

and the double chorus that followed it, make ready, ye mighty; up and bare your swords so he discoursed joyfully with his own heart, and felt above measure elated at the great and sudden change that was wrought in him, not recognising that the clouds return after the rain, and that the leopard may change his spots as easily as man may change his habits. to change a habit at fifty five or forty five or thirty five; to ordain that rivers shall flow uphill; to divert the relentless sequence of cause and effect how often dare we say this happens nemo repente no man ever suddenly became good. a moments spiritual agony may blunt our instincts and paralyse the evil in us for a while, even as chloroform may dull our bodily sense; but for permanence there is no sudden turning of the mind; sudden repentances in life or death are equally impossible. three halcyon days were followed by one of those dark and lowering mornings when the blank life seems blanker, and when the gloom of nature is too accurately reflected in the nervous temperament of man. on healthy youth climatic influences have no effect, and robust middle age, if it perceive them, goes on its way steadfast or stolid, with a celeriter, tout passera. but on the feeble and the failing such times fall with a weight of fretful despondency; and so they fell on mr sharnall. he was very restless about the time of the mid day meal. there came up a thick, dark fog from the sea, which went rolling in great masses over culterne flat, till its fringe caught the outskirts of the town. after that, it settled in the streets, and took up its special abode in bellevue lodge; till miss euphemia coughed so that she had to take two ipecacuanha lozenges, into the good opinion of the ladies, that they all declared they would be really very handsome men if their faces were not tattooed. the next day we received a visit from mr. and mrs. butler, english people, who had taken up their residence here for the purpose of trading, and we returned with them on shore, taking our female passengers with us, and leaving them in charge of mrs. butler. i determined to stroll through the village, which is, in fact, a collection of rude huts, huddled together without system or regularity. dock leaves and weeds of every description were growing luxuriantly all round them, and in many places actually overtopping the houses, few being more than four feet high, with a doorway about two feet. scarcely any of them were inhabited, as at this season of the year the greater part of the population prefer living in the open air to remaining in their small, smoky ovens of houses. i had not rambled far before i witnessed a scene which forcibly reminded me of the savage country in which i then was, and the great alteration of character and customs a few days sail will make. the sight to me so appalling was that of the remains of a human body which had been roasted, and a number of hogs and dogs were snarling and feasting upon it i was more shocked than surprised, for i had been informed of the character of the new zealanders long before my arrival amongst them; still, the coming suddenly and unexpectedly upon a sight like this completely sickened me of rambling, at least for that day, and i hastened back to mr. butlers, eager to inquire into the particulars of the horrid catastrophe. that gentleman informed me that the night of the arrival of our ship, a chief had set one of his wives a white robe with wide, open sleeves, and her arms shone in the dim light as white as her garment. the greyhound barked again; she quieted it, and then asked hermas how his father was, and whether he needed some more wine. he replied that she was very kind, angelically kind, but that the sick man was recovering fast, and that she had already given him far too much. neither of them said anything that might not have been heard by everybody, and yet they whispered as if they were speaking of some forbidden thing. wait a moment, said sirona, and she disappeared within the room, she soon reappeared, and said solid and sadly, i would ask you to come into the house but phoebicus has locked the door. i am quite alone, hold the flask so that i may fill it through the open window. with these words she leaned over with the large jar she was strong, but the wine jar seemed to her heavier than on other occasions, and she said with a sigh, the amphora is too heavy for me. he reached up to help her; again his fingers met hers, and again he felt the ecstatic thrill which had haunted his memory day and night ever since he first had felt it. at this instant there was a sudden noise in the house opposite; the slaves were coming out from supper. sirona knew what was happening;