difficult ethnological questions. The Aryans, for aught I know, are a myth, and their apparent fate may not be taken as one of the premises of a syllogism condemning the great American people to ultimate extinction. There is surely something in adaptability. Anglo-Saxons do not take kindly to the natural conditions of existence in India, and we may regard this as a sign that our struggle for life there would be hard and costly; but North American immigrants from the Eastern hemisphere soon learn to feel at home in the new land, and rarely think of returning to the old countries. They may have a struggle for it, but I think they are gifted with a vitality and adaptability which will carry them over the brunt of transplantation. But when, in the course of ages, the feat shall have been accomplished, I am not sure that they will resemble Europeans.

HERE is a handful of hints for any picturesque writer dreaming of sketching the Court of the Prince Regent. It is taken from the recently published volume of Mr. Rush's recollections of the English Court; and turns up in an account of his first visit to Court. All were in rich costume. Men of genius and science were there. The nobility were numerous; so were the military. There were from forty to fifty generals, perhaps as many admirals, with throngs of officers of ranks inferior. But what struck the quick eye of the American most of all was the number of wounded men limping about the corridors of Carlton House. A thin, pallid figure with a sparkling eye comes slowly along, and Mr. Rush asks his *cicerone* who it is. "That's General Walker. He was pierced with bayonets, leading on the assault at Badajoz." "And he close by, tall, but limping?" "Colonel Ponsonby; he was left for dead at Waterloo; the cavalry, it was thought, trampled upon him." Then came one of like port, but deprived of a leg, slowly moving, and the whisper went, "That's Lord Anglesea." A fourth had been wounded at Seringapatam; a fifth at Talavera. Some had suffered in Egypt; some in America. There were those who had received scars on the deck with Nelson; others who had carried them from the days of Howe. One, yes one, had fought at Saratoga. It was so that his inquiries were answered. "Each did his duty," this was the favourite praise bestowed. "So it is," adds Mr. Rush; "other nations chiefly fight on or near their own territory, the English everywhere;" and what was true then is true now.

PERHAPS as a companion picture to this of the Prince Regent's *levée*, I may reproduce Mr. Rush's sketch of one of the most striking of Queen Charlotte's drawing-rooms, the first that was held after the death of the Princess Charlotte. This was on the 26th of February, 1818, a red letter day in the annals of the Court. Piccadilly was lined with carriages. Every avenue to the palace was packed with people. Inside the palace you could hardly stir. It took Lady

Castlereagh, "towering in her bloom," three-quarters of an hour to make her way up a single pair of stairs with Mrs. Rush. "The whole group stood motionless. The hoop dresses of the ladies sparkling with lama, their plumes, their lappets, the fanciful attitudes which the hoops occasioned, some getting out of position, as when in Addison's time they were adjusted to shoot a door, the various costumes of the gentlemen, as they stood pinioning their elbows, or holding their swords, the common hilarity from the common dilemma; the bland recognitions passing between those above and below, made up altogether an exhibition so picturesque that a painter might give it as illustrative so far of the Court of that era." But the scene on the staircase was nothing in comparison with that which met the eye in the room where a stately old Duchess of seventy-six summers sat in all the benignity of rank and age upon a velvet chair, with the Princesses at her side, and with half the aristocracy of England in her presence. "It was like the bursting out of Spring," says Mr. Rush, contrasting the scene with all its bright colouring with the gloom which had till then distinguished the Court in consequence of the Princess Charlotte's loss. "No lady was without her plume; the whole was a waving field of feathers. Some were blue like the sky; some tinged with red; here you saw violet and yellow; there shades of green. But the most were like tufts of snow. Then the diamonds encircling them caught the sun through the windows, and threw their dazzling beams around. Then the hoops! I cannot describe these. They should be seen. To see one is nothing, but to see a thousand and their thousand wearers! I afterwards sat in the Ambassador's box at a coronation. That sight faded before this. Each lady seemed to rise out of a little gilded barricade, or one of silvery texture. This topped by a plume, and 'the face divine interposing,' gave to the whole an effect so unique, so fraught with feminine grace and grandeur, that it seemed as if a curtain had risen to show a pageant in another sphere. It was brilliant and joyous. Those to whom it was not new stood to gaze as I did—Canning for one. His fine eye took it all in. You saw admiration in the great statesmen, Lord Liverpool, Huskisson, the Lord Chancellor, everybody! Now I saw radiating on all sides British beauty, and I had the inward assurance that my countrywomen were its inheritresses. *Matre pulchrâ filia pulchrior.* So appeared to me the drawing room of Queen Charlotte: the whole was harmony, though parts of the ladies' dresses may have been incongruous. Like old English buildings and Shakespeare, it carried the feelings with it. It triumphed over criticism."

THE reappearance of rinderpest in the Yorkshire Wolds ought to set English farmers thinking afresh how they can protect themselves against the losses which the necessities of our increasing population, with its increasing love of beefsteaks and legs of mutton, expose it to now year by year. The value of our flocks and herds has been set down at £220,000,000, a sum equal to about one-fourth of the National Debt; and till now these flocks and herds have been freer from disease than any in Europe. The rinderpest is a new sensation—the foot and mouth disease an ugly surprise. The first cost us £5,000,000, in the form of direct losses, upon its visit four or five years ago; and what it cost then it may cost us again any day. Perhaps if our own pastures were properly turned to account we might stand up independent of the foreigner. But this, at present, is only a dream, and may be nothing more than a dream for years to come. Yet till we are independent of the foreigner, till the market is in our own hands, we shall never be free from the risks which Free Trade carries with it; and the only way to protect ourselves against these risks is through the principle of insurance. At present scores of farmers might be ruined in a few days by the rinderpest, the price of sirloin increased to 1s. 6d. per pound, and the cattle trade turned into a lottery where the graziers of Dumfriesshire or of Devon might make their fortune at the expense of those of Yorkshire and of Norfolk. We have all an interest in guarding against this; and if we cannot close our ports the next best thing is to indemnify ourselves against the risk of open ports—and this I hope to see done before the year is out.

HERE is a fact for political economists and seamstresses. The superintendent nurse of the sick wards of a workhouse in the West of England recently asked the Guardians for an increase of salary from £25 a year to £30, besides her board and lodging, and for a pint of beer and 4 oz. of wine or spirits a day. The Guardians hummed and ha'd for a few moments, beat the tattoo upon the table, and "caved in." Might it not have been more economical to try Mrs. Harris's plan, simply stipulating beforehand that the nurse should not drink more than a pipe of port in the year?

EVEN sport is now taking a scientific turn, and dynamite is promising—or threatening, shall I say?—to take the place of the salmon spear and the harpoon of the whalers. It has been discovered that 1½ oz. of this preparation, let down into the water in a common pomatum bottle and exploded, will kill all the fish for hundreds of